

Paediatric general surgery training posts: a trainee survey

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Background & Aims:

There remains need for surgeons able to perform paediatric general surgery (PGS) in the secondary care setting. Trainees remain interested in undertaking posts many do not know exist. This study assessed trainee knowledge about and interest in PGS training.



Methods:

Core trainee handwritten survey at deanery teaching N=20

Results:

90% of trainees had heard of PGS, with 80% having some exposure to surgical problems in children. Though a specialist OOPT post is available in the Northern deanery 70% of trainees were unaware of this, 25% of trainees would be interested in training in this field and providing a PGS service. The authors, JCST, and all trainees felt such a post should not be compulsory for general surgery trainees. The 10% that did not know PGS was part of the general surgery syllabus may be in for a nasty shock at the exit examination.

Trainees had exposure to children with abdominal pain, appendicectomy, acute scrotum, some true general and some specialist paediatric surgery

Trainees would be influenced towards this training by: knowing the opportunities available, generic skill acquisition, interaction with children, and extra employment options.

Trainees were anxious about acquiring skills for perceived complex surgery in 6 months. Being unable to consolidate these skills later, and not getting “hands-on” exposure during the post were concerns. Anxiety about treating children at all due to decreased exposure in their current rotation was also reported. Complex administration in setting up the post was seen as off-putting.

Trainees wanted more information regarding consultant job availability, competencies, objectives, curriculum, expected exposure, procedure requirements, and how specialist paediatric surgeons regard the general paediatric surgery service and these posts.

Discussion:

Trainees remain interested in paediatric general surgery but barriers to accessing training remain. More must be done to promote this to maintain future services.