



# Failure to secure a training post in an applicant’s first choice deanery: a risk factor for difficulties during training

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### Background

Whilst existing evidence suggests that GP trainees who score badly in the national recruitment process are more likely to experience problems during training, we wished to identify factors that may contribute to these trainees’ poor progression.

### Methods

We undertook a simple retrospective analysis of recruits to Wessex GP training in 2009, focussing upon those trainees who scored greater than one standard deviation below the mean in either stages two or three of the national recruitment process. The subsequent progress of these trainees (n.39) was tracked using ARCP and exam data.

### Results

Of the 39 trainees, 22 (56%) went on to experience problems during training with 19 having been placed on remedial extensions and 3 released from training at the time of the study.

It was apparent from the recruitment data that a large proportion of the lowest scoring candidates at recruitment had not applied to Wessex as their first choice deanery (n.28/39; 72%) instead being recruited via round one clearing or at round two, after applying unsuccessfully to other deaneries at round one.

We then compared the subsequent progress of these 28 trainees to that of the other eleven.

5	3	1	1	1
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
CCT achieved	Extension	Released from training	Transferred out of Wessex	Resigned / did not start

3	16	2	1	4	2
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
CCT achieved	Extension	Released from training	Transferred out of Wessex	Resigned / did not start	Out of programme / delayed start

### Key findings

- Despite having comparable recruitment scores, the trainees who had not initially applied to Wessex were more than twice as likely to require a remedial extension compared to those who had Wessex as their first choice (57% compared to 27%).
- Those trainees who had applied directly to Wessex were four times more likely to complete training successfully after three years (45% compared to 11%).
- A relatively large proportion of trainees who had not chosen to train in Wessex resigned from training or did not take up their training post having initially accepted the offer (14%).

### Discussion

Failure to apply directly to Wessex was a significant risk factor for having difficulties during training and for failing to complete training, independent of recruitment scores.

Educators in Wessex have, for some years now, been aware of a ‘London effect’ where candidates not securing a training post in their first choice deanery of London, often look to those around London and seek to obtain posts there through the national clearing process. If appointed, they often continue to live in London and commute. The effects of excessive travelling and dislocation from support networks on these trainees would seem to be cumulative, both on well-being and on their progression through training.

### Implications

- Trainees recruited via clearing appear to be at particular risk.
- Those deaneries which recruit trainees via the clearing process and those requiring a second recruitment round may be well-advised to assess these trainees early for the need for proactive intervention and support.

Handout:

Report: