Wellbeing and burnout amongst Ophthalmology Doctors in Training (DiT) in the Northern Region: our perspective and plan

Dr William Hodgkinson, Ophthalmology Registrar
Mr Rajen Gupta, Head of School
Miss Lucy Clarke, Consultant Ophthalmologist
and **the DiT of the Northern Region**

NHS North East & North Cumbria

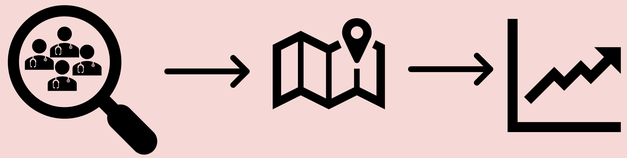
Introduction and Aims

In 2021 the GMC reported **Ophthalmology to have the largest increase in burnout** compared to other specialties.

In 2023 the GMC reported **increased workload, reduced satisfaction and heightened risk of burnou**t as key factors affecting doctors' wellbeing in the UK.

We sought to **assess mindsets** of the ophthalmologists in training and **understand root causes** of these as well as ascertaining if there was an issue with burnout in the region.

Using this information we then aimed to bring about **specific and realistic change** to improve wellbeing in the Northern region.



Methods and Results

Initial assessment using a **validated single question** regarding prevalence of burnout showed **100% of respondents to have symptoms** of burnout with **63% showing definite burnout.**

Further questioning using **Burnout Clinical Subtype Questionnaire (BCS-12)** allowed characterisation of the type of burnout being experienced.

This showed two main subtypes → **Frenetic/Overloaded**; → **Lack of development**

Qualitative questions also highlighted key themes of concern:

- **Lack of support (personal and clinical)**
- **Reduced dedicated training opportunities due to service pressures**
- **Difficulties with short rotations**

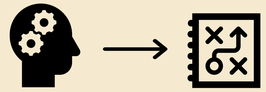
Summary

Large proportion of DiT showed symptoms of burnout.

The subtype of burnout called for opportunities to **develop but not increase workload.**

Concerns raised suggested **more cohesion was needed**. If able to address or **suggest longer rotations** as well.

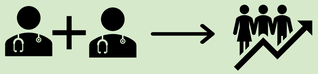
Any changes we attempt to make must remain **realistic and specific** to as to adhere to our aims.



Actions Taken

Buddy Scheme

- **Trainee-led buddy scheme** pairing senior and junior DiT.



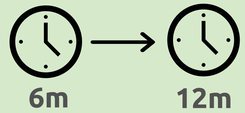
- Hopes to **improve integration** within the DiT cohort.

- Received **positive feedback** with involvement of the majority of DiT**.** Has provided **portfolio help, work-base placed assessments** and **exam practice.**

- Next year aiming to **increase social aspect of the scheme.**

Placement Length

- **Meeting with TPD** to discuss issues with current 6 month rotations.



- Awareness of desire to keep trainees in a unit for **12 months where possible** to increase opportunity within a department.

Raising Awareness

- Presented to the **Postgraduate Dean** to highlight the findings locally.



- Informed **Chair of the Training Committee at RCOphth** to ascertain if similar issues nationally.

- Presentation at **RCOphth Congress** to **encourage other regions** to complete similar projects**.**

The ROYAL COLLEGE of OPHTHALMOLOGISTS