

UK Foundation Programme National F2 Career Destination Survey (2011)

1. Building on the 2010 Career Destination Survey, the Medical Education and Training Programme at the Department of Health (England) commissioned the UK Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO) to undertake a survey of F2 doctors' career destinations on completion of the Foundation Programme in 2011. These foundation doctors typically graduated from medical schools in 2009.
2. This report identifies the key outcomes for foundation doctors, including the proportion who were appointed to specialty training in the UK, left the UK after completing their foundation training, left the medical profession after completing their foundation training and taking a career break but intend to return to the medical profession.

Method

3. The survey questions were refined in response to feedback in 2010. In particular additional options were created to better understand "other/unknown" career destinations and reduce the risk of missing or excluded data. However, the core questions remained the same.
4. Foundation doctors who were about to satisfactorily complete the programme were invited to participate as in 2010.
5. Postgraduate Deaneries and their Foundation Schools gathered the data between March and September 2011. Foundation Schools used a variety of methods to gather the data including embedding the agreed questions in their existing surveys, using the UKFPO developed on-line survey or the UKFPO developed paper-based questionnaire.

Results

6. All 25 UK Foundation Schools provided data from their outgoing F2 doctors. There were 7301 F2 doctors in these schools who successfully completed the foundation programme in August 2011.
7. 6913 doctors, who satisfactorily completed the programme, provided data about their next career destination. This response rate of 95% is a significant improvement compared to the previous two years. In 2009, the response rate was 50% and in 2010, it was 76% when only 23 out of 25 schools provided data.
8. Table 1 provides details of the career destinations for the foundation doctors, who both completed the programme successfully and responded to all questions in the survey. This includes 6492 foundation doctors on the standard Foundation Programme and 391 doctors in an Academic Foundation Programme. The remaining 15 responders did not provide complete data and have been omitted from the analysis.
9. 71.3% of respondents were appointed to specialty training in the UK in 2011.
10. Medical graduates appointed to academic foundation programmes were more likely to secure a specialty training appointment and in particular were more likely to progress to post-foundation academic training.
11. Table 2 sets out the response rate across the 25 UK Foundation Schools and career destinations for respondents.

Table 1 – F2 Career destinations (2011)

Destinations for F2 doctors	Standard	Academic	All F2
Specialty training in UK - run-through training programme	34.7%	22.5%	34.0%
Specialty training in UK - core training programme	33.6%	39.9%	34.0%
Specialty training in UK - academic programme	0.6%	15.9%	1.5%
Specialty training in UK - FTSTA	1.1%	1.5%	1.1%
Specialty training in UK - deferred for higher degree	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Specialty training in UK - deferred for statutory reasons	0.5%	0.8%	0.5%
Sub-total for specialty training in UK	70.7%	80.6%	71.3%
Locum appointment for training (LAT) in UK	0.5%	0.0%	0.4%
Specialty training outside UK	0.8%	1.5%	0.8%
Service appointment in UK	2.3%	1.8%	2.3%
Other appointment outside UK	7.6%	3.3%	7.4%
Still seeking employment as a doctor in the UK	6.5%	3.6%	6.3%
Still seeking employment as a doctor outside the UK	3.8%	1.8%	3.7%
Not practising medicine - taking a career break	4.7%	3.8%	4.6%
Not practising medicine - permanently left profession	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
Other (e.g. anatomy demonstrator, higher education)	3.0%	3.6%	3.0%
Total signed off, known destinations	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 2 – Response rate and F2 Career Destinations by Foundation School (2011)

Foundation school	No. F2 doctors signed-off	% response	% appointed to ST in UK	% other in UK*	% appointed outside UK**	% taking career break	% left the profession	% other***
Birmingham	193	96.4%	82.8%	2.7%	9.1%	2.2%	0.5%	2.7%
Black Country	143	83.9%	83.3%	10.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%
Coventry & Warwick	96	99.0%	74.7%	1.1%	10.5%	2.1%	0.0%	11.6%
East Anglia	297	100.0%	81.1%	10.8%	3.7%	2.7%	1.0%	0.7%
Hereford & Worcester	66	98.5%	73.8%	4.6%	12.3%	0.0%	0.0%	9.2%
LNR	164	89.0%	78.5%	10.4%	9.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Mersey	359	90.3%	70.7%	9.9%	14.2%	3.4%	0.3%	1.5%
Northern Ireland	238	93.7%	70.9%	4.5%	19.7%	2.7%	0.4%	1.8%
N.C.Thames	333	97.6%	78.4%	5.9%	5.2%	8.3%	0.0%	2.2%
N.E.Thames	318	95.0%	75.1%	9.0%	4.7%	9.3%	0.0%	2.0%
N.W.Thames	308	100.0%	74.1%	8.6%	8.0%	7.3%	0.0%	2.0%
North Western	520	99.8%	74.0%	8.7%	8.9%	5.2%	0.2%	3.1%
Northern	376	95.5%	68.5%	9.5%	19.2%	1.1%	0.0%	1.7%
NYEC	165	96.4%	71.7%	12.6%	3.8%	10.1%	0.0%	1.9%
Oxford	231	94.4%	72.5%	11.9%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	5.5%
Peninsula	186	99.5%	63.0%	13.6%	14.1%	4.3%	0.0%	4.9%
S.Thames	829	99.6%	63.6%	11.9%	11.2%	6.7%	0.1%	6.5%
S.Yorkshire	170	100.0%	72.4%	4.1%	16.5%	3.5%	0.0%	3.5%
Scotland	772	80.8%	72.8%	7.4%	14.6%	3.7%	0.0%	1.6%
Severn	279	100.0%	60.9%	12.5%	19.7%	3.6%	0.0%	3.2%
Staffordshire	98	46.9%	76.1%	17.4%	4.3%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Trent	265	99.6%	73.8%	7.2%	14.1%	2.7%	0.4%	1.9%
W.Yorkshire	280	99.6%	74.6%	6.5%	11.8%	3.2%	0.0%	3.9%
Wales	332	94.3%	61.3%	10.2%	20.8%	5.1%	0.3%	2.2%
Wessex	283	99.3%	66.5%	8.9%	17.4%	5.0%	0.0%	2.1%
UK Total	7301	94.7%	71.3%	9.0%	11.9%	4.6%	0.1%	3.0%

* Includes LAT appointments, service appointments and those still seeking employment in the UK.

** Includes all appointments outside the UK except specialty training plus those still seeking employment outside the UK

*** Includes any other destination notified, e.g. anatomy demonstrators, undertaking higher education, etc.

12. Direct comparison with the 2010 results is challenging due to the high number of responses in the “other/unknown” category in 2010. These responses were excluded from the 2010 analysis. For 2011, two additional categories were included: “Still seeking employment as a doctor outside the UK” and, “Other (e.g. anatomy demonstrator, higher education)” and only 15 responses were recorded as “unknown”.
13. If responses for the two new categories are excluded from the analysis together with “unknown” for 2011, the comparable sub-total for specialty training in the UK for 2011 would be 76.4%. The reported sub-total for 2010 was 83.1%.

Discussion

14. Around 7 out of 10 doctors completing the Foundation Programme in 2011 immediately secured a specialty training post in the UK. This figure is lower than the reported figure for 2010 but may be more robust due to the higher response rate and improved quality of the data.
15. As noted last year, this pattern of appointment is not new. The UK Medical Careers Research Group (led by Professor Michael Goldacre, University of Oxford) has found that approximately 20% of medical graduates choose or do not enter specialty training immediately after completing PRHO posts or the Foundation Programme. Writing in *BMJ Careers* (20 Oct 2010), Professor Goldacre noted that “now, as in the past, doctors’ medical career trajectories do not invariably take a straight and relentless course from qualification through specialist training to consultant or general practitioner principal posts.”
16. Further data is needed about the long-term career outcomes of recent medical graduates to see what proportion are retained or return to the UK health sector. DH (England) has commissioned the UK Medical Careers Research Group to follow up and undertake a detailed analysis of the career trajectories of the cohort who graduated in 2008. In addition, proposed changes to medical and dental recruitment should enable the UK-wide tracking of foundation and specialty applicants.
17. The results of the analyses looking at the relationship between placements and tasters in general practice and psychiatry will be presented at the next Medical Programme Board meeting.

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On behalf of the UK Foundation Programme Office¹

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