

**Changing Culture for Cultural Change:
a conference organized by the Learning for Partnership group of CAIPE.**

Feedback report for the Education and Training Committee of the HPC.

This was a really useful conference. It focussed on issues of regulation, employment and education for international health care workers.

The first session included a discussion of the experiences of recent overseas registrants. Their countries of origin were: Germany, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Egypt. Their professions were, doctor, social worker, nurse and an occupational therapist. All of them had qualified in their home countries. Fortunately, the HPC registrant had experienced no problems with registration or employment. It was left to the other members of the group to identify the range of problems experienced.

This session was extremely useful in identifying the kinds of difficulties registrants from abroad have, when they plan to work in the UK. The greatest difficulties lay in:

- understanding the nuances of the British professional and clinical cultures;
- finding the correct information and contacts for registration, employment, induction and training;
- the lack of knowledge of official agencies/administrators about their own procedures;
- the failure of professional and regulatory web sites to provide the kind of information needed by international applicants.

Subsequent sessions included examples of good practice in training and employment for overseas workers. By the end of the conference, some important messages had emerged.

- In terms of the experience of international registrants coming to work in the NHS (or other agencies), the path involves regulatory bodies, employers and trainers. Whilst the HPC is responsible only for the first stage of this journey, the connections between these bodies are seen as part of the same process by applicants.
- Throughout the process, some people meet with quite serious barriers including long waits, wrong information and wrong assessments.
- These difficulties can be compounded by a lack of cultural understanding about our healthcare systems and practices.

Can the Education & Training Committee of the HPC do anything to help improve the experiences of international applicants?

- The usefulness of hearing, at first hand, from people with recent experience of applying for registration, is enlightening. The group mentioned above was very positive and the session was far from a moaning and groaning event. It may be helpful to bring a group of HPC registrants together, with registration assessors, to exchange experiences and identify patterns of difficulties. Of course, the Registration Committee has responsibility for this group of applicants and it may be that this has already been tried. It's just a suggestion!
- Such an event could also be used to identify the kinds of information needed by overseas applicants and, if it isn't there already, could be provided on our web site.

- Could the Investigating Committee consider what, if anything, it might do about employers who refer allegations of incompetence about new overseas employees when they have recruited by telephone and provided no proper induction or period of adaptation?
- Although the Education and Training Committee has no remit for standards of education and training outside undergraduate programmes, is there anything we could do to encourage professional bodies and/or employers to provide effective induction courses?

Christine Farrell

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