

# The perceived global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on doctors' medical and surgical training: an international survey

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## Abstract

**Abstract Introduction** The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant burden on healthcare systems causing disruption to medical and surgical training of doctors globally. **Aims and objectives** This is the first international survey assessing the

perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on training of doctors of all grades and specialties. **Methods** An online global survey was disseminated using Survey Monkey® between 4th August 2020 and 17th November 2020. A global network of collaborators facilitated participant recruitment. Data was collated anonymously with informed consent and analysed using univariate and adjusted multivariable analysis. **Results** 743 doctors of median age 27 (IQR: 25-30) were included with the majority (56.8%, n=422) being male. Two-thirds of doctors were in a training post (66.5%, n=494), 52.9% (n=393) in a surgical specialty and 53.0% (n= 394) in low- and middle-income countries. 69.2% (n=514) reported an overall perceived negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their training. A significant decline was noted among non-virtual teaching methods such as face-to-face lectures, tutorials, ward-based teaching, theatre sessions, conferences, simulation sessions and morbidity and mortality meetings ( $p<0.05$ ). Doctors from low or middle-income countries were associated with perceived inadequate supervision while performing invasive procedures under general, local or regional anaesthetic. ( $p<0.05$ ) **Conclusion** In addition to the detrimental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on healthcare infrastructure, there has been an indirect consequence of disrupted training within medical and surgical subspecialties. A focus on reconfiguration of training programs through a variety of additional resources will become imperative to reduce the long-term sequelae of COVID-19 on doctors' training.

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