

# Near peer teachers GP Specialty Trainees (GPSTs) as Teachers and career path finders

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## Aim

To explore the impact of near peer teaching on GPSTs & their medical students.

To explore the perspective of GPSTs as UG teachers.

## Background:

- Junior doctors teach medical student in hospitals
- GP specialist trainees (GPSTs) rarely teach medical students in the UK.
- More common in Australia
- Europe?
- Reduced distance between teacher & learner “near-peer teaching” (NPT) fosters learning (Ten Cate & Durning).
- Postgraduate (PG) medical training is an “externally regulated learning” environment eg summative assessment (certification exam for UK GPs MRCGP)
- Self-regulated & externally regulated learning interact to influence students’ learning (de la Fuente).

## Background (2)

- NPT in GP
  - Australia (Anderson), Canada (Ng), US (Morhaf)
- GPST perspective
  - Want to teach (Halestrap)
  - Reduced isolation (Ahern)
  - Not taught to teach (Halestrap)
- Student perspective
  - Well received internationally (van de Mortel)
  - Appropriateness if remediation required? (Ahern)
- GP trainers
  - Workload concerns (Harding)
  - Concerns about trainees' competence (Kirby)
  - Structural support
    - Finance/ space/admin (van de Mortel)

## Setting:

- GP training schemes in North London, UK
- 6 month Innovative Training Posts (ITP) for GP specialist trainees (GPSTs)
- Combines clinical training with regular medical student teaching.
- 4<sup>th</sup> year medical students from UCL taught in general practice
- Longitudinal integrated course (LIC) 10 days over academic year



## Methods:

- An evaluation of this educational innovation
- Focus groups & semi-structured interviews with
  - GPSTs,
  - their students
  - stakeholders in GP education (education leads),
- Interviews were transcribed & data thematically analysed; deductively from Ten Cate & inductively from our novel data.

## Results - demographics



Data were obtained from 26 individual stakeholders.

- GPSTs n=8
- Students n=9
- Educational leaders n=9
  - GP trainers,
  - Training programme directors,
  - UG leads,
  - Post grad Dean (NHS)

## Results



We identified elements of role modelling and socialization into the discipline, and identified the role of external regulated learning.

All stakeholders perceived tangible benefits to students from NPTs; they adopted more student centred approaches and were more likely to take on board students' immediate goals, contrasting with senior doctors



# Students

## Valued by students

- More informal
- Addressed students perceived learning needs
- Ability to ask “silly questions”
- *‘we were able to work out what we both wanted.., what we wanted to learn and ...be taught’ (student).*

## Students & GPSTs

- Students valued GPSTs' generalist clinical expertise, who could make explicit their knowledge of medicine. (social congruence- Ten Cate).

*“we’re closer in terms of experience to the students and I think we understand to an extent what you learn in, in theory for example it’s actually difficult to put into practise and I think that’s the big challenge students get when you make that transition” (student).*

## GPSTs



GPSTs expressed benefits to their own development, forming their identity as learners & teachers.

*‘(it) really like helped me think about like how people learn potentially ... might have even changed... the way ..I learn as well’ (GPST)*

## GP career sign posting

GPSTs provided students with sign posting for GP careers.

*“I say how life is as a doctor, both in hospital and in primary care... an insight on the best of both worlds” (GPST).*

## Expertise

GPSTs & educational stakeholders explored this acquisition of 'expertise'.

*'importantly (GPSTs) develop the skills that they need to learn and work for a lifetime in GP.'*  
(Post Grad Dean)

## The broader context of learning

Near peer learning provided by GPSTs to students is accepted (and encouraged) by senior educators.

*'I think politically and also timewise it's quite hard sometimes for them to actually have the time, to be allowed the time to do the teaching.'* (UG lead)

*were very supportive and saw this as, as one of the ways to maintain our discipline really because if we don't have, especially undergraduate teaching we're going to have less people applying for GP training so that kind of long vision was there.'* (UG lead)

# Education for all?

The role of education; both teaching & learning for GPSTs was key; articulated as

*'to teach something well is to understand it well'.*

(GP trainer)

# Conclusions

- The formalised near peer teaching in GP for students is relatively novel (Rushforth).
- There are strong educational benefits to learners & teachers, while not disrupting GPSTs own training.

## Take-home Messages:

- Near peer learning provided by GPSTs to students aids their learning and role modelling and is accepted (and encouraged) by senior educators.





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# Questions?

## Further information

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