The perceived global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on doctors’ medical and surgical training: an international survey

1The Master Surgeon Trust
2Leeds General Infirmary
3Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust
4University of Birmingham College of Medical and Dental Sciences
5University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust
6Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust
7North East Deanery, United Kingdom
8University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust
9Baroda Medical College
10Moti Lal Nehru Medical College
11The University of Jordan Faculty of Medicine
12HCG-MSR Cancer Centre
13Menoufia University Faculty of Medicine
14Indira Gandhi Medical College and Research Institute
15Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
16Lokmanya Tilak Municipal Medical College and General Hospital
17Faculty of Medicine Tobruk University
18King George’s Medical University
19Vardhman Mahavir Medical College and Safdarjung Hospital
20University of Tripoli Faculty of Medicine
21Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University Medical College
22Queen’s University Belfast Faculty of Medicine Health and Life Sciences
23Combined Military Hospital Lahore Medical College
24University of Central Lancashire School of Medicine and Dentistry

March 31, 2021

Abstract

Introduction The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant burden on healthcare systems causing disruption to medical and surgical training of doctors globally. Aims and objectives This is the first international survey assessing the
perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on training of doctors of all grades and specialties. Methods An online global survey was disseminated using Survey Monkey® between 4th August 2020 and 17th November 2020. A global network of collaborators facilitated participant recruitment. Data was collated anonymously with informed consent and analysed using univariate and adjusted multivariable analysis. Results 743 doctors of median age 27 (IQR: 25-30) were included with the majority (56.8%, n=422) being male. Two-thirds of doctors were in a training post (66.5%, n=494), 52.9% (n=393) in a surgical specialty and 53.0% (n=394) in low- and middle-income countries. 69.2% (n=514) reported an overall perceived negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their training. A significant decline was noted among non-virtual teaching methods such as face-to-face lectures, tutorials, ward-based teaching, theatre sessions, conferences, simulation sessions and morbidity and mortality meetings (p<0.05). Doctors from low or middle-income countries were associated with perceived inadequate supervision while performing invasive procedures under general, local or regional anaesthetic. (p<0.05) Conclusion In addition to the detrimental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on healthcare infrastructure, there has been an indirect consequence of disrupted training within medical and surgical subspecialties. A focus on reconfiguration of training programs through a variety of additional resources will become imperative to reduce the long-term sequelae of COVID-19 on doctors’ training.

Hosted file