The Impact of an Educational Fellow in Ophthalmology: A Comparative Study

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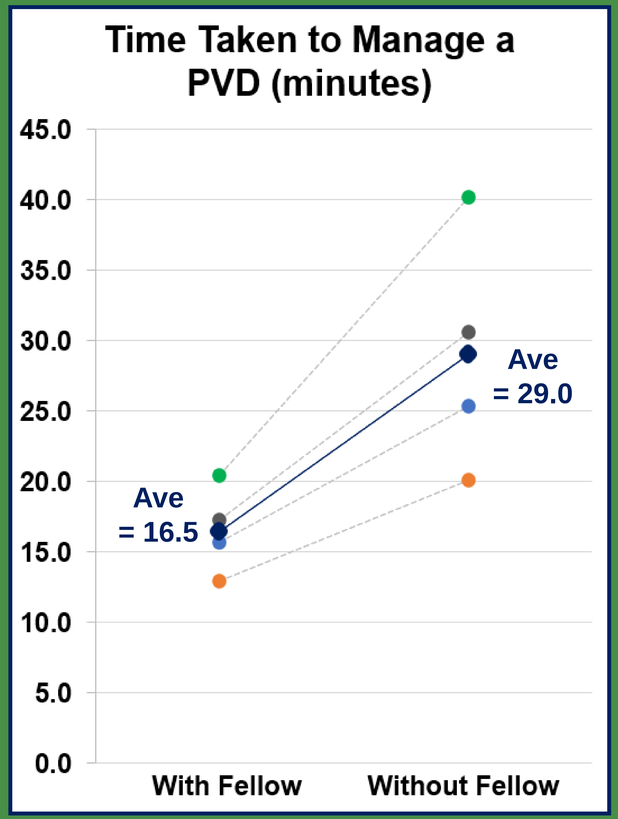
BACKGROUND

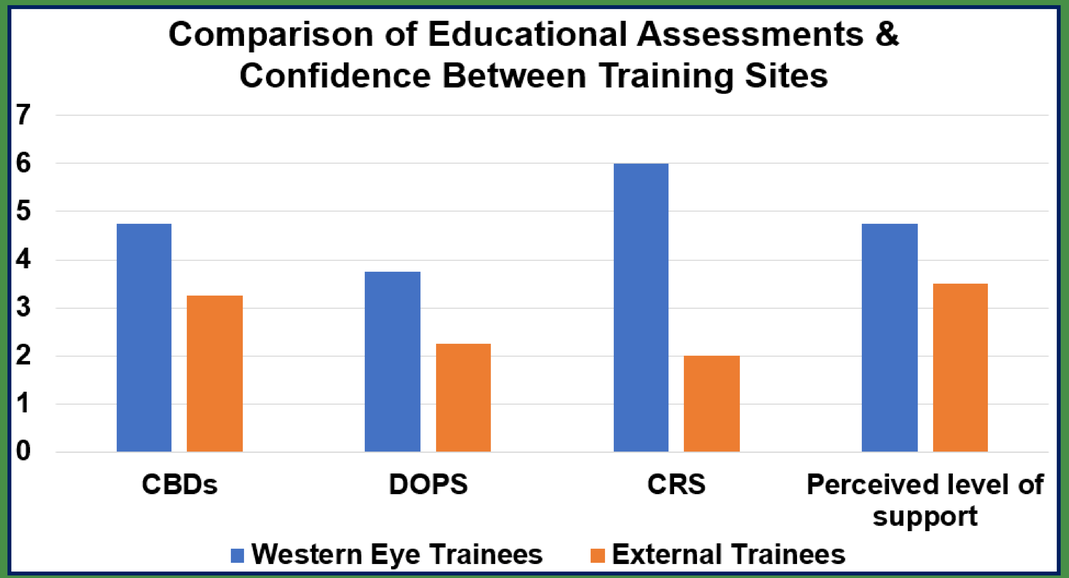
With NHS Ophthalmology waitlists at near unprecedented levels post-pandemic, balancing ophthalmic training with service provision requirements has become a significant challenge. To counter this, Health Education England has funded a 12-month Ophthalmology Educational Fellow post at Western Eye Hospital (WEH) to support training recovery for London-based trainees, including 1:1 clinical supervision in outpatients & Eye Casualty and surgical simulation courses. We aimed to quantify the impact of the Educational Fellow on trainees' teaching and on patient flow in Eye Casualty.

METHODS

We retrospectively surveyed four Year 1 Specialty Trainees (ST1s) at WEH and four ST1s at other London hospital sites to compare successfully completed e-portfolio sign-offs: case-based discussion (CBDs), direct observation of procedural skills (DOPS), clinical rating scale (CRS) during the first four months of training. For the WEH ST1s, we also compared the average time needed for a WEH ST1 to manage a posterior vitreous detachment (PVD) in Eye Casualty with the Educational Fellow present versus without.

RESULTS





CONCLUSION

Investment into an Ophthalmology Educational Fellow post has been associated with a positive impact on the training, safety, and efficiency of WEH ST1s compared to their London peers, enabling increased training opportunities and service provision. Further research should be performed on a larger trainee cohort to better understand the cost-benefit economics of this investment.