

## Introduction

The Medical Schools Council's Selecting for Excellence project looks at the selection of students into medical school with a particular focus on widening participation. The project was launched in June 2013 and will conclude with a final report and recommendations in December 2014.

This report provides a short update on the work undertaken by the project team in 2014. For more information on the Selecting for Excellence project please visit the Medical Schools Council (MSC) website.

## Widening participation

### Work experience

Feedback from those involved in widening participation work has shown that the requirements around work experience are an issue that applicants to medicine struggle to understand. To address this, MSC has produced a set of guidelines for applicants to medicine on what medical schools expect in terms of work experience and how it might be assessed during selection processes. The guidelines are currently being tested with potential applicants to ensure that they are easily understood and they will be published and promoted in autumn 2014. All medical schools have agreed to apply the principles set out in the guidelines to their own selection processes.

MSC is also working with Health Education England (HEE) to ensure that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds have access to work experience opportunities in the NHS.

### Transparency

MSC is working with NHS Medical Careers to improve the information provided to potential applicants to medicine. In particular a new online resource will be created which will set out the entry requirements and selection processes for each medical course in the UK. This will allow students to find the information they need in a single location.

### Supporting medical students from a widening participation background

MSC will be producing guidelines for medical schools as to how they can support WP students once they enter medical school to ensure that they are able to excel on the course.

## Outreach

MSC has produced guidance for medical schools on outreach. The guidance is designed to be applied flexibly, allowing medical schools to analyse how the outreach they already provide to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds can be strengthened.

MSC has also worked with HEE to commission two pilot outreach schemes from the Sutton Trust and the Social Mobility Foundation.

## Selection methods

Work is ongoing to look at the issue of consistency between medical schools on selection methods. Research has been commissioned from leading experts in the field and the results will be available in October 2014.

Contextualised admissions are also being discussed and work is taking place to identify data sources that can be used by medical schools to identify candidates from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

## Role of the doctor

MSC is in the process of developing a statement on the core values needed to study medicine which medical schools will be able to use in their selection processes. The contents will be drawn from the GMC's guidance Good Medical Practice and the work being done by HEE on values-based recruitment.

In July, MSC will undertake a number of focus groups with patients to inform this work.

## Evidence base

MSC is continuing to develop the evidence base on the social demographics of the medical profession. Work is also underway to ensure that medical students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are tracked by national data sets. This will allow MSC to monitor the impact of work being done to improve access to medicine.

## Further information

For more information on the Selecting for Excellence project please visit the MSC website or email.

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