

Conference Proceedings: BAPIO Annual Conference 2019

22-24 November 2019, Radisson Blu Edwardian, London Heathrow

Friday 22 November 2019

The first day of the conference was inaugurated by Satheesh Mathew, Chair of the Organising committee, focussing on global healthcare workforce and seeking a multiprofessional solutions from across the globe. The morning session explored the global interdependency of healthcare workforce.

- **GLOBAL LEARNERS PROGRAMME (HEE)**

Professor Ged Byrne, Executive Director, Global Engagement Health Education England (HEE) described how the global fellows programme was finding solutions for the UK wide workforce crisis by inviting healthcare professionals (Doctors and Nurses) from the Indian sub-continent Global Learners Programme, an initiative developed jointly with BAPIO. HEE is facilitating a number of short and longer-term quality placement programmes for professionals to work and learn in the NHS. As part of its government mandate, HEE is working to address identified shortages in the NHS by increasing the number of staff trained in the UK and through development ethical earn, learn, return programmes in the NHS across a number of key professions, specialties and geographies.

Professor Byrne explained the HEE's ambition to create a circular programme with a sustainable pipeline of cohorts arriving and returning each year. HEE is creating longer-term relationships with 'in-country' partners to identify high-quality experienced candidates and support their journey into the programme

HEE supports professionals through their preparation for language and competency tests; entry onto the UK professional register; visa application', and through a comprehensive programme of pastoral care, including cultural sensitivities, prior to and on arrival.

HEE is working with a number of NHS Trusts to offer placement opportunities, and we are eager to hear from registered healthcare professionals who would like to work in the NHS. The conference also heard from an Indian Radiologist who has been inducted into a UK NHS Trust under the Global Radiology Fellows scheme. Although the induction and support from the programme was good the conference heard of the challenges of the weather, schools and accommodation which can make life pretty stressful. Widespread information and recognition of such initiatives is also key to the success of this programme as some colleagues in the department may not be aware or be equally welcoming of new colleagues if taken by surprise.

- **Differential Attainment amongst Pharmacy registrants**

Duncan Rudkin, CEO, General Pharmaceutical Council, presented the data from research undertaken by the GPhC showed that the pass rate amongst candidates in the Pharmacy Licensing examination was 91% for white British, 71% for Indian origin and 61% for black British. As a vast majority of the candidates were born and educated in the UK, it was unclear why such a disparity would exist. Mr Rudkin confirmed the GPhC's commitment to work closely with BAPIO to understand the causes and make meaningful interventions.

- **Global Healthcare Workforce Crisis**

Aman Puri, Consul General, High Commission of India HCl Birmingham highlighted the challenges of training, recruiting and retaining the healthcare workforce in UK and India. He recognised the important role that UK NHS and HEE can play in helping to train a larger workforce in India which would benefit Indian healthcare system as well as provide an opportunity for a proportion to learn and earn in UK NHS as part of the scheme. He invited interest from UK NHS organisations and BAPIO, offering his consular services to smooth the legal challenges.

- **Global Interdependency in Undergraduate Medical Training**

Peter Bell, American University of Antigua, Vice Chair (CAAM-HP) described the growth of the AUA and how it flourished under the management of Manipal providing high quality undergraduate medical training to a cohort of Caribbean and Indian students. He warned against the prolific rise in privately funded medical schools and the potential risk to future candidates as well as patients. He described the function of the CAAM-HP accreditation body and the role it played in upholding the standards of medical training. He described the functions of the World Medical Association and of a world register of medical schools.

- **Training in Bioethics**

Russell Franco D'Souza, UNESCO Chair in Bioethics described the introduction of training in Bioethics in many Indian medical colleges and the benefit this brought to the professionalism and practice standards in many parts of India. He implored the help of BAPIO and organisations to champion the cause for including Bioethics as an integral part of all curricula as proposed by the Medical Council of India.

- **Workforce Transformation Through Teams**

The panel discussion on the benefits of team working, a supportive environment Hussain Bashir (Trainee, Physician), Mahendra Patel (Pharmacy), Pauline Weir (Physician Associate Primary care) and Alice Sangani (Physician Associate, Secondary care) described their own roles within multi-professional healthcare teams. The panel discussed the benefits of a multi-skilled workforce but reiterated the importance of having clear role descriptors, ensuring that the other members of the team understand the strengths and limitations and of working as an independent practitioner but within the limits of training and capability.

- **Tragic Story of an Indian Anaesthetist**

The conference heard a harrowing first-hand account of an Anaesthetist who tragically took his own life while being investigated by the GMC. The panellists Jo Revill, CEO, RCPCH, Narinder Kapur, Imperial College, Jenny Vaughan, RCP Council, Law & policy lead DAUK and Tista Chakravarty-Gannon, Principal Regional Liaison, GMC discussed the importance of sensitivity in all communication being sent to professionals under investigation. How the GMC and NHS Employers have a duty of care to avoid exclusion and offer colleague support during this tough phase for anyone. The panel members apologised on behalf of the profession and pledged to do more to improve the timeliness, content of communication and support. BAPIO offered to publicise the fund-raising attempt to provide support and offer contributions.

- **Innovative / Portfolio careers**

The panel discussion in the afternoon mapped the journey of allied healthcare professionals from their traditional roles to innovative or portfolio careers. Mr M Coumarassamy talked about pathways of progression for nurses in advanced practitioner, researcher, nurse specialist, nurse consultant to his own journey into senior management. Mahendra Patel talked about his own journey from a community pharmacist to research and academic careers. Aine Hackett described her role from a secondary care pharmacist to Lead Pharmacist for Primary Care Networks and supporting the integrated care approach in the NHS Long term plan.

- **The Global Associations of Physicians of Indian Origin (GAPIO)**

The final session focussed on an innovative approach in India of growing healthcare professionals by providing access and opportunities at early schooling level. Shubnum Singh from Healthcare Skills Council of India spoke very passionately about the initiative to grow a multi-skilled workforce beyond clinical roles by early exposure to the healthcare sector. The conference heard from Neal Simon, President of American University of Antigua and Professor Karol Sikora (Founding Dean of University of Buckingham Medical School) spoke of the role that private sector can play in producing a quality healthcare workforce without depending on the public purse and yet maintain high standards or academic excellence.

The conference then heard of the ancient teachings of Ayurveda and how the holistic care philosophy provides an alternative to 'western style' of medicine for a large proportion of the populations in India and China. There was a lively debate on the benefits of ancient treatises of medicine versus evidence based medicine. Ashok Kumar, VP, Ayurveda Practitioners Association, UK welcomed opportunities to set up and run randomised trials.