

Investigating the redeployment of Dental Foundation Trainees during the COVID-19 Pandemic

S.Fernando, V.Raniga, M.Cairns

Northwick Park Hospital, London

March 2020 marked the transition of hospital services to cope with the COVID-19 threat. Dental Foundation Trainees (DFTs) were called upon as part of the workforce within the hospital. A voluntary survey amongst DFTs was conducted to discover factors that influenced their transition, perceived needs, and their current skillset into redeployment. 72 responses from various regions across the UK were received: 41.7% had already been redeployed into secondary care, with the remainder either waiting to hear about their new placement or had not redeployed. By rating individual factors on a 5-point Likert scale, we determined what influenced their willingness to be redeployed as their decision is a voluntary one. Perceived lack of provision of adequate PPE, risk of exposure and transmission of COVID-19 to family and friends, and provision of adequate training prior to taking on new roles were ranked highly as deterrents to redeployment. Gaining new skills during redeployment and wanting to work in a larger team ranked highly as positive factors. Interestingly, factors such as working extra or unsociable hours, working in a new location or in a hospital were not ranked as major preventative factors. In terms of assessing skillsets that DFTs held at the time of redeployment in relation to working in ICU, on average responders had low confidence levels regarding familiarity with ICU lines, phlebotomy, and cannulation. These factors provide insight into the driving forces to recruit young clinicians into an unfamiliar role. They may be useful for key decision makers if we were to have a second peak or another pandemic.

sancia.fernando@nhs.net