UK Medical Careers Research Group

1996 cohort of UK Medical Graduates

Report of Fourth Survey, conducted in 2003/2004

Report produced January 2006

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Contents

Introduction	3
Cohort size and response to survey	3
Demographics	3
Career choice and firmness of choice	3
Factors influencing choice	5
Intentions to practise in the UK for the foreseeable future	6
Commitment to the NHS; intention to work part time	6
Current post	6
Satisfaction with current job	9
Satisfaction with time for family and leisure	9
Views and opinions	9
Views on future career	9
Working conditions and support	9
The NHS and equal opportunities	9
Appendix : Questionnaire	14

Introduction

This report describes the results of the fourth survey of the cohort of 3868 doctors who qualified from UK medical schools in 1996. The first baseline survey of the 1996 qualifiers was carried out during the PRHO year in 1997, and was followed by surveys in 1999 and 2001. The first mailing for this survey was completed in November 2003, and late replies were received up to October 2004. At the time of the fourth survey the majority of those in hospital practice were in specialist training. Within general practice, many had achieved GP principal status, a considerable percentage were working as salaried GPs, and a small percentage had still to complete their GP Registrar training.

The fourth survey focuses on the current employment of the respondents, their career choices and future career intentions. It also contains information about their current post and job satisfaction, in addition to views and attitudes regarding their future career, working conditions and equal opportunities.

This report is not intended as an analytical report and does not seek to relate data from this cohort to that obtained from other cohorts. We expect the findings to be of interest to medical workforce planners, policymakers, researchers and others with an interest in medical careers.

Cohort size and response to survey

The cohort comprises 3868 doctors (1995 men, 1873 women). Excluding from the denominator 33 who had declined to participate, 14 who had died, and 139 for whom no current address could be found, the response to the third survey was 65.2% (2410/3682). For men the response was 59.2% (1106/1867), and for women 71.8% (1304/1815).

Demographics

The median age of respondents at the time of responding to the survey was 32.1 years (men 32.3, women 31.9 years). Three-quarters of both men and women were living with a spouse or partner, and one quarter were single. Overall, 38.5% of respondents had children under 16 years of age (men 41.5%, women 35.9%); 4.0% (4.4% of men, 3.7% of women) had dependent adults living with them.

Career choice and firmness of choice

Of those who provided details about their choice of long-term career, 71.4% were 'definite' about their choice (75.8% of men, 67.6% of women), and 24.4% thought it a 'probable' choice. Table 1 gives details of mainstream of choice by sex. There were some marked differences between men and women, in choices for the surgical specialties (18.5% and 5.7% respectively), anaesthetics (9.8% and 6.6%), obstetrics and gynaecology (0.9% and 2.5%), paediatrics (3.0% and 6.7%), clinical oncology (1.7% and 3.0%) and general practice (26.8% of men and 39.9% of women; 33.9% in total).

			Se	x	
		-	Male	Female	Total
First choice	Medical Specs.	Count	177	205	382
mainstream		% within Sex	16.0%	15.7%	15.9%
Year 07	Paediatrics	Count	33	88	12
		% within Sex	3.0%	6.7%	5.0%
	Accident & Emergency	Count	50	57	10′
		% within Sex	4.5%	4.4%	4.4%
	General surgery	Count	11	13	24
		% within Sex	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
	Other Surgical Specialty	Count	204	74	27
		% within Sex	18.4%	5.7%	11.5%
	Obstetrics & Gynaec.	Count	10	32	42
		% within Sex	.9%	2.5%	1.79
	Anaesthetics	Count	108	86	19
		% within Sex	9.8%	6.6%	8.0%
	Radiology	Count	48	39	8
		% within Sex	4.3%	3.0%	3.6%
	Clinical Oncology	Count	19	39	5
		% within Sex	1.7%	3.0%	2.49
	Pathology	Count	32	32	6
		% within Sex	2.9%	2.5%	2.7%
	Psychiatry	Count	62	61	12
		% within Sex	5.6%	4.7%	5.19
	General Practice	Count	296	520	81
		% within Sex	26.8%	39.9%	33.9%
	Community Medicine	Count	6	14	2
		% within Sex	.5%	1.1%	.89
	Public Health Medicine	Count	6	16	2
		% within Sex	.5%	1.2%	.9%
	Other Medical Spec.	Count	23	12	3
		% within Sex	2.1%	.9%	1.5%
	Non-Medical	Count	16	10	2
		% within Sex	1.4%	.8%	1.19
	Unknown	Count	5	6	1
		% within Sex	.5%	.5%	.5%
Fotal		Count	1106	1304	241
		% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 1. First choice of mainstream in Year 07 by Sex

Factors influencing choice

Doctors were invited to indicate how much a number of different factors had influenced their longterm choice of career specialty. Figure 1 shows, for men and women, the percentages of respondents who agreed that factors influenced their choice of specialty 'a great deal', 'a little', or 'not at all'. Enthusiasm and commitment for the specialty, and experience of jobs so far were selected by 70% of respondents as influencing their choice 'a great deal'; there was very little difference between men ands women. Whilst a similar percentage of men and women cited selfappraisal of own skills and aptitudes as having a great deal of influence; higher percentages of women than of men selected hours and working conditions (women 61.7%; men 47.2%) and domestic circumstances (women 41.3%; men 29.5%).



Figure 1. Factors influencing choice of specialty

Men

Intentions to practise in the UK for the foreseeable future

Respondents were asked to indicate whether, apart from temporary visits abroad, they intended to practise medicine in the UK for the foreseeable future. 84.3% of them said that they definitely or probably would do so; a further 7.3% were undecided. There was little difference between men and women in their intentions.

Commitment to the NHS; intention to work part time

To the question, *Do you feel committed to a long-term career in the NHS*? 79.2% of respondents answered Yes – *definitely* or Yes – *probably*, and 11.6% were undecided. A higher percentage of women than of men were definite (women 40.8%; men 31.5%).

Respondents were also asked whether they planned to work in a career post on a less-than-fulltime basis at some point during their careers. Overall, 45.9% indicated that this was their definite intention (22.9% of men; 72.1% of women); 18.6% were undecided.

Current post

At 30 September 2004 81.2% (1958/2410) of respondents who gave information about their job at that date were working in medical posts in the UK NHS (men 80.1%, 886/1106; women 82.2%, 1072/1304); a further 5.7% were working in medical posts in UK universities (7.1% of men; 4.5% of women). 4.9% were in medical posts abroad. Of those working in UK NHS or UK University posts, 42.9% were in specialist training (48.7% of men; 37.9% of women), 6.4% were SHOs, 13.8% had achieved GP Principal posts, 6.7% were salaried GPs, 4.4% were GP Registrars and a further 5.4% were working as GP locums (Table 2).

Table 3 shows the specialty mainstreams of those who were working in the UK NHS or UK universities at 30 September 2004.

			Se	K	
		-	Male	Female	Total
Grade	No grade given	Count	8	3	11
Yr 07		% within Sex	.7%	.2%	.5%
	Hosp. Consultant	Count	5	3	8
		% within Sex	.5%	.2%	.3%
	Hosp. SHO	Count	62	77	139
		% within Sex	5.6%	5.9%	5.8%
	Specialist Registrar	Count	499	454	953
		% within Sex	45.1%	34.8%	39.5%
	Hosp. other	Count	84	113	197
		% within Sex	7.6%	8.7%	8.2%
	GP Principal	Count	128	168	296
		% within Sex	11.6%	12.9%	12.3%
	GP Registrar	Count	32	60	92
		% within Sex	2.9%	4.6%	3.8%
	GP Locum	Count	47	71	118
		% within Sex	4.2%	5.4%	4.9%
	GP Salaried	Count	46	94	140
		% within Sex	4.2%	7.2%	5.8%
	GP other	Count	5	58	63
		% within Sex	.5%	4.4%	2.6%
	University	Count	96	77	173
		% within Sex	8.7%	5.9%	7.2%
	Other	Count	51	37	88
		% within Sex	4.6%	2.8%	3.7%
	Not Applicable	Count	43	89	132
		% within Sex	3.9%	6.8%	5.5%
Total		Count	1106	1304	2410
		% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 2. Grade in Year 07 by Sex

			Sez	x	
		-	Male	Female	Total
Mainstream	Medical Specs.	Count	146	173	319
Yr 07		% within Sex	15.1%	15.3%	15.2%
	Paediatrics	Count	33	82	115
		% within Sex	3.4%	7.3%	5.5%
	Accident & Emergency	Count	38	42	80
		% within Sex	3.9%	3.7%	3.8%
	General surgery	Count	16	14	30
		% within Sex	1.7%	1.2%	1.4%
	Other Surgical Specialty	Count	182	63	245
		% within Sex	18.9%	5.6%	11.7%
	Obstetrics & Gynaec.	Count	17	39	50
		% within Sex	1.8%	3.4%	2.7%
	Anaesthetics	Count	104	72	170
		% within Sex	10.8%	6.4%	8.4%
	Radiology	Count	42	37	79
		% within Sex	4.4%	3.3%	3.8%
	Clinical Oncology	Count	17	34	5
		% within Sex	1.8%	3.0%	2.4%
	Pathology	Count	30	32	62
		% within Sex	3.1%	2.8%	3.0%
	Psychiatry	Count	61	60	12
		% within Sex	6.3%	5.3%	5.8%
	General Practice	Count	258	446	704
		% within Sex	26.7%	39.4%	33.6%
	Community Medicine	Count	6	13	19
		% within Sex	.6%	1.1%	.9%
	Public Health Medicine	Count	4	13	17
		% within Sex	.4%	1.1%	.8%
	Other Medical Spec.	Count	9	9	18
		% within Sex	.9%	.8%	.9%
	Two or more specialties	Count	2	1	3
		% within Sex	.2%	.1%	.1%
	Not in Paid Employment	Count	0	1	1
		% within Sex	.0%	.1%	.0%
Total		Count	965	1131	2096
		% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3. Specialty Mainstream in Year 07 by Sex

Satisfaction with current job

To obtain a measure of job satisfaction, five statements were presented for evaluation, on a scale from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The statements were

I find enjoyment in my current post I am doing interesting and challenging work I feel dissatisfied in my current post Most days I am enthusiastic about my work I am often bored with my work

Scores of 1 to 5 were assigned to the responses (with scales reversed for the 1st, 2nd and 4th statements) and an overall job satisfaction score calculated. The median job satisfaction score for both men and women was 20, indicating a high degree of job satisfaction.

Satisfaction with time for family and leisure

Respondents were invited to express, on a scale from 1 to 10, their level of satisfaction with the amount of time their work left them for family, social and recreational activities. The mean score was 6.1 (men 5.9, women 6.4).

Views and opinions

A number of attitude statements were included in the questionnaire, to ascertain respondents' views and concerns about their future career, working conditions and support, and equal opportunities in the NHS. Responses were invited on a 5-point scale, from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. For ease of presentation, the responses *strongly agree* and *agree* have been combined into *Agree*, and *strongly disagree* and *disagree* into *Disagree*. The results for men and women are shown in Figures 2, 3 and 4. The full wording of the attitude statements can be found on pages 4-5 of the questionnaire (see Appendix).

Views on future career

Overall, 84.0% agreed that they had had good career opportunities to date, and 82.9% were satisfied with their career prospects (men 85.3%; women 80.8%). However, only 56.0% felt that the postgraduate training they had received so far was of a high standard. Many, and, in particular, women, were concerned about securing a consultant post within six months of completing their CCST (men 38.2%; women 48.3%). A third felt that their training was too short to enable them to practise adequately when they first became consultants (men 29.3%; women 34.9%), and a third felt that making career choices had been made difficult by inadequate careers advice.

Working conditions and support

Over three-quarters of respondents agreed that they received good support from nursing staff (78.0%) and senior doctors (76.5%). Only 34.4%, however, agreed that they received a good level of support from hospital or practice management (men 31.0%; women 37.4%). Overall, 75.4% felt that their annual leave arrangements were satisfactory (72.4% of men; 78.1% of women). Working conditions (e.g. food and accommodation) were viewed as satisfactory by less than half of the respondents.

The NHS and equal opportunities

Considerably higher percentages of men than of women regarded the NHS as '...a good equal opportunities employer for...[a particular group of doctors]'. Two-thirds of all respondents thought

the NHS a good equal opportunities employer for women (men 71.1%; women 62.6%), and half thought it favourable towards ethnic minority doctors (men 52.9%; women 45.5%). Only 44.1% thought the NHS offered good equal opportunities to gay and lesbian doctors (men 49.4%; women 39.4%); only one third thought it a good equal opportunities employer for doctors working less than full time (men 30.0%; women 24.1%), only a quarter thought it favourable towards doctors with family responsibilities (30.0% of men; 24.1% of women); and only 16.1% thought the NHS favourable to doctors with disabilities (men 21.0%; women 11.9%).

On questions relating to remuneration and fair treatment by the NHS in their current job however, a smaller percentage of men than of women rated the NHS favourably. Only half of all respondents agreed that the NHS remunerated them fairly for their basic hours of work (59.5% of women; 46.3% of men), and that the NHS treated them fairly in their current job (58.3% of women; 46.7% of men). The corresponding percentages for remuneration for additional hours worked were 40.5% of women and 36.0% of men.



Figure 2. Views on future career

Men











Women





Figure 4. The NHS and equal opportunities



Good equal opps - women Good equal opps - ethnic minorities Good equal opps - gay/lesbian Treated fairly in current job Fair remuneration for basic hours Good equal opps - < full-time work Fair remuneration for ADHs Good equal opps - family resps Good equal opps - disability

Women



Appendix : Questionnaire

UK Medical Careers Research (2003/4 Survey of the Career Preferences and E	
	he box of your choice : 🔀 🔲 🗌 rint numbers : 3 9 9
Your career	choices
1. Have you made up your mind about your choic	e of long-term career? (Mark X)
Definitely Pro	bably Not really
	ase give your choice of specialty or subspecialty. Be as eference, please mark X in the boxes adjacent to those Of equal preference?
2	
2	
3	
3. How much has each of the following factors in <i>Please answer for each factor, by marking X in one c</i>	
Not at A A great	Not at A A grea
all little deal Domestic circumstances	all little deal Experience of chosen subject as a student
Hours/working conditions	A particular teacher/department
Future financial prospects	Inclinations before medical school
Career and promotion prospects	Experience of jobs so far
Self-appraisal of own skills/aptitudes	siasm/commitment: what I really want to do
Advice from others	Other reasons *
* If 'Other reasons' influenced your caree	er choice, please give details of those reasons

Your career plans	
4. Apart from temporary visits abroad, do you intend to practise n Kingdom for the foreseeable future? (<i>Mark X</i>)	nedicine in the United
Yes-definitely Yes-probably Undecided No-probabl	ly not No-definitely not
<i>If you did <u>not</u> answer 'Yes-definitely'</i> , are you considering practising medicine leaving medicine but leav abroad remaining in the UK	ving medicine and leaving the UK
If you did <u>not</u> answer 'Yes-definitely', what changes to medicin your commitment to it (or encourage you to return if you have l	
If you intend to practise medicine outside the UK, in which coun	try or continent?
5. Do you feel committed to a long-term career in the NHS? (Mark X)	Yes-definitely Yes-probably Undecided No-probably not
If you did not answer <i>Yes-definitely</i> , what changes to the NHS commitment or encourage you to return (if you have left)?	No-definitely not would increase your
6. Do you plan to work in a <i>career post</i> on a less-than-full-time bas at some point in your career? (Mark X) Yes	is No Undecided
Your current e-mail address	
7. Your e-mail address:	
(We may send you future surveys, and occasional newsletters, via email)	

Your employment history since 1 August 2001

8. Please give details of your current employment and all completed periods of employment since 1 August 2001, including any substantial period(s) of time not in paid employment, except periods of maternity leave from a post to which you returned (or plan to return).

Specialty: Enter medical specialty/ subspecialty, type of work (if non-medical), or 'Not in paid employment' Grade : Enter full details of grade, job title (if non-medical), travel/career break/domestic responsibilities/illness etc (if not employed). Location: Give the town or county if in the UK, or the country if abroad.

Date started	Date ended		Details of posts		Additional details (Mark X))
ММҮҮ	ММ ҮҮ	Specialty	Grade	Location	Full- time?	NHS?	Locum?	Retainer scheme?	HM Forces?
	(Current job)								

Your current post
9. How satisfied are you with your current post? (for each statement, please mark X in one box) Strongly Agree Neither Disagree Strongly agree agree disagree nor
I find enjoyment in my current post. $
Your personal circumstances
11. Are you ? (Mark X) single living with a spouse or a partner
12. How many children under 16 are normally resident in your household?
If there are children, what are their ages in years?
Your views
In this section, please consider each statement and mark with X the response which most accurately reflects your own opinion. For all statements SA =Strongly agree, A =Agree, N =Neither agree nor disagree, D =disagree, SD =Strongly disagree, N / O =No opinion.
14. Your future career SA A N D SD N/4 I have had good career opportunities in my career to date Image: SA A N D SD N/4 I am satisfied with my future career prospects Image: SA Image: SA<
The postgraduate training I have received so far has been of a high standard
Making career choices has been made difficult by inadequate careers advice
(Specialist registrars only) My training is too short to enable me to practise
adequately when I first become a consultant
(Specialist registrars only) I am concerned about securing a consultant post
For all statements SA=Strongly agree, A=Agree, N=Neither agree nor disagree, D=disagree, SD=Strongly disagree, N/O=No opinion.

15. Working conditions and support

1996 Cohort, 2003/4 Questionnaire, Page 4

In my current post I work longer hours than I think I should	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/O
Arrangements for my annual leave are satisfactory						
Arrangements for cover for absent doctors are satisfactory						
I receive good support from senior doctors						
I receive good support from nursing staff						
I receive good support from hospital / practice management						
The working conditions (e.g. food, accommodation) are satisfactory						
I am currently under too much pressure whilst at work I am expected to perform an excessive amount of routine work which could be						
done by staff without medical qualifications						
Lam required to perform clinical tasks for which I do not feel adaquately trained						
I am required to perform clinical tasks for which I do not feel adequately trained						
16. Equal opportunities	S A		N	П	SD	N/O
	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/O
16. Equal opportunities	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/O
16. Equal opportunities The NHS is a good equal opportunities employer for	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/O
16. Equal opportunitiesThe NHS is a good equal opportunities employer forwomen doctors	SA			D	SD	
16. Equal opportunities The NHS is a good equal opportunities employer for women doctors doctors from ethnic minorities	SA		N		SD	
16. Equal opportunities The NHS is a good equal opportunities employer for women doctors doctors from ethnic minorities doctors with disabilities						
16. Equal opportunities The NHS is a good equal opportunities employer for women doctors doctors from ethnic minorities doctors with disabilities gay and lesbian doctors				▶ □ □ □ □		
16. Equal opportunities The NHS is a good equal opportunities employer for women doctors doctors from ethnic minorities doctors with disabilities gay and lesbian doctors doctors with family responsibilities						
16. Equal opportunities The NHS is a good equal opportunities employer for women doctors doctors from ethnic minorities doctors with disabilities gay and lesbian doctors doctors with family responsibilities doctors who work less than full time						
16. Equal opportunities The NHS is a good equal opportunities employer for women doctors doctors from ethnic minorities doctors with disabilities gay and lesbian doctors doctors with family responsibilities doctors who work less than full time The NHS remunerates me fairly for my basic contracted hours of work						

17. Please list all higher professional or academic qualifications obtained since qualifying as a doctor. *Please give details below (spell out in full rather than initials) and the year passed.*

 Qualification
 Year

Additional Comments

Please give us **comments** on **any aspect** of your training, career choices or work. Use continuation sheets if you wish. We summarise the views of respondents and report on them to policy-makers and in publications, in ways intended to ensure that individuals cannot be identified. **Your individual comments will remain confidential** to researchers in the UK Medical Careers Research Group.

Thank you for your co-operation. Please return this questionnaire to: UK Medical Careers Research Group, UHCE, Old Road, Oxford OX3 7BR.