

Mobility, Training and the Global Supply of Health Workers

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University of Sussex

Losing out Twice? Skill Wastage of Overseas Health Professionals in the UK

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Migrant and Refugee
Communities Forum

1. Background

1.1. UK short of Doctors: myth or reality?

- Consultants and GP principals
- Competition for training posts
- New EEA members
- Medical schools expansion in the UK
- Increased number of IMGs seeking work

1.2. Recruiting Doctors

- August 2001 campaign to recruit consultants and GPs
- February 2002 launch of NHS International Fellowships

1. Background (continued)

Table 1: Initial admissions to the GMC register for top 35 source countries

PMQ	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05
Pakistan	144	276	484	663	957	907
Poland	17	18	21	19	736	1,084
Germany	489	352	422	494	1,071	1,230
India	868	1,215	1,940	3,203	3,650	2,940
UK	4,443	4,044	4,350	4,708	4,709	5,078
Others	1,767	1,905	2,236	4,349	3,662	4,109
Total	7,728	7,810	9,553	13,436	14,785	15,348

1. Background (continued)

1.3. UK short of Dentists: myth or reality?

Reality:

- A shortage of 4,000 Dentists in 2003
- A predicted shortage of 8,000 in 2011

1.4. Recruiting Dentists

- July 2004 campaign to recruit 1,000 dentists
- Targeted countries: India, Poland and Spain

1. Background (continued)

Table 2: Initial admissions to the GDC register for top 25 source countries

PDQ	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005
Greece	54	79	114
Germany	56	73	125
Poland	0	157	408
UK	757	772	777
Others	468	645	826
Total	1,335	1,726	2,250

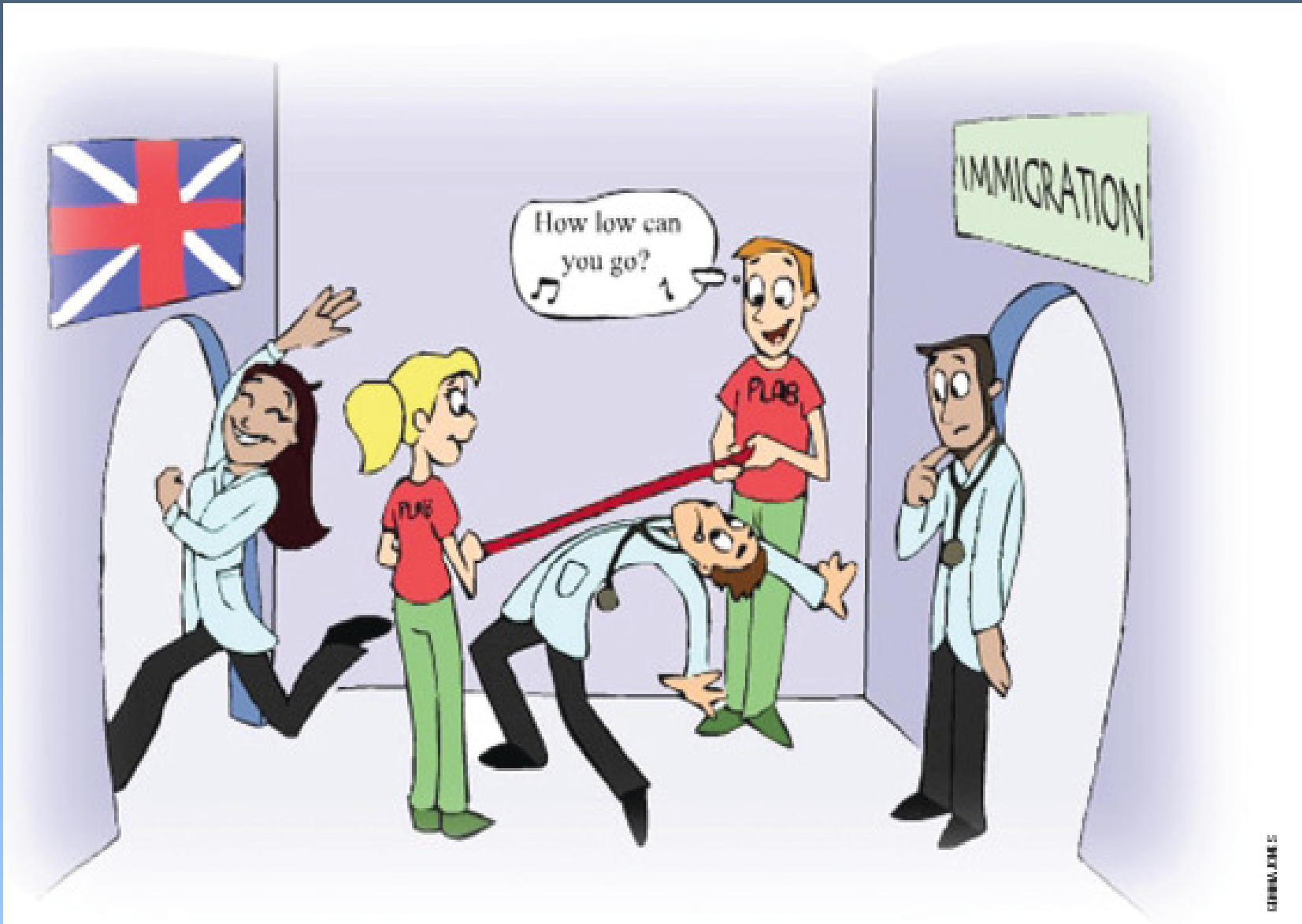
2. Methodology

Questionnaires mailed to 1,600 Doctors/Dentists

- 339 Doctors (166 refugees)
- 1,261 Dentists (98 refugees)

Response rate:

- 39 Doctors (11.5%) 26 refugees questionnaires returned (15.6%)
- 104 Dentists (8%) 26 refugees questionnaires returned (26.5%)



3. Research findings

Table 3: Comparative table of Doctors' exam preparation period

Exam	Average time in months to prepare		Average number of sittings to pass exam	
	<i>F.M</i>	<i>V.M</i>	<i>F.M</i>	<i>V.M</i>
<i>M. Category</i>				
IELTS	26	12	3	2
PLAB 1	10	5	2	1
PLAB 2	8	4	1	1

3. Research findings (continued)

Table 4: Doctors (forced and voluntary migrants) employment whilst preparing for exams

Employment status whilst preparing for exams	% of total
Unemployed	69
Phlebotomist	7
Health care assistant	5
Interpreter	5
Chef	2
Cleaner	2
Lecturer	2
Sales assistant	2
Support worker	2
Waiter	2

3. Research findings (continued)

Table 5: Comparative table of Doctors employment status whilst preparing for exams

Employment status whilst preparing for exams	% of total	
	<i>F.M</i>	<i>V.M</i>
<i>Migrant category</i>		
Unemployed	72	60
Medical related jobs	14	20
Non-medical related jobs	14	20

3. Research findings (continued)

Table 6: Comparative table for forced and voluntary migrants who have passed PLAB 2

Current employment status	% of total	
<i>Migrant category</i>	<i>F.M</i>	<i>V.M</i>
Unemployed	68	76
Medical related jobs	24	8
Non-medical related jobs	04	8
Phlebotomist	04	8

3. Research findings (continued)

Table 7: Comparative table of Dentist's exam preparation period

Exam	Average time in months to prepare		Average number of sittings to pass exam	
	<i>F.M</i>	<i>V.M</i>	<i>F.M</i>	<i>V.M</i>
IELTS	22	10	3	2
IQE A	10	7	2	1
IQE B	8	6	1	1
IQE C	2	4	1	1

3. Research findings (continued)

Table 8: Dentists (forced and voluntary migrants) employment whilst preparing for exams

Employment whilst preparing for exams	% of total
Unemployed	60
Dental nurse	17
Other non dentistry related jobs	11
Dental assistant	4
Dentist (in own country)	4
Clinical teacher	2
Senior House Officer	2

3. Research findings (continued)

Table 9: Comparative table of dentists' employment status whilst preparing for exams

Employment status whilst preparing for exams	% of total	
	<i>F.M</i>	<i>V.M</i>
<i>Migrant category</i>		
Unemployed	69	42
Medical related jobs	26	43
Non-medical related jobs	5	15

3. Research findings (continued)

Table 10 : Employment in the UK for dentists who have passed IQE C

Current employment status	% of total	
	<i>F.M</i>	<i>V.M</i>
<i>Migrant category</i>		
Unemployed	74	66
Dentists	13	17
Dental nurse	9	12
Non-dentistry related jobs	4	5

3. Research findings (continued)

“I left the security of a permanent, full time, fairly well paid job in my country of origin, just for the sake of obtaining a postgraduate degree abroad so that I could go back and be better paid. However, the thing that I regret the most is having left my family behind. In these four years abroad, I have lost my father and my closest aunt. I tried really hard to become a better person, someone my family were proud of and they didn’t live to see it. I wished I had spent that time there, with them” (Female Colombian Migrant Doctor).

“I came here because I didn’t have the choice, I flee from my country because of my political opinion, but I see now apart from all I lost, here I lost my personality, my dignity, my degree, my qualifications etc. I regret that because of my political opinions I lost my life...” (Male Iranian Refugee Dentist).

4. Some policy implications

1- Support for refugees

- Government needs to instigate a strategic programme to support refugee health care professionals
- Regulators needs to provide concessions for refugee health care professionals
- Welfare benefit policies need to be reassessed

2- Immigration

- Time-bound postgraduate training available for overseas qualified health care professionals
- International recruitment should be focused and limited
- Cross-Whitehall approach to issues of migration, poverty reduction and development outcomes

3- Registration exams

- Regulators need to review and standardise the re-qualification exams
- Regulators need to limit exam places if no jobs are available