

GEMs offer brief updates from general practice research tackling the challenges of front-line practice.

## Revealing the reality of undergraduate GP teaching in UK medical curricula: a cross-sectional questionnaire study

**Dr Emily Cottrell**

### The clinical problem tackled by this research

Undergraduate exposure to General Practice is important for GP recruitment and offers all medical students the opportunity to learn clinical and communication skills in the context of holistic patient-centred care, as well as valuable lessons in expert medical generalism including managing uncertainty, health promotion, disease prevention and multimorbidity.

Despite a general trend in undergraduate medical education towards a community focus and recommendations that 25% of undergraduate medical curricula should be GP based, previous work in 2011-2013 demonstrated undergraduate GP teaching had plateaued or reduced. This cross-sectional questionnaire study described the current picture of UK undergraduate GP teaching, including the amount of time and resources allocated to GP teaching.

### What this research tells us about the problem

- GP teaching forms 9.2% of UK medical curricula which is well below recommended levels and suggests a trend which is static or falling.
- There is significant variation in funding with the average payment of £55.60/student/session, falling significantly below the actual cost, in addition to the funding provided for equivalent secondary care teaching.
- A minimum payment tariff for GP teaching has been introduced in England since this study was performed; an improvement, but this still does not provide fair or sufficient financial reimbursement, which is essential for the sustainability and expansion of undergraduate GP teaching.

### The research team (\*GPs)

Emily Cottrell\* (GP Registrar), Hugh Alberti\*, Joe Rosenthal\*, Lindsey Pope\* and Trevor Thompson\*

### Suggested WISE Action

- Consider highlighting to local medical schools and primary care leaders the need for increased general practice experience for medical students, to ensure good quality training in expert generalism and to improve recruitment and help with the workforce crisis, whilst highlighting the need for this to be supported by appropriate funding.
- Review the feedback from medical students taught at your practice, identify areas for improvement and consider if they are getting enough patient contact.
- Consider involving GP trainees, early career GPs and locums to support medical student teaching at your practice.

### Where you can read more about this work

Published article: <https://bjgp.org/content/70/698/e644>

### Who funded this work

This work was unfunded.