

MR 03

Ymchwiliad i recriwtio meddygol

Inquiry into medical recruitment

Ymateb gan: Dr Geraint Morris

Response from: Dr Geraint Morris

Dear Senedd Committee

Please may I draw your attention to a situation that is not helping the current recruitment of doctors into Wales and for which there is a simple solution?

I am a Consultant and Clinical Lead in the Neonatal Unit at Singleton hospital in Swansea and have been involved in both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching since my medical career began 27 years ago.

For many of those years I have been offering potential medical student (current 6th form/college/university students) workplace experience. In each case the students have shown interest and ability to be doctors in the future. As I work in Swansea, all of the work experience students will have come from around the vicinity of Swansea, and most of these have applied for Medical School places in Cardiff.

Unfortunately, all too often, students are unsuccessful in applying to Cardiff Medical School but are then successful in getting places in London/Birmingham/Bristol Medical Schools – even Edinburgh. It then strikes me that not only is a complete waste of resources sending these Welsh students to England to train, but also *as they will become doctors anyway*, why not train them in Cardiff? Many students who train in London stay in London, but likewise many students who train in Wales stay in Wales. There is no better way of retaining doctors in Wales, and of ensuring that places like Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Gwynedd are adequately able to recruit doctors than by recruiting medical students from Wales in the first place.

Our Medical Schools in Swansea and Cardiff really need to start encouraging students who are from Wales to apply for medicine, and ensure that those who are successfully recruited reflect the proportion who have applied.

I came to know yesterday (informally) that a huge proportion of current medical students in Swansea Medical School are from England. Many of them, in fact perhaps most of them, will apply outside Wales for Foundation training after qualifying and will never come back. What a shame, as it takes a huge amount of investment and effort to train them.

The medical profession has seen a huge amount of feminisation over recent years – Over 70% of paediatric trainees are female. I suspect that there is also a much higher proportion of female medical students than male. Whilst I welcome this to a certain extent, it does provide added challenges in regard to staffing, and should cause us to ask why are boys not applying or being successful at interviews?

Solutions:

1. Advertise the medical schools in Wales, targeting potential Welsh medical students
2. Target young men in Wales in particular who might choose medicine as a career
3. Ensure the school curriculum does not favour girls – this is a serious point as we know that there have been swings toward better grades among girls than boys
4. Ensure that medical schools in Wales are not favouring students from outside Wales by checking that the proportion of successful applicants from Wales matches the overall proportion of applicants from Wales, with a similar comparison for English students
5. Why not have a system that allows students who are unsuccessful in getting into medical school in Wales but who are successful in getting into a non-Welsh medical school to have a place in Wales – a number of Welsh medical school places can be reserved for such students.

Thanks for your consideration

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