

Peer Support Groups as a Tool to Increase Chances of Passing General Practice UK Qualification Exams

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Abstract : Introduction: The purpose of this paper is to discuss the effectiveness of a peer support network created to provide medical education, pastoral support, and reliable resources to registrars to help them pass the MRCGP exams. This paper will include a description of the network and its purpose, discuss how it has been used by trainees since its creation, and explain how this methodology can be applied to other areas of medical education and primary care. Background: The peer support network was created in February 2021, using Facebook, Telegram, and WhatsApp platforms to facilitate discussion of cases and answer queries about the exams, share resources, and offer peer support from qualified GPs and specialists. The network was created and is maintained by the authors of this paper and is open to anyone who is registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) and is studying for the MRCGP exams. Purpose: The purpose of the network is to provide medical education, pastoral support, and reliable resources to registrars to help them pass the exams. The network is free to use and is designed to take the onus away from a single medical educator and collate a vast amount of information from multiple medical educators/trainers; thereby creating a digital library of information for all trainees - exam related or otherwise. Methodology The network is managed by a team of moderators who respond to queries and facilitate discussion. Smaller study groups are created from the main group and provide a platform for trainees to work together, share resources, and provide peer support. The network has had thousands of trainees using it since February 2021, with positive feedback from all trainees. Results: The feedback from trainees has been overwhelmingly positive. Word of mouth has spread rapidly, growing the groups exponentially. Trainees add colleagues to the groups and often stay after they pass their exams to 'give back' to their fellow trainees. To date, thousands of trainees have passed the MRCGP exams using the resources and support provided by the network. Conclusion The success of this peer support network demonstrates the effectiveness of creating a network of thousands of doctors to provide medical education and support.

Keywords : peer support, medical education, pastoral support, MRCGP exams

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