

Learning from 4 years of feedback: INGEM- A National Conference for Graduate Medical Students by INSPIRE

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Background: The national decline in the academic medicine workforce is likely to adversely impact future medical research and teaching in the UK. Graduate-entry medical (GEM) students are more likely to have previous research experience, and this has shown to be a good predictor for entry into an academic medicine career. The INSPIRE Conference is a national conference for GEM students, including workshops around navigating the application process for the Specialised Foundation Programme (SFP) with the aim of the improving students' confidence and understanding of the recruitment and selection process (though this is due to change for 2025). Alongside this, providing opportunities for students, particularly those from Widening Participation (WP) backgrounds, to present their research formally either through poster or oral presentations is a key aim of the conference, as well as increase opportunities to network and improve the social capital of those for whom access may be limited.

Feedback was sought via an anonymous survey from 146 students who attended the INGEM conference between the years 2020-2023 to explore the helpfulness of the conference in improving confidence and knowledge of research options and opportunities.

The conference has shown to significantly increase students' confidence and knowledge in research activities such as presenting and publishing, following attendance. Further, there was a significant increase in interest in pursuing academic medicine. Similar patterns were also observed in students from WP backgrounds. The conference has had a positive impact on attendees and is likely to contribute to the growth of the academic medicine workforce.

