

Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School 2015 – Report

Dr Victoria Thom, Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School 2015 lead
Advanced trainee recruitment lead for South West

Background

The Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School is an annual event for foundation doctors who are considering a career in psychiatry. The Autumn School was started in 2013 as part of the local response to the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Recruitment Strategy 2011-2016¹. The aim of this strategy is to increase recruitment into core training and this is closely reflected by the aims of Autumn School.

The Autumn School has been held for two years with 28 places offered in 2013 and 30 in 2014. Each year the event has been oversubscribed with applications received from foundation doctors across the country. The Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School was the second event of its kind in the UK and the first to offer a clinical placement as part of the programme. Previous feedback has been excellent with 100% of attendees saying they would recommend the event to a friend. Feedback has also demonstrated that all attendees found the event useful and in 2014 67% reported it has increased the likelihood of them applying for core training in psychiatry. . Since the Autumn School started the recruitment fill rate for CT1 posts within the Severn Deanery has increased from 75 to 100%². Data collected by Dr Helen Sharrard, recruitment lead for South West Division, showed that 7 out of 15 new CT1 trainees in Severn had attended an Autumn School and 6 of these had attended the Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School³.

Aims

- Create a two day event for foundation doctors which would allow them to explore the clinical diversity of the specialty, gain an understanding of the training structure and to develop their skills in psychiatry
- To encourage a positive view of psychiatry and challenge stigma
- To promote psychiatry as a career and encourage recruitment into core training
- To provide trainees with an opportunity to develop leadership and teaching skills

¹Brown, T (2013) Royal College of Psychiatry Recruitment Strategy.
<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/workinpsychiatry/recruitmentstrategy.aspx>

² Core psychiatry training competition and fill rates from
http://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/national_Psychiatry_Recruitment_Comp_Ratios_Fill_Rates

³ Personal communication from Dr Helen Sharrard 20.10.2015

Methods

Organisation

The Autumn School was organised by a small committee of core and advanced psychiatry trainees from the Severn Deanery. The committee were supported by Abigail Watts, South West Division Manager.

Funding was received from the RCPsych South West Division and Severn Deanery School of Psychiatry with venues provided by Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP). The budget is included as Appendix One. The total budget for the Autumn School was £1000.

Applications

Funding was secured for 30 places on the Autumn School and these were available for foundation programme doctors in either their first or second year (FY1 or FY2). The Autumn School was advertised nationally by email via the Foundation Programme's newsletter and individual foundation schools. It was also advertised via the RCPsych Student Associate webpages and College Twitter account.

Applications were open from 21st August – 21st September 2015. Places were first allocated to foundation doctors working within the South West Division (Severn and Penninsula Deaneries) and additional places were then allocated in the order they were received. Unsuccessful applicants were provided with advice on alternative sources of information about a career in psychiatry including other Autumn/Summer Schools and Student Associate membership of RCPsych. Where applicants withdrew after selection their places were offered to those on a waiting list.

A total of 59 applications were received within the application windows. 16 applications were from F1 doctors and 43 were from F2 doctors. A total of 13 applicants were working within the South West Division (10 from Severn and 3 from Penninsula). The remaining applicants came from more than 10 other deaneries including Scotland, North West Thames, West Midlands, Wales and Yorkshire & Humber.

Programme

A two day programme was organised to reflect the diverse opportunities available within a career in psychiatry and included a range of teaching methods. The programme was largely based on that used in previous successful Autumn Schools with some adjustments made to take into account feedback.

Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School

5th -6th October 2015

Avon and Wiltshire
Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust



On day one delegates were given presentations on the history of psychiatry, life as a junior and senior psychiatrist and the application process. They participated in three small group masterclasses including an eating disorders workshop during which they had the opportunity to hear from a patient, a history taking session with a professional actor and a case-based discussion of the Mental Health Act. This was followed by a networking session which enabled the delegates to meet consultants and trainees from each of the sub-specialties of psychiatry. Delegates were then invited to visit the Glenside Psychiatry Museum and to attend a social event at a restaurant in Bristol giving them the opportunity to mix with trainees in a more informal environment.

On day two delegates spent the morning with a clinical team of their choice giving them exposure to the clinical environment, multi-disciplinary teams, patients and their carers. They were able to choose between sessions with the forensic, learning disability, CAMHS, addictions and general/older adult teams. Each of these teams put on an interactive morning including talks from peer mentors, a visit to a local farm staffed by patients, observation of family therapy and a talk by a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. In the afternoon there were sessions on research into personality disorders and the portrayal of mental illness on television.

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Welcome to Bristol's Psychiatry Autumn School

- We hope by the end of these 2 days you will:
- have increased your knowledge of psychiatry
 - be aware of the different sub-specialties
 - have increased your clinical skills through masterclasses and direct clinical experience
 - feel well equipped to apply for core training



Programme: Day 1 – Monday 5th October

Whole day at Fromeside Medium Secure Unit, Blackberry Hill Hospital

Morning chaired by Dr Kirsty Alderton, afternoon chaired by Dr Vicky Thom

9.00	Registration	
9.30	Welcome	Dr Rob Macpherson, Head Of The Postgraduate School Of Psychiatry, Severn Deanery
10.00	A History Of Psychiatry	Dr Clare Trevelyan, ST5
10.30	Life as a Consultant Psychiatrist	Dr Leanne Hayward, consultant liaison psychiatrist
11.00	<i>Coffee</i>	
11.15	Psychiatric Training	Dr Andy Todd, CT3 Dr Vicky Thom, ST4
11.55	Q&A – training and application process	Dr Linda Heaney, Training Programme Director for core training, Severn Deanery Trainees of all levels
12.30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13.15	Networking	Consultants and trainees from across sub-specialties
14.45	<i>Coffee</i>	
15.00	Clinical Masterclasses	Eating disorders – Dr Hugh Herzig, consultant Common clinical scenarios illustrated by both actors and patients. Mental Health Act – Dr Chris Lucchese, ST5 History taking – Dr Annika Rose, CT3
16.30	Visit To Glenside Psychiatric Museum	
19.30	<i>Social Event</i>	

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Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School

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Programme: Day 2 – Tuesday 6th October

Morning Session – Various clinical sites

- 9.00– 12.45 **Clinical Sessions**
Visit to one of:
- Forensic Psychiatry – Dr Kirsty Alderton
Fromeside Medium Secure Unit, Blackberry Hill Hospital
 - General Adult & Older Adult Psychiatry – Dr Vivaine Ngwompo
Callington Road Hospital, Bristol
 - Child and Adolescent Psychiatry – Dr Melanie Merricks
Community Children's Health Partnership, Barton Hill
 - Learning Disabilities Psychiatry – Dr Owen Roberts
South Bristol Community Learning Disability Team, Withywood
 - Addictions Psychiatry – Dr Ruta Kuzminskyte
Bristol Specialist Drug & Alcohol Service, Colston Fort

Afternoon session – Callington Road Hospital

Chaired by Dr Clare Trevelyan

12.45	<i>Lunch</i>	
13.30	Research in psychiatry – epidemiology & treatment of personality disorders	Dr Paul Moran, Reader & Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist, University of Bristol
14.15	<i>Coffee</i>	
14.30	Psychiatry in the media	Dr Sherryl Wilson, Senior Lecturer in media & cultural studies, University of West England
16.00	<i>Coffee</i>	
16.15	Q&A	Trainees of all levels
16.45	Certificates, feedback and close	

This event has been made possible by the kind support and sponsorship of the Royal College of Psychiatrists South West Division Executive Committee and the Severn Deanery, and with the provision of venues by AWP.

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Evaluation

30 foundation doctors attended the Autumn School. Delegates were asked to complete pre- and post-course questionnaires covering basic demographic information, their expectations of the Autumn School and their feedback on the event. They were also asked about their career intentions and perceptions of psychiatry.

All 30 delegates completed the pre-course questionnaire and 29 completed the post-course questionnaire. All delegates gave written consent for their feedback to be used anonymously in presentations and publications.

Demographic Information

		Number of delegates (%)
Current grade	F1	5
	F2	25
Foundation school	Severn	9
	Penninsula	2
	Other	19
Psychiatry post during foundation programme		25

Expectation of Autumn School

Delegates were asked what they hoped to get out of the Autumn School.

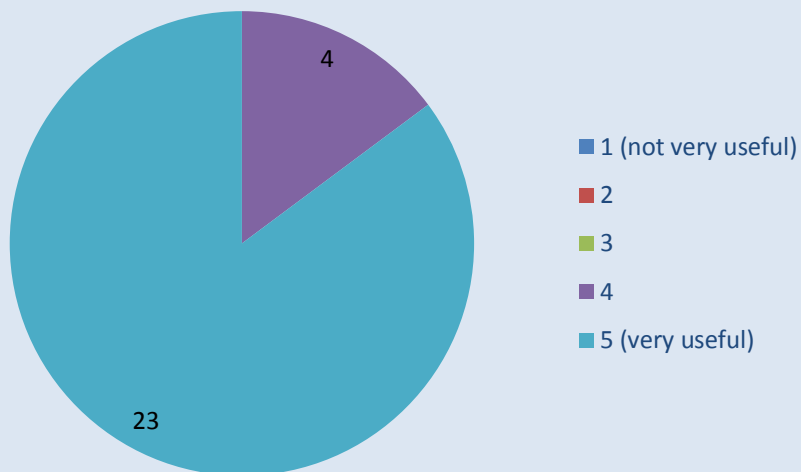
22 delegates stated that they hoped to learn more about the application process for core training, 17 stated that they wanted to know more about psychiatric training and careers. Other themes were that foundation doctors hoped to learn about the different sub-specialties, to meet trainees and to gain some clinical experience. Several delegates also hoped that attending the Autumn School would help them decide whether or not they wanted to apply for psychiatry.

“As my psychiatry post is going to be my last rotation of FY2, I am hoping to find out more about a career in psychiatry and advice on applications before the application process opens in November”

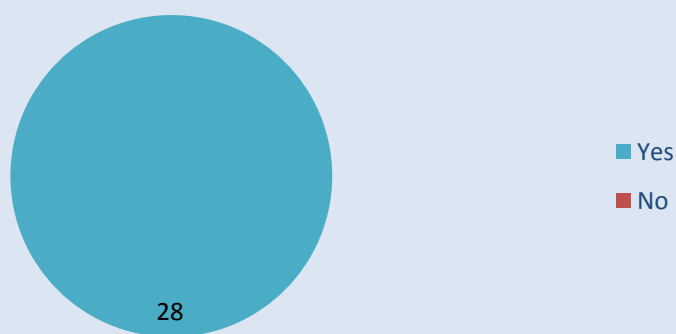
“I am hoping to gather more information about a career in psychiatry and also experience another area of psychiatry (learning disabilities) to help assist in my decision whether to pursue a career in psychiatry. I would also like to learn more about the application process.”

Feedback on Autumn School

How useful have you found the Autumn School?



Would you recommend the Autumn School to a colleague?



Following the Autumn School delegates were asked to feedback on their experiences using free text boxes. Key themes were extracted from the answers given.

What were the best parts of the Autumn School?

- 12 delegates listed the networking session as one of the best parts of the Autumn School
- 9 listed information about the applications process and structure of training
- 7 listed meeting clinicians, in particular trainees
- 5 listed the clinical sessions
- 3 listed the clinical masterclasses

"Very organised from start to finish"

"Loads of opportunities for questions – great people organising/running it"

"Informative and relaxed atmosphere"

"Getting first-hand experience from clinicians"

"Exposure to areas of psychiatry I have not had experience in"

What were your least favourite parts of the Autumn School?

- 7 delegates listed the session on 'psychiatry in the media' with 3 saying they had found it too long
- 2 listed the talk on 'research in psychiatry'
- 2 made comments about the content of the clinical sessions

"Psychiatry and media – I suppose it's a personal dislike"

"Travelling between sites"

"Second day less useful, limited information of psych as a career"

"Found addiction morning was very similar to teaching at medical school – focussed more on addiction rather than career in addiction psychiatry"

"Clinical session could have been better structured – sadly patient didn't show"

What, if anything, would you like to see added to the programme?

- 4 delegates wanted more information on the application process
- 2 delegates wanted more clinical content including case discussions and patient contact

"Make it longer please"

"Think programme should be condensed into one day or accommodation included as cost could be prohibitive for some for travel/accommodation"

"More about what to put in portfolios/CVs etc"

"More clinical situations/patient interactions"

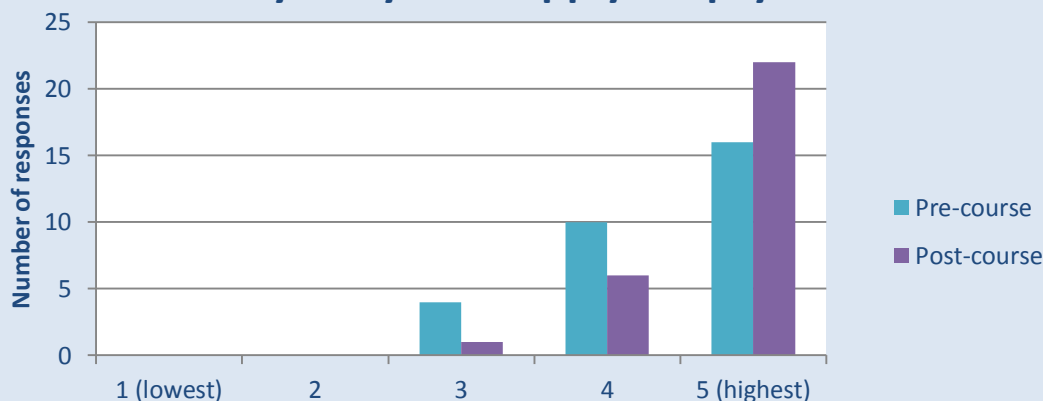
"More about other deaneries"

"Better representation of neuropsychiatry"

Career Intentions

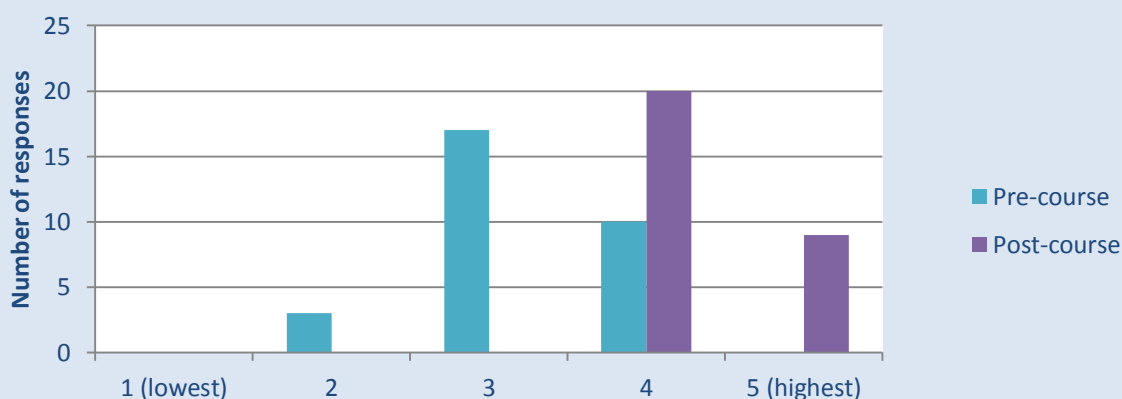
Delegates were asked about their career intentions and knowledge of a career in psychiatry before and after attending the Autumn School.

How likely are you to apply for psychiatric training?



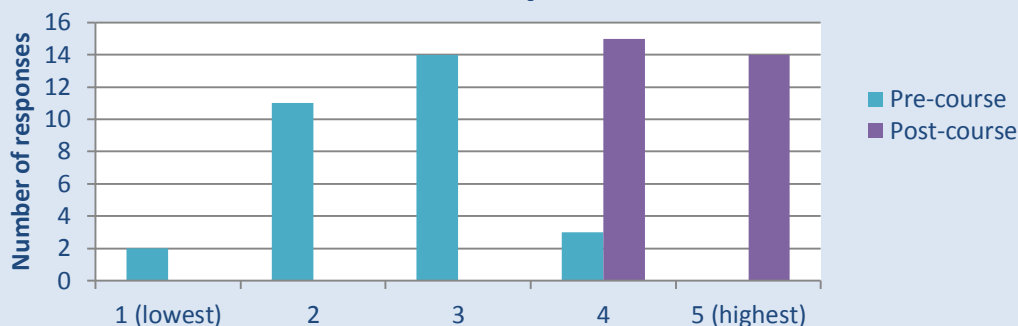
The mean score was 4.4 before the Autumn School and 4.7 afterwards. Following the Autumn School 8 delegates rated their likelihood of applying as higher, 1 rated it as lower and the rest were unchanged

How much do you know about psychiatry as a career?



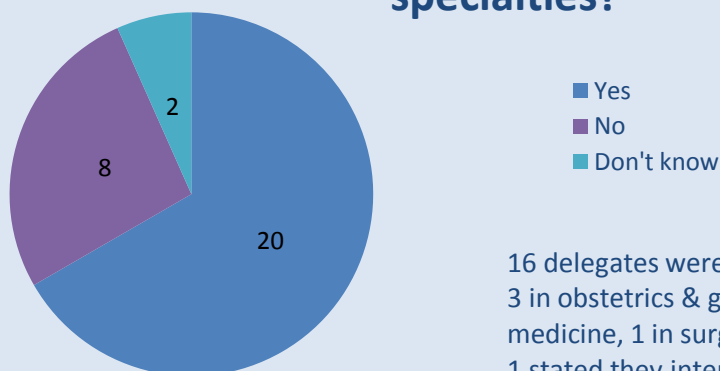
The mean score was 3.2 before the Autumn School and 4.3 afterwards. 23 delegates rated their knowledge as higher after attending the Autumn School, 6 rated it as the same.

How much do you know about the application process?



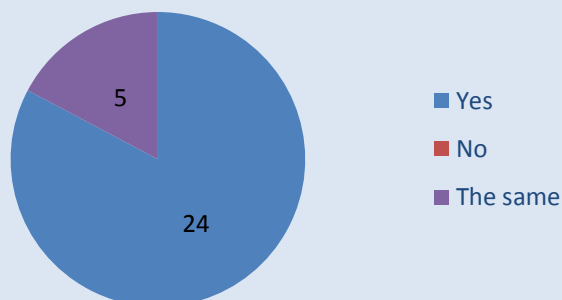
The mean score was 2.6 before the Autumn School and 4.48 afterwards. All delegates rated their knowledge as higher after the Autumn School.

Are you considering applying for any other specialties?



16 delegates were considering training in GP, 3 in obstetrics & gynaecology, 3 in core medicine, 1 in surgery and 1 in public health. 1 stated they intended to go abroad.

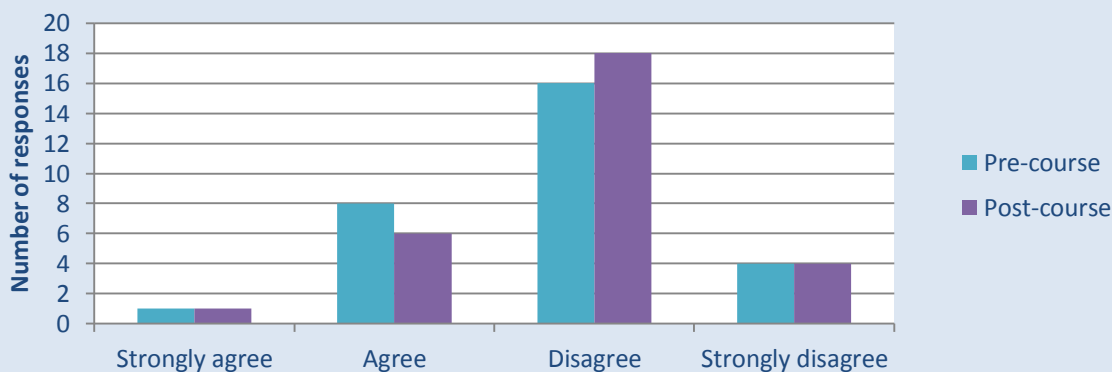
Has the Autumn School increased the chances of you applying for psychiatry?



Perceptions of Psychiatry

Delegates were asked about their perceptions of psychiatry before and after the Autumn School. They were asked to score to what extent they agreed with 4 statements about psychiatry which were raised as “push” factors in the College’s recruitment strategy.

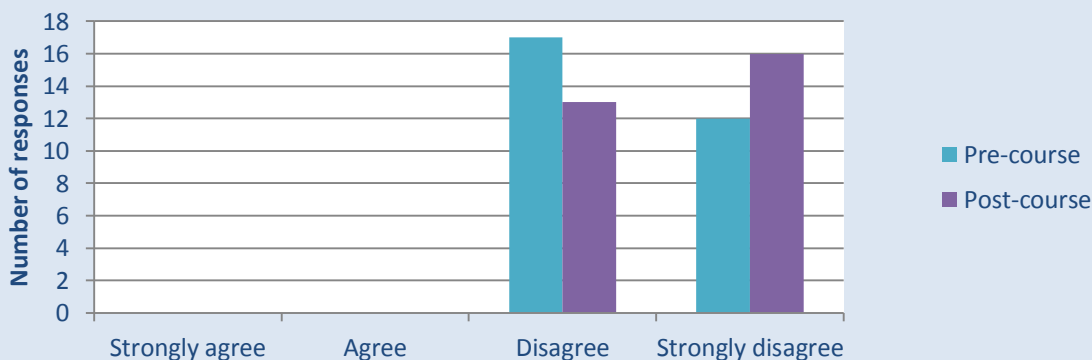
Psychiatry is remote from the rest of medicine



Following the Autumn School 4 delegates more strongly disagreed with this statement, 2 more strongly agreed with it and the rest were unchanged.

The number of foundation doctors disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement increased from 69% to 76%.

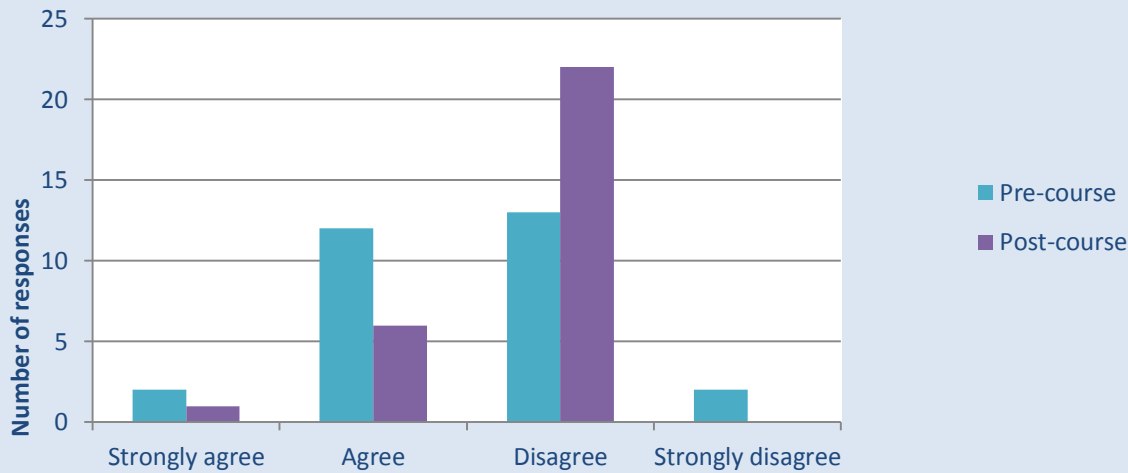
Psychiatry is unscientific and its treatments are not evidence-based when compared to other specialties



Following the Autumn School 6 delegates disagreed more strongly with this statement, two disagreed less strongly and the rest were unchanged.

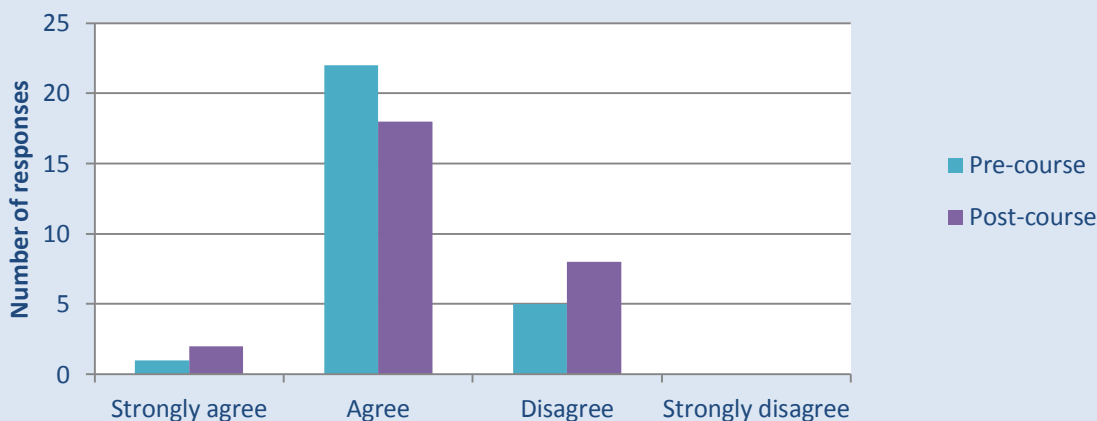
All foundation doctors disagreed with the statement but the number strongly disagreeing increased from 41% to 55%.

Psychiatric patients are difficult and hard to treat



Following the Autumn School 6 delegates more strongly disagreed with this statement, 4 more strongly agreed with it and the rest were unchanged. The number disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement increased from 52% to 76%.

Psychiatrists are held in low esteem and often criticised by doctors from other specialties



Following the Autumn School 4 delegates more strongly disagreed with this statement, 2 more strongly agreed and the rest were unchanged. Most foundation doctors agreed with the statement but this decreased from 82% to 71%

Summary

The Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School 2015 was organised by core and advanced trainees from the Severn Deanery School of Psychiatry with funding and support from the Severn Deanery, South West Division of RCPsych and Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust. The two day event is aimed at foundation doctors who are considering a career in psychiatry and forms part of the local implementation of the College's Promoting Recruitment into Psychiatry strategy.

59 foundation doctors from across the country applied to the Autumn School and places were offered to 30 doctors. The varied programme included sessions on the structure of training, application process, sub-specialties, clinical skills and research. All delegates were able to spend a session in a clinical environment with the team of their choice giving them exposure to the multi-disciplinary team, patients and carers.

Foundation doctors attending the event hoped to learn more about psychiatric training, the application process, to learn about the sub-specialties and to gain some clinical experience. This was reflected in the feedback given on the best parts of the Autumn School with sessions on training and applications, networking and clinical aspects of psychiatry highly valued. Foundation doctors commented that they enjoyed meeting clinicians and in particular trainees and they liked the organised but relaxed format of the event.

- 79% of attendees rated the Autumn School as very useful with the remaining 21% rating it as useful.
- 100% feedback that they would recommend the event to a colleague.
- After attending 79% rated their knowledge of a career in psychiatry as higher and 100% rated their knowledge of the application process as higher.

The session which delegates found less useful was on 'psychiatry in the media' with several commenting that the session was too long. Previously this session has been well received but the speaker and focus of the session were different this year. Two foundation doctors commented that their clinical sessions had not gone as well as they could have. In one instance the patient had not attended and in the other the foundation doctor felt the experience was similar to that at medical school. Two areas for improvement emerged from the feedback with delegates reporting that they would like more information on the application process and more of a clinical focus to the programme.

Foundation doctors were asked about their career intentions before and after the Autumn School.

- 83% of foundation doctors reported that the Autumn School had increased the chances of them applying for core training in psychiatry. The mean likelihood (out of 5) of attendees applying for psychiatry rose from 4.4 to 4.7.
- 27% were considering applying only for psychiatry training and 67% were also considering alternatives such as general practice, obstetrics and general medicine.

The foundation doctors were asked to what extent they agreed with various statements about psychiatry that have previously been identified as “push factors”.

- The number of foundation doctors disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement “psychiatry is remote from the rest of medicine” increased from 69% to 76%.
- All foundation doctors disagreed with the statement “psychiatry is unscientific and its treatments are not evidence-based when compared to other specialties” but the number strongly disagreeing increased from 41% to 55%.
- The number disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement “psychiatric patients are difficult and hard to treat” increased from 52% to 76%.
- Most foundation doctors agreed with the statement “psychiatrists are held in low esteem and often criticised by doctors from other specialties” but this decreased from 82% to 71% following the Autumn School.

Conclusions

The Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School 2015 was a successful event which was highly valued by those attending. The event was oversubscribed by 100% indicating high demand, from within the South West Division and across the UK, for events of this kind. Feedback from foundation doctors indicated that the event was very useful and that sessions on training, application to core training, clinical topics and the sub-specialties were more highly valued. Attendees knowledge of a career in psychiatry and the application process increased following attendance. All of those attending were considering a career in psychiatry and the majority reported that the event had increased the chances of them applying for core training in the specialty. Feedback indicates that the Autumn School may have challenged some of the negative perceptions of psychiatry held by foundation doctors including that it is unscientific, remote from medicine and that patients are hard to treat. The majority of foundation doctors agreed that psychiatrists are held in low esteem and often criticised by colleagues from other specialties and although this perception improved following the Autumn School this remains a worrying trend.

Overall the Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School 2015 fulfilled its aims by promoting psychiatry as a career and recruitment into core training and encouraging a more positive view of psychiatry. Additionally it provided core and advanced trainees in psychiatry with the opportunity to develop their skills in teaching and leadership. The Autumn School committee intend to organise another event in 2016.

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5th -6th October 2015

Avon and Wiltshire
Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

Severn Deanery



Appendix One – Bristol Psychiatry Autumn School 2015 budget

	In	Out
Grant from Severn Deanery	£500	
Grant from South West Division RCPsych	£500	
Venue		£0
Catering		£624
Refreshments		£46.74
Actor for clinical masterclass		£110
External speaker		£100
Total	£1000	£880.74
Balance	+£119.26	