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# BMJ Open

## Mentoring Is Associated With Better Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in Medicine: A Cross-sectional study on Core Medical Trainees in the UK

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Manuscripts

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3 **Mentoring Is Associated With Better Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in**  
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5 **Medicine: A Cross-sectional study on Core Medical Trainees in the UK**  
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## **ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** To determine quantitatively if a positive association exists between the mentoring of junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate medical training within the UK.

**Design:** Cross-sectional study

**Participants:** 117 trainees from the East of England Deanery (non-mentored group) and the recently established Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Mentoring scheme (mentored group) who were core medical trainees (CMTs) between 2015 and 2017 completed an online survey. Trainees who received mentoring at the start of higher speciality training, incomplete responses and trainees who were a part of both the East of England deanery and RCP Mentoring scheme were excluded leaving 85 trainees in the non-mentored arm and 25 trainees in the mentored arm. Responses from a total of 110 trainees were analysed.

**Main Outcome Measures:** Pass rates of the various components of the MRCP(UK) examination (MRCP Part 1, MRCP Part 2 Written and MRCP Part 2 PACES), pass rates at the Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP), trainee involvement in significant events, clinical incidents, or complaints and trainee feedback on career progression and confidence.

**Results:** Mentored trainees reported higher pass rates of the MRCP Part 1 exam versus non-mentored trainees (84.0% vs. 42.4%,  $p<0.01$ ). Mentored international medical graduates (IMGs) had higher pass rates than non-mentored IMGs in the MRCP Part 2 Written exam (80.0% vs. 25.9%,  $p<0.05$ ) and the MRCP Part 2 PACES exam (80.0% vs. 11.1%,  $p<0.01$ ). ARCP pass rates in mentored trainees were higher than non-

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3 mentored trainees (95.8% vs. 69.9%,  $p < 0.01$ ). Rates of involvement in significant  
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5 events, clinical incidents and complaints in both groups did not show any statistical  
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7 difference. Mentored trainees reported higher confidence and career progression.  
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10 **Conclusions:** Mentoring of CMTs is positively associated with better training  
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12 outcomes. Randomised control trials are justified to demonstrate the causative effects of  
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14 mentoring in postgraduate medical training within the UK.  
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### 17 18 19 20 **Strengths and limitations of this study**

- 21 • Novel quantitative data demonstrating a positive association between mentoring  
22  
23 and better training-specific outcomes in core medical trainees.
- 24 • Strengthens the limited existing qualitative data on the effects of mentoring in  
25  
26 postgraduate medical training within the UK.
- 27 • Potential for response bias from participants through self selection.
- 28 • Small sample size of International Medical Graduates who received mentoring.
- 29 • Provides preliminary evidence to justify further randomised control trials to  
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31 demonstrate the causative effects of mentoring in UK medical trainees.  
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## 44 **INTRODUCTION**

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47 Work based mentoring is a growing and encouraged practice in UK postgraduate  
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49 medical training [1]. Though qualitative data suggests that mentored trainees do  
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51 generally have a positive experience, there is little quantitative evidence to suggest this  
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53 directly and positively impacts on training-specific outcomes in postgraduate medicine  
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55 [2]. Here we studied two groups of junior medical doctors in training and compared  
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3 targeted training outcomes in a group of trainees who have received mentorship in a  
4 structured mentoring programme versus a non-mentored group. By default, mentoring is  
5 not provided to all trainees in the UK.  
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10 Mentoring is defined as "a process whereby an experienced, highly regarded, empathic  
11 person (the mentor) guides another usually younger individual (the mentee) in the  
12 development and re-examination of their own ideas, learning, and personal or  
13 professional development" [3]. It describes a voluntary and synergistic relationship  
14 which requires commitment from both parties in order to be effective [4]. Its ultimate  
15 purpose is to empower an individual to achieve set goals [4], though these goals  
16 inevitably evolve over time as the mentee develops [3].  
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26 In many studies in literature, failed mentor-mentee relationships are a result of poor  
27 communication, lack of commitment, personality differences, competition, conflicts of  
28 interest, mentor inexperience [5] and unrealistic mentee expectations [4],[6]. To  
29 minimise these problems, we included trainees from the Royal College of Physicians  
30 (RCP) Mentoring scheme, an optional and recently established mentoring programme  
31 made available to any interested core medical trainee in the UK. Interested trainees  
32 apply to join the scheme and choose their mentors based on online mentor profiles to  
33 improve mentor-mentee compatibility. Mentors in the scheme comprise senior registrars  
34 and consultants from different medical specialties. They have volunteered to be mentors  
35 and received formal training in mentorship and effective communication prior to  
36 accepting mentees. To avoid unrealistic expectations by mentees, mentors engaged in  
37 goal setting (e.g. S.M.A.R.T objectives) during the early stages of the mentor-mentee  
38 process.  
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3 Easy accessibility and open communication is an important factor for a successful  
4 mentor-mentee relationship [5]. To facilitate this, mentors and mentees in the RCP  
5 mentoring scheme had the option to conduct mentor-mentee meetings either in person,  
6 online or both. Mentees determined the mode, frequency and duration of the meetings.  
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Though some studies question the quality and validity of online mentoring [7],[8], others have argued it can still be effective [9], [10] and provides opportunities for mentoring when it would otherwise not be possible [9]. We have chosen not to investigate the mode of how mentoring was delivered in this study because many mentees within the RCP Mentoring scheme have used a combination of face-to-face meetings, webcam meetings (e.g. Skype or Facetime) and email communications. This makes quantitative analysis difficult and does not answer the research question posed by this study.

## METHOD

A questionnaire was designed to enable the quantitative analysis of training-specific outcomes and the qualitative analysis of trainee feedback. Parameters for quantitative analysis were the (i) pass rates of the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCP UK) exams, (ii) pass rates of the Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) and (iii) the rate of trainee involvement in significant events (SEs), clinical incidents (CIs) and complaints.

The MRCP(UK) exam is a postgraduate exam in general internal medicine which comprises of three parts: MRCP Part 1 Written, MRCP Part 2 Written and the MRCP Part 2 PACES (practical component). The MRCP(UK) diploma is awarded upon completion of all three exams and completion of the MRCP Part 1 Written exam is

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3 required before a trainee can sit for the other two exams. Completion of the MRCP(UK)  
4 diploma is expected by the end of core medical training and is a pre-requisite to joining  
5 a higher specialty training programme in medicine within the UK. Completion of these  
6 examinations is an objective indicator that a trainee has achieved the medical  
7 knowledge required for their stage of training.  
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14 In postgraduate medical training in the United States, the Accreditation Council for  
15 Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) assesses trainee progress in the six domains of  
16 patient care, medical knowledge, practice based learning and improvement,  
17 interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism and system based practice.  
18 Each domain has "milestones" which trainees are expected to achieve at different stages  
19 of training. In the UK, a similar approach is adopted and progress is determined by the  
20 ARCP review. The ARCP review occurs annually and involves a panel of senior  
21 clinical educators and physicians assessing a trainee's progress in the domains of  
22 multiple consultant reports, educational supervisor report, advanced life support,  
23 supervised learning events, multi-source feedback, research and audit, common  
24 procedural competencies, non-procedural competencies (e.g. communication skills,  
25 history taking etc), top medical presentations, emergency medical presentations, other  
26 medical presentations, clinics and teaching attendance. The trainee submits evidence to  
27 the panel to demonstrate the domain requirements have been achieved and an outcome  
28 is awarded to the trainee after the entire review process. Outcome 1, the equivalent of a  
29 pass, is described as "satisfactory progress - achieving progress and competencies at  
30 expected rate". Other outcomes relevant to core medical training are similar to a fail.  
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32 The ARCP pass rate was chosen as a parameter of interest because it is an indirect but  
33 objective indicator of a trainee's all-rounded development in both the educational  
34 curriculum and clinical practice.  
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3 Further questions were also incorporated into the questionnaire to facilitate the  
4 qualitative analysis of a trainee's experience of being mentored and offer a platform for  
5 feedback by free text.  
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10 The questionnaire was pretested on a small group of medical registrars within the East  
11 of England deanery to assess its ability at extracting the information required for the  
12 study. Minor revisions were made and the final questionnaire was sent as a link to an  
13 online survey to all core medical trainees (CMTs) within the East of England Deanery  
14 between 2015 and 2017 (n=540 trainees, non-mentored group), and all CMTs who  
15 voluntarily registered with the RCP Mentoring scheme between 2015 and 2017 (n=160,  
16 mentored group). All responses were automatically anonymised by the online survey  
17 platform and trainees were made aware of this in their invitation email. Of the 700  
18 trainees that the invitations were sent to, responses from 117 trainees were received. Of  
19 the 117 responses, trainees who received mentoring at the start of higher speciality  
20 training (ST3 or above), incomplete responses and trainees who were both a part of the  
21 East of England deanery and the RCP Mentoring scheme were excluded (n=7 in total).  
22 Other grades of junior doctors equivalent to CMTs (e.g. CMT grade Clinical Fellows  
23 and LAT SHOs) were classed the same as CMTs for analysis since these numbers were  
24 relatively small. The final numbers for comparison were 25 trainees in the mentored  
25 group and 85 trainees in the non-mentored group (Figure 1A).  
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45 Graphpad 7.0 (by PRISM) was used to perform the statistical analyses between the two  
46 groups of trainees. When numbers were sufficiently large,  $\chi^2$  test was used to test if  
47 mentoring resulted in a significant change in proportions of the test parameter. The  
48 Baptista-Pike method was used to calculate the confidence intervals of odds ratios.  
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54 When trainee numbers were small (n < 5), Fisher's exact test was used to calculate p-  
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3 values for better accuracy. Statmate 2.0 (PRISM) was used for power calculations in the  
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5 study.

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8 Qualitative responses were grouped into categories of "positive" or "negative" feedback  
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10 when applicable and descriptors provided by the trainees were summarised.

## 11 12 13 14 15 16 **RESULTS**

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19 Of the 110 trainees in the study (85 non-mentored, 25 mentored), there were slightly  
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21 more female respondents than male in both arms of the study; 52.0% (13/25) vs. 48.0%  
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23 (12/25) in the mentored group and 52.9% (45/85) vs. 47.1% (40/85) in the non-  
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25 mentored group (Figure 1B). There were no statistically significant differences in the  
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27 career grades of the respondents in both arms of the study (Figure 1C) and the majority  
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29 of respondents were graduates from the UK (Figure 1D). In terms of age (Figure 1E),  
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31 there was an incidentally higher proportion of trainees aged 31-35 years in the mentored  
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33 group compared to the non-mentored group ( $X^2 = 9.831$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p=0.04$ ).

### 34 35 36 37 **Mentoring is associated with higher pass rates of the MRCP exams (Figure 2A).**

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40 The pass rate of the MRCP Part 1 exam is significantly higher in trainees receiving  
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42 mentorship compared to non-mentored trainees; 84.0% (21/25) vs. 42.4% (36/85),  $p <$   
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44 0.01 (OR=7.1, 95% CI 2.4-20.3). In sub-population analyses, the pass rates of the  
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46 MRCP Part 2 (Written) exam and MRCP Part 2 (PACES) exam were significantly  
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48 higher in mentored, international medical graduates (IMGs) compared to non-mentored  
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50 IMGs; 80.0% (4/5) vs. 25.9% (7/27),  $p < 0.05$  and 80.0% (4/5) vs. 11.1% (3/27),  $p < 0.01$   
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52 respectively. Though the pass rates of all components of the MRCP(UK) exams were  
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3 higher in the mentored group compared to the non-mentored group, only the categories  
4 described above were of statistical significance.  
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8 **Mentoring is associated with higher ARCP pass rates (Figure 2B).**  
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10 The ARCP review provides a comprehensive assessment of a trainee's progress in the  
11 core medical training educational curriculum and personal clinical practice. In our  
12 study, 97 trainees (24 mentored, 73 non-mentored) out of 110 had an ARCP within 12  
13 months. The ARCP pass rate (Outcome 1s) was significantly higher in mentored  
14 trainees compared to non-mentored trainees; 95.8% (23/24) vs. 69.9% (51/73),  $p < 0.01$   
15 (OR=9.9, 95% CI 1.5-107).  
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24 **Mentoring does not significantly decrease the number of Significant Events (SEs),**  
25 **Clinical Incidents (CIs) or Complaints in core medical trainees (Figure 2C).**  
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28 The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) in the UK defines a significant event as  
29 "any event (negative) thought by anyone in the team to be significant in the care of  
30 patients or conduct of practice" [11]. The term "clinical incident" is often used to  
31 describe an unintentional or unexpected event that is less severe in nature and which  
32 does not cause significant harm to a patient or member of staff. As part of the ARCP  
33 process, it is mandatory for all trainees to declare any involvement in SEs, CIs or  
34 complaints received to the ARCP panel. In our study, though the number of trainee  
35 involvement in such events are lower in the mentored group compared to the non-  
36 mentored group, 4.0% (1/25) vs. 9.4% (8/85) respectively, this was not statistically  
37 significant ( $p = 0.35$ ).  
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51 **Mentoring is associated with increased trainee confidence and better career**  
52 **progression (Figure 3A and Figure 3B).**  
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3 69.6% (16/23) of mentored trainees in our study reported that mentoring had improved  
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5 their confidence and 95.8% (23/24) reported mentoring aided in their career progression  
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7 in medicine. Exploration of reasons from the mentored trainees who did not find  
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9 mentoring useful revealed their experience was limited by insufficient time, poor  
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11 response from mentors and unmet expectations.  
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### 13 14 **The majority of mentored CMTs had a positive experience.**

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17 88.0% (22/25) of mentored trainees provided positive feedback when asked for their  
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19 opinion on their mentoring experience (Figure 3C). 79.1% (87/110) of all mentored and  
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21 non-mentored trainees agreed with the statement that mentoring should be made  
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23 available to all CMTs. Only 1.8% (2/110) of responders agreed that mentoring should  
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25 only be provided to trainees struggling with career progression or clinical work (Figure  
26  
27 3D). This suggested that mentoring does not confer a negative connotation on the  
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29 mentee by fellow colleagues.  
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33 Positive and negative descriptors have been summarised in Figure 3E.  
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### 36 **Mentee selection of mentors improves compatibility and increases positive** 37 **experiences.**

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41 Analysis of positive feedback from mentored trainees provided valuable insight into the  
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43 importance of the specialty and gender of mentors. Two examples are provided below.  
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46 *"I was initially told there was no mentor in my speciality. After a year*  
47 *I was re-contacted because there was a mentor in my specialty. This*  
48 *relationship worked really well. We were able to discuss on Skype and*  
49 *meet in person. It aided my confidence and also structured my career*  
50 *goals into attainable chunks."*  
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3 *"This was a transformative experience for me. My mentor was an*  
4 *excellent fit for me (I selected the gender of my mentor only and was*  
5 *then allocated. It was important for me to be mentored by another*  
6 *woman) and provided a space, encouragement, acceptance and deep*  
7 *kindness whilst asking good questions. This allowed me to grow from a*  
8 *personal perspective and steer my professional life more effectively. I*  
9 *feel better than I have in years and am carving a path that is right for*  
10 *me."*  
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## 24 **DISCUSSION**

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27 To our knowledge, our study is the first to provide quantitative data showing that  
28 mentoring junior medical doctors in the UK is associated with better training outcomes  
29 such as higher pass rates of the MRCP(UK) exams and ARCP. Our study has shown a  
30 statistically significant higher pass rate among mentored IMG trainees in the MRCP  
31 Part 2 exams (Written and PACES) compared to non-mentored IMG trainees, however  
32 the authors acknowledge that the sample size is small in the aforementioned group and  
33 these results should be interpreted with caution. Further confounding factors such as  
34 response bias or self-selection may exist. There were also more trainees aged 31-35  
35 years in the mentored group compared to the non-mentored group and this may have  
36 occurred either by chance or response bias. We sought to reduce the latter firstly by  
37 keeping all responses anonymous to encourage more trainees to participate. Secondly,  
38 we compared results of trainees matched to the same grade of training.  
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53 Interestingly, all mentored IMG trainees began their mentoring relationship before core  
54 medical training - two trainees received mentorship as Foundation Year 2 doctors and  
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3 two as CMT-equivalent Clinical Fellows. Further research is needed to see if an earlier  
4 introduction of mentoring (e.g. during Foundation Training) in trainees keen on a career  
5 in medicine has any effect on training outcomes.  
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10 Although mentoring did not have a statistically significant association with trainee  
11 involvement in SEs, CIs or complaints, the vast majority of trainees who participated in  
12 mentoring found it to be a positive experience which improved confidence and aided in  
13 improved career progression. Similar to current literature, qualitative analysis of  
14 feedback from our group of mentored trainees revealed that poor mentor-mentee  
15 communication and unmet expectations remain causes of a negative mentor-mentee  
16 experience. This could be addressed in the future by more frequent interval  
17 communications with the mentee to detect and address incipient problems.  
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28 It has been acknowledged that a facilitative approach is needed in order for a mentor-  
29 mentee relationship to be successful [3], [12], however this should extend not only to  
30 the mentor but also to the mentoring programme that the mentee is engaged in.  
31 Although the overall impact of gender specificity of mentors remains a debate in current  
32 literature [5], [13], there are clearly female mentees who seek female mentors as role  
33 models. It is therefore important for any mentoring programme to allow mentees the  
34 option to choose their mentors freely as well as recruit and utilise equal proportions of  
35 mentors from both genders.  
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46 The benefits of mentoring are not limited to the mentee. Mentoring provides the mentor  
47 with personal satisfaction [14], an avenue for reflection and the exchange of experiences  
48 [3] which will in turn enhance one's own professional development. It is important  
49 however to stress that mentoring should not be a therapeutic exercise for the senior  
50 clinician and that altruistic intentions should be coupled with appropriate training in  
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3 mentoring, communication and adequate organisational support made accessible to  
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5 mentors and mentees at any point during the mentoring process.  
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8 Mentoring is centred on developing and empowering trainees to realise and achieve  
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10 their objectives. It should not be restricted to helping trainees in difficulty pass their  
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12 training, as often in the UK, trainees access mentoring programmes because of  
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14 compulsory, remedial action or through support offered by higher educational  
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16 authorities to address exam or domain failures. The majority of CMTs from our survey,  
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18 together with expert opinions from some RCP Tutors, believed that mentoring should be  
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20 made available to all trainees. It is therefore important to change perspectives amongst  
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22 senior medical educators who are opined that mentoring should be encouraged only in  
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24 trainees who are struggling to progress.  
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28 With regard to career progression, our study has also shown that ARCP pass rates were  
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30 significantly higher in the mentored group though a contributory reason for this may be  
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32 that successful completion of the MRCP Part 1 exam is one of the pre-requisites for  
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34 obtaining an Outcome 1 (pass) at ARCP for the first year of core medical training.  
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36 However, the lower ARCP pass rates in the non-mentored group could also have been a  
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38 result other domain failures. Therefore, a separate study would be needed to identify  
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40 specifically the impact of mentoring on progression in the other domains.  
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## 46 47 **Conclusion**

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50 Our study provides new quantitative evidence that mentoring junior doctors is  
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52 associated with better training outcomes in postgraduate training in general medicine  
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54 within the UK. Both quantitative and qualitative data from our study supports and  
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3 reinforces current qualitative literature with similar findings in mentee experiences.  
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5 Randomised control trials are needed to demonstrate the causative effects of mentoring  
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7 on the outcomes of postgraduate medical training.  
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45  
46 Mentoring scheme described in this manuscript.  
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53  
54 performed the statistical and qualitative analyses, prepared the figures and wrote the  
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3 manuscript. NM advised on statistical methods, checked the results of the analyses and  
4  
5 edited the manuscript. SO and AD gave their expert opinion on medical education in the  
6  
7 training of junior doctors. YA and AS edited the manuscript prior to submission and  
8  
9 gave their senior opinion on mentoring in medicine.  
10

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15 **Data sharing:** No additional data is available  
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21 **REFERENCES**  
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#### 47 **Figure legends:**

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50 Figure 1. (A) Distribution of responses received into “mentored”, “not mentored” arms  
51 and responses excluded in the study. Demographics of respondents grouped by (B)  
52 gender, (C) current stage of training , (D) country of primary medical qualification and  
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3 (E) age. The majority of respondents were aged between 26 years to 35 years and  
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5 graduated from the UK.  
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8 Figure 2. (A) Mentoring is associated with higher pass rates of the MRCP(UK) exams  
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10 in Core Medical Trainees. The positive effects of mentoring is most significant in IMG  
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12 trainee doctors. (B) Mentoring is associated with higher rates of Outcome 1 at ARCP  
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14 ( $p<0.01$ ) but has no statistically significant effect on trainee involvement in SEs, CIs, or  
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16 complaints (C).  
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19 Figure 3. The majority of trainees receiving mentorship reported it did help in their (A)  
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21 confidence and (B) career progression. (C) The majority of mentored trainees provided  
22  
23 positive feedback and (D) most trainees in the study were of the opinion that mentoring  
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25 should be offered to all trainees. (E) Summary of descriptors from trainee feedback.  
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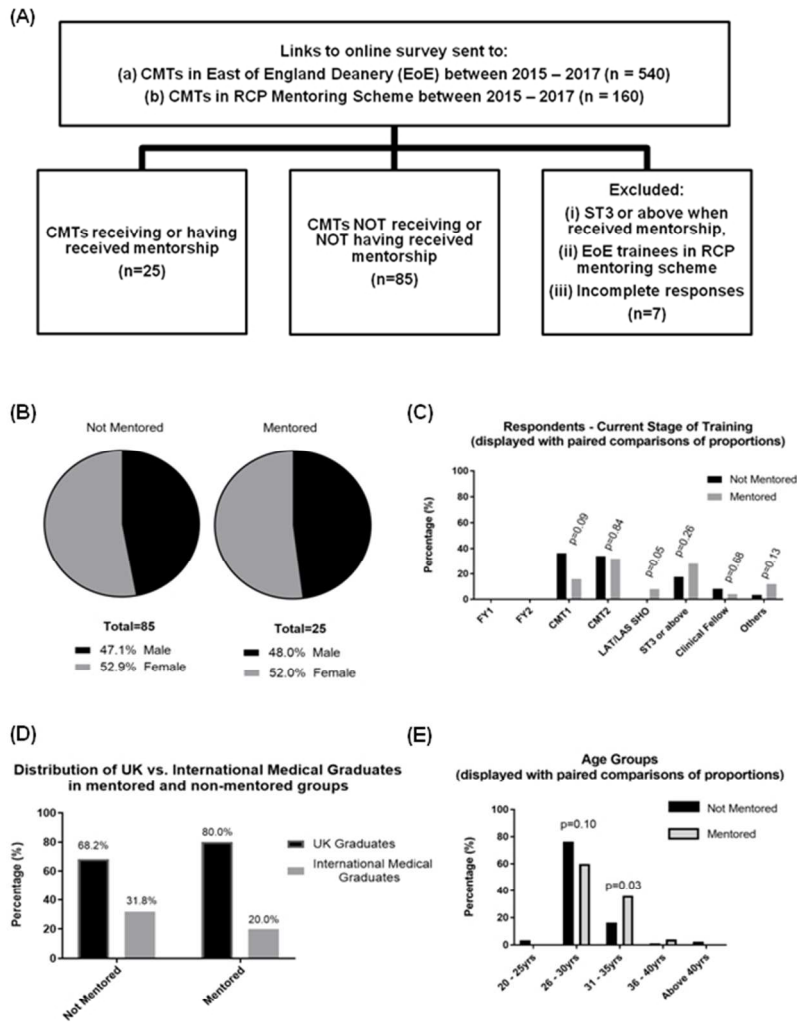


Figure 1. (A) Distribution of responses received into “mentored”, “not mentored” arms and responses excluded in the study. Demographics of respondents grouped by (B) gender, (C) current stage of training, (D) country of primary medical qualification and (E) age. The majority of respondents were aged between 26 years to 35 years and graduated from the UK.

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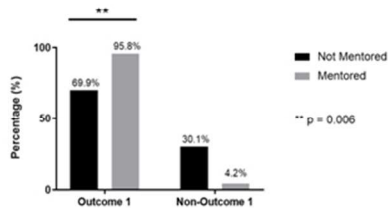
(A)

**MRCPPass Rates in Non-Mentored and Mentored Trainees**

Examination	Pass Rate for Non- Mentored Trainees (Total)	Pass Rate for Mentored Trainees (Total)	p value
<b>MRCPPart 1 (Written)</b>	<b>42.4%</b> (36/85)	<b>84.0%</b> (21/25)	<b>p &lt; 0.01</b>
MRCPPart 2 (Written)	30.6% (26/85)	44.0% (11/25)	p = 0.11
MRCPPart 2 (PACES)	29.4% (25/85)	44.0% (11/25)	p = 0.09
MRCPP (UK) Diploma	29.4% (25/85)	40.0% (10/25)	p = 0.16

Pass Rates in UK Graduates				Pass Rates in International Medical Graduates			
Examination	Not Mentored	Mentored	p value	Examination	Not Mentored	Mentored	p value
MRCPPart 1 (Written)	<b>46.6%</b> (27/58)	<b>85.0%</b> (17/20)	<b>p &lt; 0.01</b>	MRCPPart 1 (Written)	33.3% (9/27)	80.0% (4/5)	p = 0.07
MRCPPart 2 (Written)	32.8% (19/58)	35.0% (7/20)	p = 0.43	MRCPPart 2 (Written)	<b>25.9%</b> (7/27)	<b>80.0%</b> (4/5)	<b>p &lt; 0.05</b>
MRCPPart 2 (PACES)	37.9% (22/58)	35.0% (7/20)	p = 0.41	MRCPPart 2 (PACES)	<b>11.1%</b> (3/27)	<b>80.0%</b> (4/5)	<b>p &lt; 0.01</b>
MRCPP (UK) Diploma	37.9% (22/58)	30.0% (6/20)	p = 0.26	MRCPP (UK) Diploma	<b>11.1%</b> (3/27)	<b>80.0%</b> (4/5)	<b>p &lt; 0.01</b>

(B)

**ARCP Outcomes in Mentored vs Non-Mentored Trainees**

(C)

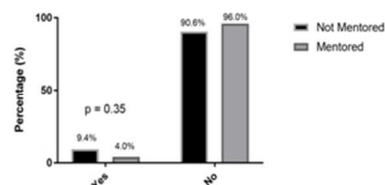
**Trainee Involvement in SEs, CIs or Complaints**

Figure 2. (A) Mentoring is associated with higher pass rates of the MRCP(UK) exams in Core Medical Trainees. The positive effects of mentoring is most significant in IMG trainee doctors. (B) Mentoring is associated with higher rates of Outcome 1 at ARCP ( $p < 0.01$ ) but has no statistically significant effect on trainee involvement in SEs, CIs, or complaints (C).

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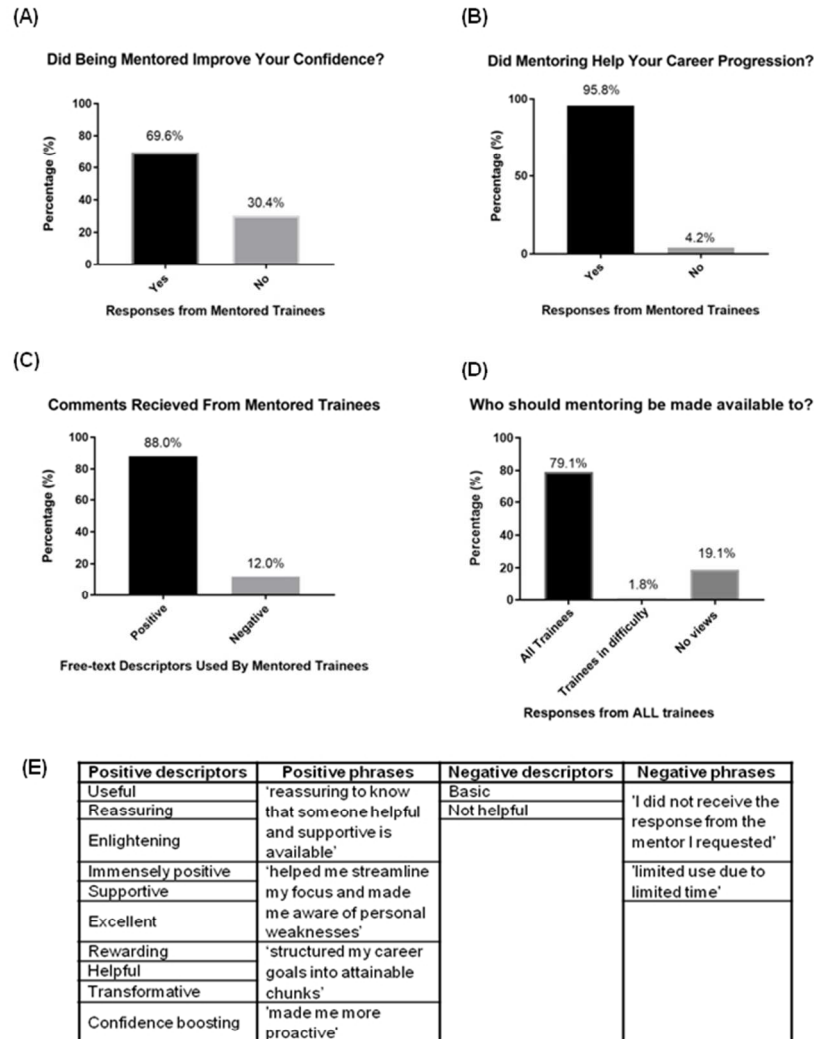


Figure 3. The majority of trainees receiving mentorship reported it did help in their (A) confidence and (B) career progression. (C) The majority of mentored trainees provided positive feedback and (D) most trainees in the study were of the opinion that mentoring should be offered to all trainees. (E) Summary of descriptors from trainee feedback.

60x81mm (300 x 300 DPI)

**STROBE 2007 (v4) Statement—Checklist of items that should be included in reports of *cross-sectional studies***

Section/Topic	Item #	Recommendation	Reported on page #
<b>Title and abstract</b>	1	(a) Indicate the study's design with a commonly used term in the title or the abstract	1,2
		(b) Provide in the abstract an informative and balanced summary of what was done and what was found	2
<b>Introduction</b>			
Background/rationale	2	Explain the scientific background and rationale for the investigation being reported	3 - 5
Objectives	3	State specific objectives, including any prespecified hypotheses	2
<b>Methods</b>			
Study design	4	Present key elements of study design early in the paper	4 - 6
Setting	5	Describe the setting, locations, and relevant dates, including periods of recruitment, exposure, follow-up, and data collection	7
Participants	6	(a) Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of selection of participants	7
Variables	7	Clearly define all outcomes, exposures, predictors, potential confounders, and effect modifiers. Give diagnostic criteria, if applicable	5
Data sources/ measurement	8*	For each variable of interest, give sources of data and details of methods of assessment (measurement). Describe comparability of assessment methods if there is more than one group	5
Bias	9	Describe any efforts to address potential sources of bias	11
Study size	10	Explain how the study size was arrived at	7
Quantitative variables	11	Explain how quantitative variables were handled in the analyses. If applicable, describe which groupings were chosen and why	7
Statistical methods	12	(a) Describe all statistical methods, including those used to control for confounding	7, 8
		(b) Describe any methods used to examine subgroups and interactions	7
		(c) Explain how missing data were addressed	7
		(d) If applicable, describe analytical methods taking account of sampling strategy	7
		(e) Describe any sensitivity analyses	7
<b>Results</b>			

Participants	13*	(a) Report numbers of individuals at each stage of study—eg numbers potentially eligible, examined for eligibility, confirmed eligible, included in the study, completing follow-up, and analysed	7, 8
		(b) Give reasons for non-participation at each stage	n/a – exclusion criteria listed on p7
		(c) Consider use of a flow diagram	Figure 1
Descriptive data	14*	(a) Give characteristics of study participants (eg demographic, clinical, social) and information on exposures and potential confounders	8, figure 1
		(b) Indicate number of participants with missing data for each variable of interest	7
Outcome data	15*	Report numbers of outcome events or summary measures	8 – 10, figure 2, figure 3
Main results	16	(a) Give unadjusted estimates and, if applicable, confounder-adjusted estimates and their precision (eg, 95% confidence interval). Make clear which confounders were adjusted for and why they were included	8 - 10
		(b) Report category boundaries when continuous variables were categorized	n/a
		(c) If relevant, consider translating estimates of relative risk into absolute risk for a meaningful time period	n/a
Other analyses	17	Report other analyses done—eg analyses of subgroups and interactions, and sensitivity analyses	Figure 2
<b>Discussion</b>			
Key results	18	Summarise key results with reference to study objectives	11
Limitations	19	Discuss limitations of the study, taking into account sources of potential bias or imprecision. Discuss both direction and magnitude of any potential bias	11
Interpretation	20	Give a cautious overall interpretation of results considering objectives, limitations, multiplicity of analyses, results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence	11 - 13
Generalisability	21	Discuss the generalisability (external validity) of the study results	13, 14
<b>Other information</b>			
Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study and, if applicable, for the original study on which the present article is based	14

\*Give information separately for cases and controls in case-control studies and, if applicable, for exposed and unexposed groups in cohort and cross-sectional studies.

**Note:** An Explanation and Elaboration article discusses each checklist item and gives methodological background and published examples of transparent reporting. The STROBE checklist is best used in conjunction with this article (freely available on the Web sites of PLoS Medicine at <http://www.plosmedicine.org/>, Annals of Internal Medicine at <http://www.annals.org/>, and Epidemiology at <http://www.epidem.com/>). Information on the STROBE Initiative is available at [www.strobe-statement.org](http://www.strobe-statement.org).



# BMJ Open

## The Association Between Mentoring and Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in Medicine: An Observational Study

Journal:	<i>BMJ Open</i>
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<b>Primary Subject Heading</b>:	Medical education and training
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Keywords:	EDUCATION & TRAINING (see Medical Education & Training), GENERAL MEDICINE (see Internal Medicine), Clinical governance < HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT, MEDICAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

SCHOLARONE™  
Manuscripts

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3 **The Association Between Mentoring and Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in**  
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5 **Medicine: An Observational Study**  
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8 Dr John Ong<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr Carla Swift<sup>2\*</sup>, Mr Nicholas Magill<sup>3</sup>, Ass. Prof Sharon Ong<sup>4</sup>, Dr Anne  
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## **ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** To determine quantitatively if a positive association exists between the mentoring of junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate medical training within the UK.

**Design:** Observational study

**Participants:** 117 trainees from the East of England Deanery (non-mentored group) and the recently established Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Mentoring scheme (mentored group) who were core medical trainees (CMTs) between 2015 and 2017 completed an online survey. Trainees who received mentoring at the start of higher speciality training, incomplete responses and trainees who were a part of both the East of England deanery and RCP Mentoring scheme were excluded leaving 85 trainees in the non-mentored arm and 25 trainees in the mentored arm. Responses from a total of 110 trainees were analysed.

**Main Outcome Measures:** Pass rates of the various components of the MRCP(UK) examination (MRCP Part 1, MRCP Part 2 Written and MRCP Part 2 PACES), pass rates at the Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP), trainee involvement in significant events, clinical incidents or complaints, and trainee feedback on career progression and confidence.

**Results:** Mentored trainees reported higher pass rates of the MRCP Part 1 exam versus non-mentored trainees (84.0% vs. 42.4%,  $p < 0.01$ ). Mentored international medical graduates (IMGs) reported higher pass rates than non-mentored IMGs in the MRCP Part 2 Written exam (71.4% vs. 24.0%,  $p < 0.05$ ). ARCP pass rates in mentored trainees were observed to be higher than non-mentored trainees (95.8% vs. 69.9%,  $p < 0.05$ ).

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3 Rates of involvement in significant events, clinical incidents and complaints in both  
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5 groups did not show any statistical difference. Mentored trainees reported higher  
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7 confidence and career progression.  
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10 **Conclusions:** A positive association is observed between the mentoring of CMTs and  
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12 better training outcomes. Further studies are needed to demonstrate the causative effects  
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14 of mentoring in postgraduate medical training within the UK.  
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### 17 18 19 20 **Strengths and limitations of this study**

- 21 • Novel quantitative data demonstrating a positive association between mentoring  
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23 and better training-specific outcomes in core medical trainees.  
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- 26 • Adds to the limited qualitative data on the effects of mentoring in postgraduate  
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28 medical training within the UK.  
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- 31 • Potential for non-response bias and self-selection bias.  
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- 34 • Small sample size of International Medical Graduates who received mentoring.  
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- 37 • Provides preliminary evidence to support further studies in investigating the  
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39 causative effects of mentoring in UK medical trainees.  
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## 44 **INTRODUCTION**

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47 Work based mentoring is a growing and encouraged practice in UK postgraduate  
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49 medical training [1]. Though qualitative data suggests that mentored trainees do  
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51 generally have a positive experience, there is little quantitative evidence to suggest this  
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53 directly and positively impacts on training-specific outcomes in postgraduate medicine  
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55 [2]. Here we studied two groups of junior medical doctors in training and compared  
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3 targeted training outcomes in a group of trainees who have received mentorship in a  
4 structured mentoring programme versus a non-mentored group. By default, mentoring is  
5 not provided to all trainees in the UK.  
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10 Mentoring is defined as "a process whereby an experienced, highly regarded, empathic  
11 person (the mentor) guides another usually younger individual (the mentee) in the  
12 development and re-examination of their own ideas, learning, and personal or  
13 professional development" [3]. It describes a voluntary and synergistic relationship  
14 which requires commitment from both parties in order to be effective [4]. Its ultimate  
15 purpose is to empower an individual to achieve set goals [4], though these goals  
16 inevitably evolve over time as the mentee develops [3].  
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26 In many studies in literature, failed mentor-mentee relationships are a result of poor  
27 communication, lack of commitment, personality differences, competition, conflicts of  
28 interest, mentor inexperience [5] and unrealistic mentee expectations [4],[6]. To  
29 minimise these problems, we included trainees from the Royal College of Physicians  
30 (RCP) Mentoring scheme, an optional and recently established mentoring programme  
31 made available to any interested core medical trainee in the UK. The programme was  
32 advertised through RCP newsletters, social media or peer recommendations. Interested  
33 trainees accessed and applied to join the scheme online. Once accepted into the  
34 programme, mentees chose their mentors based on online mentor profiles to improve  
35 mentor-mentee compatibility. Mentors in the scheme comprise senior registrars and  
36 consultants from different medical specialties. They were recruited via RCP newsletters,  
37 screened then received formal, compulsory training in mentorship and effective  
38 communication over two days of training prior to accepting mentees. Mentoring was  
39 voluntary and no financial incentives were offered to the mentors.  
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3 At the start of the mentor-mentee relationship, mentors engaged in goal setting (e.g.  
4 S.M.A.R.T objectives) to avoid unrealistic expectations by mentees. Subsequently,  
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6 mentors employed effective questioning techniques to encourage mentee reflection,  
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8 planning and decision making before dispensing advice or intervention depending on  
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10 which approach was most appropriate (e.g. facilitative or directive). Mentors were also  
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12 provided with a platform to obtain confidential, third party advice to ensure difficult  
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14 situations are dealt with appropriately.  
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18 As easy accessibility and open communication is an important factor for a successful  
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20 mentor-mentee relationship [5], mentors and mentees in the RCP mentoring scheme  
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22 were provided the option to conduct mentor-mentee meetings either in person, online or  
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24 both. Mentees determined the mode, frequency and duration of the meetings. The most  
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26 frequent method of communication was email but this was often combined with online  
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28 conferencing and in-person meetings. Though some studies question the quality and  
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30 validity of online mentoring [7], [8], others have argued it can still be effective [9], [10]  
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32 and provides opportunities for mentoring when it would otherwise not be possible [9].  
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34 We have chosen not to investigate the mode of how mentoring was delivered in this  
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36 study because it makes quantitative analysis difficult and does not answer the research  
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38 question posed by this study.  
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43 The objective of our study is to determine quantitatively if a positive association exists  
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45 between the mentoring of junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate  
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47 medical training within the UK.  
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## 53 **METHODS**

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### ***Rationale of Study Design***

A questionnaire was designed to enable the quantitative analysis of training-specific outcomes and the qualitative analysis of trainee feedback. Parameters for quantitative analysis were the (i) pass rates of the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCP UK) exams, (ii) pass rates of the Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) and (iii) the rate of trainee involvement in significant events (SEs), clinical incidents (CIs) and complaints.

The MRCP(UK) exam is a postgraduate exam in general internal medicine which comprises three parts: MRCP Part 1 Written, MRCP Part 2 Written and the MRCP Part 2 PACES (practical component). The MRCP(UK) diploma is awarded upon completion of all three exams and completion of the MRCP Part 1 Written exam is required before a trainee can sit for the other two exams. Completion of the MRCP(UK) diploma is expected by the end of core medical training and is a pre-requisite to joining a higher specialty training programme in medicine within the UK. Completion of these examinations is an objective indicator that a trainee has achieved the medical knowledge required for their stage of training.

In postgraduate medical training in the United States, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) assesses trainee progress in the six domains of patient care, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism and system-based practice. Each domain has "milestones" which trainees are expected to achieve at different stages of training. In the UK, a similar approach is adopted and progress is determined by the ARCP review. The ARCP review occurs annually and involves a panel of senior clinical educators and physicians assessing a trainee's progress in the domains of

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3 multiple consultant reports, educational supervisor report, advanced life support,  
4 supervised learning events, multi-source feedback, research and audit, common  
5 procedural competencies, non-procedural competencies (e.g. communication skills,  
6 history taking etc), top medical presentations, emergency medical presentations, other  
7 medical presentations, clinics and teaching attendance. The trainee submits evidence to  
8 the panel to demonstrate the domain requirements have been achieved and an outcome  
9 is awarded to the trainee after the entire review process. Outcome 1, the equivalent of a  
10 pass, is described as "satisfactory progress - achieving progress and competencies at  
11 expected rate". Other outcomes relevant to core medical training are similar to a fail.  
12 The ARCP pass rate was chosen as a parameter of interest because it is an indirect but  
13 objective indicator of a trainee's all-rounded development in both the educational  
14 curriculum and clinical practice.

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Trainees from the RCP mentoring programme were chosen as a positive control because  
of its nationwide recruitment which reduces the risk of inter-deanery variability if any.  
East of England trainees were chosen as a negative control because at the time of the  
study, no mentoring programme for medicine was active within the region. In contrast,  
other regional deaneries had separate mentoring programmes for junior doctors (e.g.  
London deanery, Health Education England Thames Valley deanery). This would have  
limited standardisation of positive and negative controls (e.g. Career grade of mentors,  
level of training delivered to mentors, mentees from other mentoring programmes  
responding to our survey etc).

As a second negative control, observed results were also compared to the pass rates for  
all UK candidates in the 2017 MRCP exams [11] to provide a better representation of  
the performance of candidates attempting the MRCP exams and reduce bias. Though  
this cohort contained both non-mentored and mentored trainees, the authors believe the



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3 total number of mentored trainees nationally is small and any contributing effects to this  
4  
5 large sample size ( $n > 1500$ ) is negligible.  
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### 10 ***Design and Administration of Questionnaire***

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12  
13 The questionnaire comprised of 14 binary, non-Likert questions and 1 open question  
14  
15 which enabled free text entry for the qualitative analysis of a trainee's experience of  
16  
17 being mentored. The qualitative questions within the questionnaire also served as an  
18  
19 internal check, so that quantitative results from the survey could be validated against  
20  
21 trainee experience (e.g. MRCP or ARCP Pass rates vs. "Did mentoring help your career  
22  
23 progression?"). The questionnaire was pretested on a small group of medical registrars  
24  
25 not involved with the study to assess its ability at extracting the information required for  
26  
27 the study. Minor revisions were made and a final Cronbach alpha score of 0.83 was  
28  
29 achieved. The final questionnaire was sent via email as a link to an online survey to all  
30  
31 core medical trainees (CMTs) within the East of England Deanery between 2015 and  
32  
33 2017 ( $n=540$  trainees, non-mentored group), and all CMTs who voluntarily registered  
34  
35 with the RCP Mentoring scheme between 2015 and 2017 ( $n=160$ , mentored group).  
36  
37 None of the authors participated in the survey. The survey was subsequently conducted  
38  
39 from 14 August 2017 to 15 September 2017 to capture data from trainees at the start of  
40  
41 their posts. One reminder email was sent 2 weeks after the invitation email.  
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### 50 ***Ethics***

51  
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53 Prior to designing the survey, the authors completed the Medical Research Council and  
54  
55 NHS Health Research Authority decision tool ([www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk](http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk)) which  
56  
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1  
2  
3 determined ethical approval from a local research ethics committee (REC) was not  
4  
5 required. This decision is attached as Appendix 1.  
6  
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8 All participants were automatically anonymised by the online survey platform and  
9  
10 trainees were made aware of this in their invitation email. Trainees were also informed  
11  
12 the survey was for research purposes and participation was voluntary. Completion of the  
13  
14 survey conferred implied consent and the authors only received anonymised responses  
15  
16 with no trainee identifiable information. There was no risk posed to participants and  
17  
18 participants were not paid for completed questionnaires.  
19  
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#### 24 ***Patient and Public Involvement***

25  
26  
27 This study did not involve any members of the public or patients.  
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#### 33 ***Exclusion Criteria***

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35  
36 Of the 700 trainees that the invitations were sent to, responses from 117 trainees were  
37  
38 received. Of the 117 responses, trainees who received mentoring at the start of higher  
39  
40 speciality training; ST3 or above (n=2), incomplete responses (n=3) and trainees who  
41  
42 were both a part of the East of England deanery and the RCP Mentoring scheme were  
43  
44 excluded (n=2). Incomplete responses were defined as surveys with less than 50% of  
45  
46 answered questions. The survey was conducted as a sequence of questions, one question  
47  
48 at a time. The first half of the survey collected demographic data therefore surveys with  
49  
50 less than 50% of answered questions were not interpretable. A total of 7 returned  
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52 surveys were excluded. All of the other 110 surveys were adequately completed.  
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3 Other grades of junior doctors equivalent to CMTs (e.g. CMT grade Clinical Fellows  
4 and LAT SHOs) were classed "Others" but included in the analysis since these numbers  
5 were relatively small. The final numbers for comparison were 25 trainees in the  
6 mentored group and 85 trainees in the non-mentored group (Figure 1A).  
7  
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### 10 11 12 13 14 15 *Statistical and Qualitative Analyses* 16

17  
18 Graphpad 7.0 (by PRISM) was used to perform the statistical analyses between the two  
19 groups of trainees. When numbers were greater than five in a 2x2 contingency table,  
20 chi-squared test was used to test if mentoring resulted in a significant change in  
21 proportions of the test parameters which were all binary. When trainee numbers were  
22 small ( $n \leq 5$ ) in a 2x2 contingency table, Fisher's exact test was used to calculate p-  
23 values for better accuracy. The Koopman asymptotic method [12] was used to calculate  
24 the confidence intervals of the relative risk (RR) and the Baptista-Pike method was used  
25 to calculate confidence intervals for the Odd's Ratio (OR) [13].  
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36 MedCalc version 18 was used to perform logistic regression. Older age of respondents  
37 may have been a confounding factor to MRCP pass rates if respondents had more time  
38 out of training to complete the exams. Lower pass rates of IMGs are usually observed in  
39 the MRCP exams and the reason for this phenomenon is likely multi-factorial. For both  
40 these reasons, age group (coded as 0=20-25yrs, 1=26-30yrs, 2=31-35yrs, 3=36-40yrs,  
41 4=above 40yrs) and the country of the primary medical degree (coded as UK=1, non-  
42 UK=0) of respondents were used as covariates in the regression model together with  
43 exposure to mentoring in order to make an assessment of any confounding of the  
44 relationship between mentoring and outcome. Since completion of MRCP exams is  
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3 expected with career progression, stage of training was not used as a covariate in the  
4  
5 regression model.  
6

7  
8 Qualitative responses were grouped into categories of "positive" or "negative" feedback  
9  
10 when applicable and descriptors provided by the trainees were summarised. Examples  
11  
12 of the feedback received have also been quoted verbatim in the results section for  
13  
14 readers to interpret.  
15

## 16 17 18 19 20 **RESULTS**

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23 Of the 110 trainees in the study (85 non-mentored, 25 mentored), there were slightly  
24  
25 more female respondents than male in both arms of the study; 56.0% (14/25) vs. 44.0%  
26  
27 (11/25) in the mentored group and 51.8% (44/85) vs. 48.2% (41/85) in the non-  
28  
29 mentored group (Figure 1B). There were no statistically significant differences in the  
30  
31 career grades of the respondents in both arms of the study (Figure 1B) and the majority  
32  
33 of respondents were graduates from the UK.  
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40 *Significant differences were observed in the MRCP exam pass rates between*  
41  
42 *mentored and non-mentored trainees (Figure 2A, Figure 2B & Figure 3A).*  
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45 The pass rate of the MRCP Part 1 exam was observed to be significantly higher in  
46  
47 trainees receiving mentorship compared to non-mentored East of England trainees;  
48  
49 84.0% (21/25) vs. 42.4% (36/85),  $p < 0.01$  (OR=7.1, 95% CI 2.4 - 20.3 and RR=2.0,  
50  
51 95% CI 1.4 - 2.7). This effect was also observed when the MRCP Part 1 exam pass rates  
52  
53 were compared between mentored trainees and all UK candidates attempting the exam  
54  
55 in 2017; 84.0% (21/25) vs. 50.6% (2065/4079),  $p < 0.01$  (OR= 5.1, CI 1.9 - 13.9 and  
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3 RR=1.7, 95% CI 1.3 - 1.9). Logistic regression demonstrated that age and the country of  
4  
5 primary qualification did not have any significant influence on the effects observed in  
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7 mentoring (p = 0.14 and p = 0.62 respectively). The model showed that mentoring was  
8  
9 associated with higher pass rates of the MRCP Part 1 exam (p < 0.01) with adjusted  
10  
11 OR=7.7, 95% CI 2.4 - 25.2.  
12

13  
14 The MRCP Part 2 (Written) exam pass rates between mentored trainees and non-  
15  
16 mentored East of England trainees showed no significant difference. However, when  
17  
18 pass rates in mentored trainees were compared to all candidates attempting the MRCP  
19  
20 Part 2 (Written) exam within the UK, an unexpected statistically significant difference  
21  
22 was found; 44.0% (11/25) vs. 75.1% (1584/2110), p < 0.01 (OR=0.3, 95% CI 0.1 - 0.6  
23  
24 and RR=0.6, 95% CI 0.4 - 0.8). This difference may be explained by the timing of the  
25  
26 survey which captured data from mentored CMT trainees at the start of their post and  
27  
28 who may not have yet attempted the exam. In sub-population analyses, the pass rates of  
29  
30 the MRCP Part 2 (Written) exam was observed to be significantly higher in mentored,  
31  
32 international medical graduates (IMGs) compared to non-mentored IMGs; 71.4% (5/7)  
33  
34 vs. 24.0% (6/25), p < 0.05. (Figure 2B). No significant differences were observed when  
35  
36 pass rates in mentored IMGs and mentored UK trainees were compared to all UK  
37  
38 candidates in 2017. However, in comparing pass rates in the MRCP Part 2 Written  
39  
40 exam and the MRCP Part 2 (PACES) exam between non-mentored IMGs and all UK  
41  
42 candidates in 2017, a statistically significant difference was detected in the lower pass  
43  
44 rates of the former group; 24.0% (6/25) vs. 75.1% (1584/2110), p < 0.01 and 24.0%  
45  
46 (6/25) versus 56.1% (1594/2843), p < 0.01.  
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55 ***Higher ARCP pass rates were observed in mentored trainees (Figure 3B).***  
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3 The ARCP review provides a comprehensive assessment of a trainee's progress in the  
4 core medical training educational curriculum and personal clinical practice. In our  
5 study, 97 trainees (24 mentored, 73 non-mentored) out of 110 had an ARCP within 12  
6 months. The ARCP pass rate (Outcome 1s) was observed to be significantly higher in  
7 mentored trainees compared to non-mentored trainees; 95.8% (23/24) vs. 69.9%  
8 (51/73),  $p < 0.05$  (OR=9.9, 95% CI 1.5 - 107 and RR=1.4, 95% CI 1.1 - 1.7).  
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20 ***Mentoring did not significantly decrease the number of Significant Events (SEs),***  
21 ***Clinical Incidents (CIs) or Complaints in core medical trainees (Figure 3C).***  
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23  
24 The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) in the UK defines a significant event as  
25 "any event (negative) thought by anyone in the team to be significant in the care of  
26 patients or conduct of practice" [14]. The term "clinical incident" is often used to  
27 describe an unintentional or unexpected event that is less severe in nature and which  
28 does not cause significant harm to a patient or member of staff. As part of the ARCP  
29 process, it is mandatory for all trainees to declare any involvement in SEs, CIs or  
30 complaints received to the ARCP panel. In our study, though the number of trainee  
31 involvement in such events were lower in the mentored group compared to the non-  
32 mentored group, 4.0% (1/25) vs. 9.4% (8/85) respectively, this was not statistically  
33 significant ( $p=0.68$ ).  
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50 ***Mentoring is associated with increased trainee confidence and better career***  
51 ***progression (Figure 4A and Figure 4B).***  
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3 In total, 69.6% (16/23) of mentored trainees in our study reported that mentoring had  
4 improved their confidence and 95.8% (23/24) reported mentoring had aided in their  
5 career progression in medicine. Exploration of reasons from the mentored trainees who  
6 did not find mentoring useful revealed their experience was limited by insufficient time,  
7 poor response from mentors and unmet expectations.  
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17 ***The majority of mentored CMTs had a positive experience.***  
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20 When asked for their opinion on their mentoring experience, 88.0% (22/25) of mentored  
21 trainees provided positive feedback (Figure 4C). A total of 78.2% (86/110) of all  
22 trainees (mentored and non-mentored) agreed with the statement that mentoring should  
23 be made available to all CMTs. Only 1.8% (2/110) of responders agreed that mentoring  
24 should only be provided to trainees struggling with career progression or clinical work  
25 (Figure 4D). This suggests mentoring does not confer a negative connotation on the  
26 mentee by fellow colleagues. Positive and negative descriptors have been summarised  
27 in Figure 4E.  
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41 ***Mentee selection of mentors improves compatibility and increases positive***  
42 ***experiences.***  
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45  
46 Analysis of positive feedback from mentored trainees provided valuable insight into the  
47 importance of the specialty and gender of mentors. Two examples are provided below.  
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49

50  
51 *"I was initially told there was no mentor in my speciality. After a year*

52 *I was re-contacted because there was a mentor in my speciality. This*  
53 *relationship worked really well. We were able to discuss on Skype and*  
54  
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3 *meet in person. It aided my confidence and also structured my career*  
4  
5 *goals into attainable chunks."*  
6

7  
8 *"This was a transformative experience for me. My mentor was an*  
9  
10 *excellent fit for me (I selected the gender of my mentor only and was*  
11  
12 *then allocated. It was important for me to be mentored by another*  
13  
14 *woman) and provided a space, encouragement, acceptance and deep*  
15  
16 *kindness whilst asking good questions. This allowed me to grow from a*  
17  
18 *personal perspective and steer my professional life more effectively. I*  
19  
20 *feel better than I have in years and am carving a path that is right for*  
21  
22 *me."*  
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## 29 **DISCUSSION**

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32 To our knowledge, our study is the first UK-specific study to provide quantitative data  
33  
34 showing a positive association between mentoring of junior medical doctors and better  
35  
36 training outcomes. In this study, the effect of mentoring was assessed against clinically  
37  
38 important parameters such as MRCP(UK) pass rates, ARCP pass rates, clinical  
39  
40 incidents and significant events which has not been previously attempted in literature.  
41  
42 With regards to the MRCP exams, the strongest association of mentoring with higher  
43  
44 pass rates was seen in the MRCP Part 1 exams where a statistically significant  
45  
46 difference was detected when comparing mentored trainees to two negative controls.  
47  
48 Higher pass rates in the MRCP Part 2 Written exam were also observed in mentored  
49  
50 IMGs compared to non-mentored IMG trainees, however the authors acknowledge that  
51  
52 the sample size is small in the aforementioned group and these results should be  
53  
54 interpreted with caution.  
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3 Interestingly, non-mentored IMGs (n=25) were observed to have statistically significant  
4 lower pass rates in the MRCP Part 2 exams (Written and PACES) compared to UK  
5 candidates in 2017 though a statistical difference was not detected in mentored IMGs.  
6  
7 Also, most mentored IMG trainees began their mentoring relationship before core  
8 medical training - two trainees received mentorship as Foundation Year 2 doctors and  
9 two as CMT-equivalent Clinical Fellows. Further research is needed to see if an earlier  
10 introduction of mentoring (e.g. during Foundation Training) in trainees keen on a career  
11 in medicine has any effect on training outcomes.  
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21 Although mentoring did not have a statistically significant association with trainee  
22 involvement in SEs, CIs or complaints, the vast majority of trainees who participated in  
23 mentoring found it to be a positive experience which improved confidence and aided in  
24 improved career progression. This positive feedback, considered cumulatively with  
25 current literature and our observed results, suggests that mentoring may have a  
26 genuinely positive effect on postgraduate medical education and development. Similar  
27 to current literature, qualitative analysis of feedback from our group of mentored  
28 trainees revealed that poor mentor-mentee communication and unmet expectations  
29 remain causes of a negative mentor-mentee experience. This could be addressed in the  
30 future by more frequent interval communications with the mentee to detect and address  
31 incipient problems.  
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45 It has been acknowledged that a facilitative approach is needed in order for a mentor-  
46 mentee relationship to be successful [3], [15], however this should extend not only to  
47 the mentor but also to the mentoring programme that the mentee is engaged in.  
48  
49 Although the overall impact of gender specificity of mentors remains a debate in current  
50 literature [5], [16], there are clearly female mentees who seek female mentors as role  
51 models. It is therefore important for any mentoring programme to allow mentees the  
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3 option to choose their mentors freely as well as recruit and utilise equal proportions of  
4  
5 mentors from both genders.  
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7  
8 The benefits of mentoring are not limited to the mentee. Mentoring provides the mentor  
9  
10 with personal satisfaction [17], an avenue for reflection and the exchange of experiences  
11  
12 [3] which will in turn enhance one's own professional development. It is important  
13  
14 however to stress that mentoring should not be a therapeutic exercise for the senior  
15  
16 clinician and that altruistic intentions should be coupled with appropriate training in  
17  
18 mentoring, communication and adequate organisational support. Platforms that support  
19  
20 mentors or mentees in difficulty should be made easily accessible at any point during  
21  
22 the mentoring process.  
23

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26 Mentoring is centred on developing and empowering trainees to realise and achieve  
27  
28 their objectives. It should not be restricted to helping trainees in difficulty pass their  
29  
30 training, as often in the UK, trainees access mentoring programmes because of  
31  
32 compulsory, remedial action or through support offered by higher educational  
33  
34 authorities to address exam or domain failures. The majority of CMTs from our survey,  
35  
36 together with expert opinions from some RCP Tutors, believed that mentoring should be  
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38 made available to all trainees. It is therefore important to change perspectives amongst  
39  
40 senior medical educators who are opined that mentoring should be encouraged only in  
41  
42 trainees who are struggling to progress.  
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46 With regard to career progression, our study has also shown that ARCP pass rates were  
47  
48 significantly higher in the mentored group though a contributory reason for this may be  
49  
50 that successful completion of the MRCP Part 1 exam is one of the pre-requisites for  
51  
52 obtaining an Outcome 1 (pass) at ARCP for the first year of core medical training.  
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54 However, the lower ARCP pass rates in the non-mentored group could also have been a  
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3 result of other domain failures. Therefore, further studies would be needed to identify  
4 specifically the impact of mentoring on progression in the other domains.  
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### 10 ***Limitations of the study and special considerations for future research.***

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13 The main limitations of this study arise through the potential for self-selection bias and  
14 non-response bias. Trainees within the mentored group have volunteered to be mentored  
15 and as such they may be more motivated and highly engaged than those within the non-  
16 mentored arm. This could have resulted in self-selection bias. Equally, the low response  
17 rate of the survey may have resulted in non-response bias e.g. mentored trainees could  
18 have failed their exams and did not respond to the survey causing a skew in the  
19 observed results. Both biases would have been minimised if the survey was compulsory.  
20 However, there are ethical considerations in making such a survey compulsory as  
21 trainees may not give consent to providing non-essential and personal information,  
22 especially if it involves potentially sensitive issues such as clinical incidents or  
23 complaints. We sought to address these issues by keeping all responses anonymous and  
24 keeping the survey concise. This would have encouraged more trainees to participate  
25 and improved response rates so a better representation of the positive and negative  
26 control groups could be obtained.  
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45 A further limitation of the study was the absence of a perfectly matched negative control  
46 group. In theory, the ideal control group for the study would be equally motivated  
47 CMTs who had sought mentorship with the RCP but were then matched according to  
48 individual attributes and randomised to not receive mentorship. However, this would  
49 have been both unethical and against current GMC guidance. We therefore recruited  
50 CMTs within the East of England deanery who had not received mentoring as our  
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3 negative control though we acknowledge this may have introduced selection bias.  
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5 Therefore for added rigor, we used a second control group (all UK candidates of the  
6  
7 MRCP exams) and have discussed the reasons for doing so above.  
8  
9

10 Response rates in unpaid, voluntary research surveys are well known to be poor. The  
11  
12 only exception to our knowledge is the GMC National Training Survey because its  
13  
14 completion is required before attendance at the ARCP interviews. As a result of the low  
15  
16 response rate, sample sizes in some subgroups in the study are small. Therefore, caution  
17  
18 is advised when interpreting results in subgroups where small sample sizes may have  
19  
20 affected statistical calculations and may not be accurately representative of the entire  
21  
22 population.  
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25  
26 Lastly, our study design was limited and influenced significantly by the lack of a central  
27  
28 platform for data collection and the availability of resources to collate the data.  
29  
30 Information on the exam pass rates is held by the MRCP(UK) body and information on  
31  
32 the ARCP pass rates, significant events, clinical incidents or complaints is held in  
33  
34 confidentiality by a separate body (the Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training  
35  
36 Board, JRCPTB). We found the most cost effective method of collating data from these  
37  
38 two bodies was therefore a survey targeted at trainees who are a common join between  
39  
40 the two. Other researchers would therefore need to consider these ethical and logistical  
41  
42 challenges in designing future studies.  
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## 49 **Conclusion**

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52 Our study provides new quantitative data in support of a positive association between  
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54 mentoring junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate training in  
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3 general medicine within the UK. Both quantitative and qualitative data from our study  
4 supports and reinforces current qualitative literature with similar findings in mentee  
5 experiences. Further studies are needed to demonstrate the causative effects of  
6 mentoring on the outcomes of postgraduate medical training.  
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47 Mentoring scheme described in this manuscript.  
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3 **Author's contributions:** JO and CS designed the study, conducted the literature search,  
4 performed the statistical and qualitative analyses, prepared the figures and wrote the  
5 manuscript. NM advised on statistical methods, checked the results of the analyses and  
6 edited the manuscript. SO and AD gave their expert opinion on medical education in the  
7 training of junior doctors and contributed to parts of the manuscript. YA and AS edited  
8 the manuscript prior to submission and gave their senior opinion on mentoring in  
9 medicine.

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18 **Data sharing:** No additional data is available

## 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 **REFERENCES**

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16 **Figure legends:**

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19 Figure 1. (A) Distribution of responses received into “mentored”, “not mentored” arms  
20 and responses excluded in the study. (B) Demographics of respondents grouped by  
21 gender, current stage of training, country of primary medical qualification and age  
22 group. The majority of respondents were aged between 26 years to 35 years and  
23 graduated from the UK.  
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30 Figure 2. (A) Higher pass rates in the MRCP(UK) Part 1 exam were observed in  
31 mentored trainees. (B) Mentored IMG trainees were observed to have higher pass rates  
32 in the MRCP(UK) Part 2 Written exams compared to non-mentored trainees. \* denotes  
33 information unavailable.  
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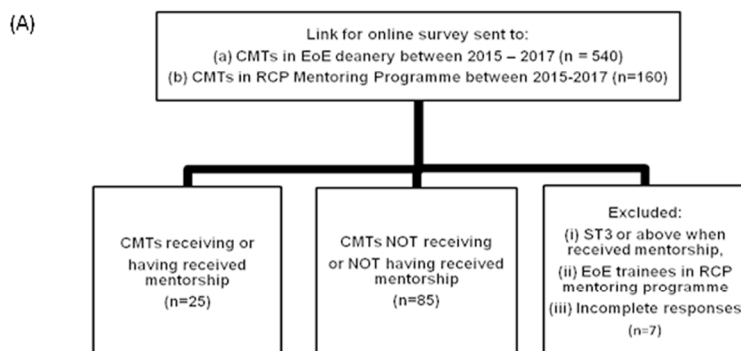
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40 Figure 3. (A) In comparing equivalent career grades, higher pass rates in the  
41 MRCP(UK) Part 1 exam were observed in mentored CMT Year 1 and CMT Year 2  
42 trainees. (B) Higher rates of Outcome 1 at ARCP was observed in mentored trainees  
43 ( $p<0.05$ ) but no statistically significant effect was observed in trainee involvement in  
44 SEs, CIs, or complaints (C).  
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51 Figure 4. The majority of trainees receiving mentorship reported it did help in their (A)  
52 confidence and (B) career progression. (C) The majority of mentored trainees provided  
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3 positive feedback and (D) most trainees in the study were of the opinion that mentoring  
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5 should be offered to all trainees. (E) Summary of descriptors from trainee feedback.  
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(B) **Demographics of Respondents**

	<i>Mentored (1)</i>	<i>Non-mentored (2)</i>	<i>p-value (1) Vs (2)</i>
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	44.0% (11/25)	48.2% (41/85)	p=0.71
Female	56.0% (14/25)	51.8% (44/85)	p=0.71
<b>Stage of training</b>			
FY1	0.0% (0/25)	0.0% (0/85)	p=1.00
FY2	0.0% (0/25)	0.0% (0/85)	p=1.00
CMT1	16.0% (4/25)	36.5% (31/85)	p=0.09
CMT2	32.0% (8/25)	34.1% (29/85)	p=0.76
ST3 or above	28.0% (7/25)	17.6% (15/85)	p=0.26
Others	24.0% (6/25)	11.8% (10/85)	p=0.13
<b>Primary degree</b>			
UK trained	72.0% (18/25)	70.6% (60/85)	p=0.89
IMG	28.0% (7/25)	29.4% (25/85)	p=0.89
<b>Age group</b>			
20 – 25yrs	0.0% (0/25)	3.5% (3/85)	p=1.00
26 – 30yrs	76.0% (19/25)	72.9% (62/85)	p=0.76
31 – 35yrs	20.0% (5/25)	20.0% (17/85)	p=1.00
36 – 40yrs	4.0% (1/25)	1.2% (1/85)	p=0.40
Above 40yrs	0.0% (0/25)	2.3% (2/85)	p=1.00

Figure 1. (A) Distribution of responses received into “mentored”, “not mentored” arms and responses excluded in the study. (B) Demographics of respondents grouped by gender, current stage of training, country of primary medical qualification and age group. The majority of respondents were aged between 26 years to 35 years and graduated from the UK.

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(A) **MRCP(UK) Pass Rates: Mentored and Non-Mentored Trainees vs 2017 UK Candidates**

	<i>Pass Rate for Non-Mentored Trainees (1)</i>	<i>Pass Rate for Mentored Trainees (2)</i>	<i>2017 UK Pass Rates (3)</i>	<i>p-value (1) vs (2)</i>	<i>p-value (2) vs (3)</i>
<i>MRCP Part 1 (Written)</i>	42.4% (36/85)	84.0% (21/25)	50.6% (2065/4079)	p < 0.01	p < 0.01
<i>MRCP Part 2 (Written)</i>	30.6% (26/85)	44.0% (11/25)	75.1% (1584/2110)	p = 0.21	p < 0.01
<i>MRCP Part 2 (PACES)</i>	29.4% (25/85)	44.0% (11/25)	56.1% (1594/2843)	p = 0.17	p = 0.23
<i>Full MRCP (UK)</i>	29.4% (25/85)	40.0% (10/25)	*	p = 0.32	*

(B) **MRCP(UK) Pass Rates: International Medical Graduates vs 2017 UK Candidates**

	<i>Pass Rate in International Medical Graduates</i>		<i>2017 UK Pass Rates (3)</i>	<i>p-value (1) vs (2)</i>	<i>p-value (2) vs (3)</i>	<i>p-value (1) vs (3)</i>
	<i>Non-Mentored (1)</i>	<i>Mentored (2)</i>				
<i>MRCP Part 1 (Written)</i>	32.0% (8/25)	71.4% (5/7)	50.6% (2065/4079)	p = 0.09	p = 0.45	p = 0.06
<i>MRCP Part 2 (Written)</i>	24.0% (6/25)	71.4% (5/7)	75.1% (1584/2110)	p < 0.05	p = 0.69	p < 0.01
<i>MRCP Part 2 (PACES)</i>	24.0% (6/25)	57.1% (4/7)	56.1% (1594/2843)	p = 0.17	p = 1.00	p < 0.01
<i>Full MRCP (UK)</i>	24.0% (6/25)	57.1% (4/7)	*	p = 0.17	*	*

Figure 2. (A) Higher pass rates in the MRCP(UK) Part 1 exam were observed in mentored trainees. (B) Mentored IMG trainees were observed to have higher pass rates in the MRCP(UK) Part 2 Written exams compared to non-mentored trainees. \* denotes information unavailable.

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## (A) MRCP Exams: Pass Rates by Stage of Training

	Mentored (1)	Non-mentored (2)	p-value (1) Vs (2)
<b>CMT Year 1</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	100.0% (4/4)	19.4% (6/31)	p < 0.01
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	75.0% (3/4)	6.5% (2/31)	p < 0.01
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	50.0% (2/4)	3.2% (1/31)	p < 0.05
Full MRCP (UK)	50.0% (2/4)	3.2% (1/31)	p < 0.05
<b>CMT Year 2</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	100.0% (8/8)	41.4% (12/29)	p < 0.01
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	25.0% (2/8)	31.0% (9/29)	p = 1.00
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	37.5% (3/8)	31.0% (9/29)	p = 1.00
Full MRCP (UK)	25.0% (2/8)	31.0% (9/29)	p = 1.00
<b>ST3 and above</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	71.4% (5/7)	86.7% (13/15)	p = 1.00
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	57.1% (4/7)	80.0% (12/15)	p = 0.33
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	57.1% (4/7)	80.0% (12/15)	p = 0.33
Full MRCP (UK)	57.1% (4/7)	80.0% (12/15)	p = 0.33
<b>Others</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	66.7% (4/6)	50.0% (5/10)	p = 0.63
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	33.3% (2/6)	30.0% (3/10)	p = 1.00
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	33.3% (2/6)	30.0% (3/10)	p = 1.00
Full MRCP (UK)	33.3% (2/6)	30.0% (3/10)	p = 1.00

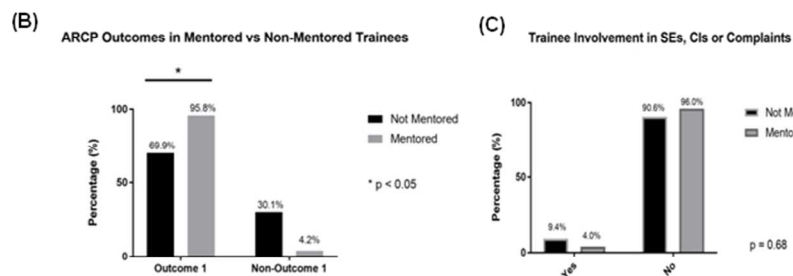


Figure 3. (A) In comparing equivalent career grades, higher pass rates in the MRCP(UK) Part 1 exam were observed in mentored CMT1 and CMT2 trainees. (B) Higher rates of Outcome 1 at ARCP was observed in mentored trainees ( $p < 0.05$ ) but no statistically significant effect was observed in trainee involvement in SEs, CIs, or complaints (C).

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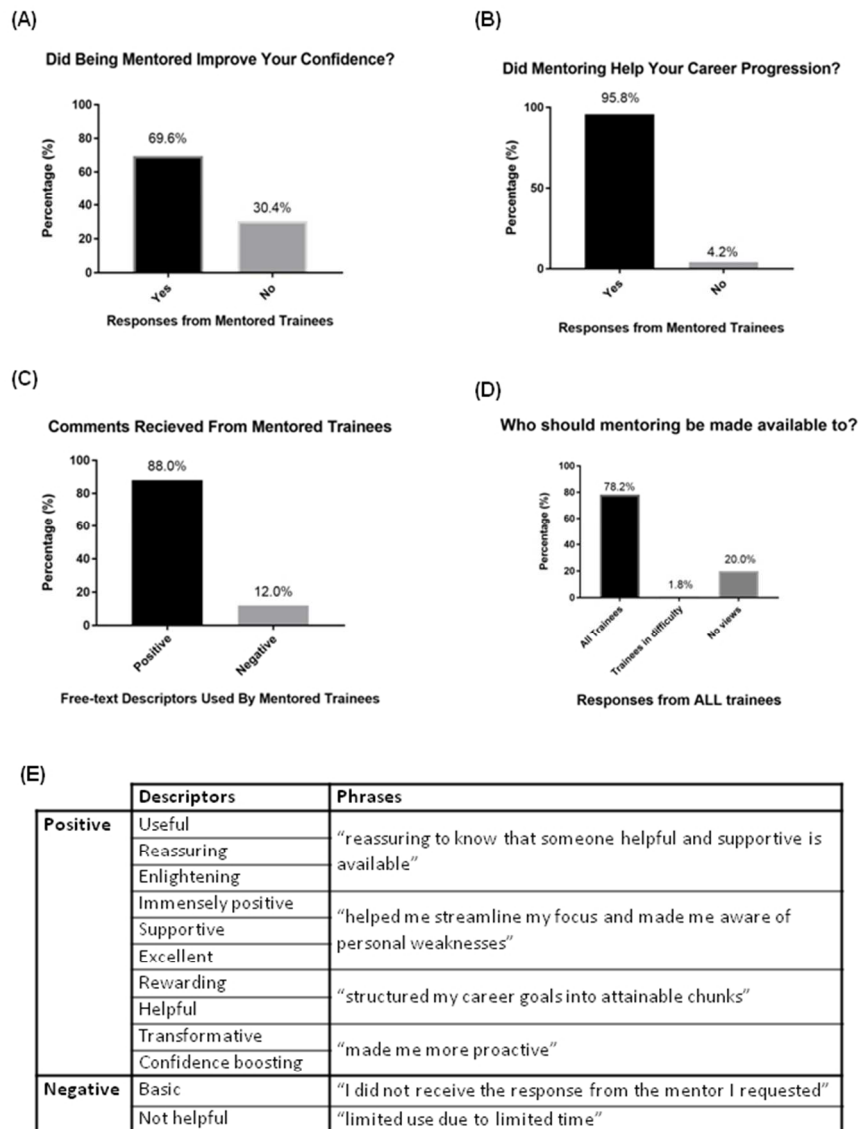


Figure 4. The majority of trainees receiving mentorship reported it did help in their (A) confidence and (B) career progression. (C) The majority of mentored trainees provided positive feedback and (D) most trainees in the study were of the opinion that mentoring should be offered to all trainees. (E) Summary of descriptors from trainee feedback.

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## Appendix 1

**MRC** | Medical Research Council

**NHS**  
**Health Research Authority**

**Do I need NHS REC approval?**

**To print your result with title and IRAS Project ID please enter your details below:**

**Title of your research:**

The Association Between Mentoring and Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in Medicine: An Observational Study

**IRAS Project ID (if available):**

**Your answers to the following questions indicate that you do not need NHS REC approval for sites in England. However, you may need other approvals.**

**You have answered 'YES' to: Is your study research?**

**You answered 'NO' to all of these questions:**

**Question Set 1**

- Is your study a clinical trial of an investigational medicinal product?
- Is your study one or more of the following: A non-CE marked medical device, or a device which has been modified or is being used outside of its CE mark intended purpose, and the study is conducted by or with the support of the manufacturer or another commercial company (including university spin-out company) to provide data for CE marking purposes?
- Does your study involve exposure to any ionising radiation?
- Does your study involve the processing of disclosable protected information on the Register of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority by researchers, without consent?
- Is your study a clinical trial involving the participation of practising midwives?

**Question Set 2**

- Will your study involve research participants identified from, or because of their past or present use of services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care), for which the UK health departments are responsible (including services provided under contract with the private or voluntary sectors), including participants recruited through these services as healthy controls?
- Will your research involve collection of tissue or information from any users of these services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care)? This may include users who have died within the last 100 years.
- Will your research involve the use of previously collected tissue or information from which the research team could identify individual past or present users of these services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care), either directly from that tissue or information, or from its combination with other tissue or information likely to come into their possession?
- Will your research involve research participants identified because of their status as relatives or carers of past or present users of these services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care)?

#### Question Set 3

- Will your research involve the storage of relevant material from the living or deceased on premises in the UK, but not Scotland, without an appropriate licence from the Human Tissue Authority (HTA)? This includes storage of imported material.
- Will your research involve storage or use of relevant material from the living, collected on or after 1st September 2006, and the research is not within the terms of consent from the donors, and the research does not come under another NHS REC approval?
- Will your research involve the analysis of DNA from bodily material, collected on or after 1st September 2006, and this analysis is not within the terms of consent for research from the donor?

#### Question Set 4

- Will your research involve at any stage intrusive procedures with adults who lack capacity to consent for themselves, including participants retained in study following the loss of capacity?
- Is your research health-related and involving prisoners?
- Does your research involve xenotransplantation?
- Is your research a social care project funded by the Department of Health?

If your research extends beyond England find out if you need NHS REC approval by selecting the 'OTHER UK COUNTRIES' button below.

**OTHER UK COUNTRIES**

**If, after visiting all relevant UK countries, this decision tool suggests that you do not require NHS REC approval [follow this link for final confirmation and further information.](#)**

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# BMJ Open

## The Association Between Mentoring and Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in Medicine: An Observational Study

Journal:	<i>BMJ Open</i>
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Article Type:	Research
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Secondary Subject Heading:	Evidence based practice
Keywords:	EDUCATION & TRAINING (see Medical Education & Training), GENERAL MEDICINE (see Internal Medicine), Clinical governance < HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT, MEDICAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

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3 **The Association Between Mentoring and Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in**  
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5 **Medicine: An Observational Study**  
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## **ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** To determine quantitatively if a positive association exists between the mentoring of junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate medical training within the UK.

**Design:** Observational study

**Participants:** 117 trainees from the East of England Deanery (non-mentored group) and the recently established Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Mentoring scheme (mentored group) who were core medical trainees (CMTs) between 2015 and 2017 completed an online survey. Trainees who received mentoring at the start of higher speciality training, incomplete responses and trainees who were a part of both the East of England deanery and RCP Mentoring scheme were excluded leaving 85 trainees in the non-mentored arm and 25 trainees in the mentored arm. Responses from a total of 110 trainees were analysed.

**Main Outcome Measures:** Pass rates of the various components of the MRCP(UK) examination (MRCP Part 1, MRCP Part 2 Written and MRCP Part 2 PACES), pass rates at the Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP), trainee involvement in significant events, clinical incidents or complaints, and trainee feedback on career progression and confidence.

**Results:** Mentored trainees reported higher pass rates of the MRCP Part 1 exam versus non-mentored trainees (84.0% vs. 42.4%,  $p < 0.01$ ). Mentored international medical graduates (IMGs) reported higher pass rates than non-mentored IMGs in the MRCP Part 2 Written exam (71.4% vs. 24.0%,  $p < 0.05$ ). ARCP pass rates in mentored trainees were observed to be higher than non-mentored trainees (95.8% vs. 69.9%,  $p < 0.05$ ).

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3 Rates of involvement in significant events, clinical incidents and complaints in both  
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5 groups did not show any statistical difference. Mentored trainees reported higher  
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7 confidence and career progression.  
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10 **Conclusions:** A positive association is observed between the mentoring of CMTs and  
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12 better training outcomes. Further studies are needed to investigate the causative effects  
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14 of mentoring in postgraduate medical training within the UK.  
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### 17 18 19 20 **Strengths and limitations of this study**

- 21 • Novel quantitative data demonstrating a positive association between mentoring  
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23 and better training-specific outcomes in core medical trainees.  
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- 26 • Adds to the limited qualitative data on the effects of mentoring in postgraduate  
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28 medical training within the UK.  
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- 31 • Potential for non-response bias and self-selection bias.  
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- 34 • Small sample size of International Medical Graduates who received mentoring.  
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- 37 • Provides preliminary evidence to support further studies investigating the  
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39 causative effects of mentoring in UK medical trainees.  
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## 44 **INTRODUCTION**

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47 Work based mentoring is a growing and encouraged practice in UK postgraduate  
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49 medical training [1]. Though qualitative data suggests that mentored trainees do  
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51 generally have a positive experience, there is little quantitative evidence to suggest this  
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53 directly and positively impacts on training-specific outcomes in postgraduate medicine  
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55 [2]. Here we studied two groups of junior medical doctors in training and compared  
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3 targeted training outcomes in a group of trainees who have received mentorship in a  
4 structured mentoring programme versus a non-mentored group. By default, mentoring is  
5 not provided to all trainees in the UK.  
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10 Mentoring is defined as "a process whereby an experienced, highly regarded, empathic  
11 person (the mentor) guides another usually younger individual (the mentee) in the  
12 development and re-examination of their own ideas, learning, and personal or  
13 professional development" [3]. It describes a voluntary and synergistic relationship  
14 which requires commitment from both parties in order to be effective [4]. Its ultimate  
15 purpose is to empower an individual to achieve set goals [4], though these goals  
16 inevitably evolve over time as the mentee develops [3].  
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26 In many studies in literature, failed mentor-mentee relationships are a result of poor  
27 communication, lack of commitment, personality differences, competition, conflicts of  
28 interest, mentor inexperience [5] and unrealistic mentee expectations [4],[6]. To  
29 minimise these problems, we included trainees from the Royal College of Physicians  
30 (RCP) Mentoring scheme, an optional and recently established mentoring programme  
31 made available to any interested core medical trainee in the UK. The programme was  
32 advertised through RCP newsletters, social media or peer recommendations. Interested  
33 trainees accessed and applied to join the scheme online. Once accepted into the  
34 programme, mentees chose their mentors based on online mentor profiles to improve  
35 mentor-mentee compatibility. Mentors in the scheme comprise senior registrars and  
36 consultants from different medical specialties. They were recruited via RCP newsletters,  
37 screened then received formal, compulsory training in mentorship and effective  
38 communication over two days of training prior to accepting mentees. Mentoring was  
39 voluntary and no financial incentives were offered to the mentors.  
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3 At the start of the mentor-mentee relationship, mentors engaged in goal setting (e.g.  
4 S.M.A.R.T objectives) to avoid unrealistic expectations by mentees. Subsequently,  
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6 mentors employed effective questioning techniques to encourage mentee reflection,  
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8 planning and decision making before dispensing advice or intervention depending on  
9  
10 which approach was most appropriate (e.g. facilitative or directive). Mentors were also  
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12 provided with a platform to obtain confidential, third party advice to ensure difficult  
13  
14 situations are dealt with appropriately.  
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18 As easy accessibility and open communication are important factors for a successful  
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20 mentor-mentee relationship [5], mentors and mentees in the RCP mentoring scheme  
21  
22 were provided the option to conduct mentor-mentee meetings either in person, online or  
23  
24 both. Mentees determined the mode, frequency and duration of the meetings. The most  
25  
26 frequent method of communication was email but this was often combined with online  
27  
28 conferencing and in-person meetings. Though some studies question the quality and  
29  
30 validity of online mentoring [7], [8], others have argued it can still be effective [9], [10]  
31  
32 and provides opportunities for mentoring when it would otherwise not be possible [9].  
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34 We have chosen not to investigate the mode of how mentoring was delivered in this  
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36 study because it makes quantitative analysis difficult and does not answer the research  
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38 question posed by this study.  
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43 The objective of our study is to determine quantitatively if a positive association exists  
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45 between the mentoring of junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate  
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47 medical training within the UK.  
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## 53 **METHODS**

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### *Rationale of Study Design*

A questionnaire was designed to enable the quantitative analysis of training-specific outcomes and the qualitative analysis of trainee feedback. Parameters for quantitative analysis were the (i) pass rates of the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCP) UK exams, (ii) pass rates of the Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) and (iii) the rate of trainee involvement in significant events (SEs), clinical incidents (CIs) and complaints.

The MRCP(UK) exam is a postgraduate exam in general internal medicine which comprises three parts: MRCP Part 1 Written, MRCP Part 2 Written and the MRCP Part 2 PACES (practical component). The MRCP(UK) diploma is awarded upon completion of all three exams and completion of the MRCP Part 1 Written exam is required before a trainee can sit for the other two exams. Completion of the MRCP(UK) diploma is expected by the end of core medical training and is a pre-requisite to joining a higher specialty training programme in medicine within the UK. Completion of these examinations is an objective indicator that a trainee has achieved the medical knowledge required for their stage of training.

In postgraduate medical training in the United States, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) assesses trainee progress in the six domains of patient care, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism and system-based practice. Each domain has "milestones" which trainees are expected to achieve at different stages of training. In the UK, a similar approach is adopted and progress is determined by the ARCP review. The ARCP review occurs annually and involves a panel of senior clinical educators and physicians assessing a trainee's progress in the domains of

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3 multiple consultant reports, educational supervisor report, advanced life support,  
4 supervised learning events, multi-source feedback, research and audit, common  
5 procedural competencies, non-procedural competencies (e.g. communication skills,  
6 history taking etc), top medical presentations, emergency medical presentations, other  
7 medical presentations, clinics and teaching attendance. The trainee submits evidence to  
8 the panel to demonstrate the domain requirements have been achieved and an outcome  
9 is awarded to the trainee after the entire review process. Outcome 1, the equivalent of a  
10 pass, is described as "satisfactory progress - achieving progress and competencies at  
11 expected rate". Other outcomes relevant to core medical training are similar to a fail.  
12 The ARCP pass rate was chosen as a parameter of interest because it is an indirect but  
13 objective indicator of a trainee's all-rounded development in both the educational  
14 curriculum and clinical practice.

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30 The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) in the UK defines a significant event (SE)  
31 as "any event (negative) thought by anyone in the team to be significant in the care of  
32 patients or conduct of practice" [11]. The term "clinical incident" (CI) is often used to  
33 describe an unintentional or unexpected event that is less severe in nature and which  
34 does not cause significant harm to a patient or member of staff. As part of the ARCP  
35 process, it is mandatory for all trainees to declare any involvement in SEs, CIs or  
36 complaints received to the ARCP panel. In this study, we also investigated if mentoring  
37 or the lack thereof, had any association with trainee involvement in SEs, CIs or  
38 complaints.

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50 Trainees from the RCP mentoring programme were chosen as the mentored group  
51 because of its nationwide recruitment which reduces the risk of inter-deanery variability  
52 if any. East of England trainees were chosen as a control group because, at the time of  
53 the study, no mentoring programme for medicine was active within the region. In



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3 contrast, other regional deaneries had separate mentoring programmes for junior doctors  
4 (e.g. London deanery, Health Education England Thames Valley deanery). This would  
5 have limited standardisation of mentored and non-mentored groups (e.g. Career grade of  
6 mentors, level of training delivered to mentors, mentees from other mentoring  
7 programmes responding to our survey etc). To provide context to our results, we also  
8 provide the pass rates for all UK candidates in the 2017 MRCP exams [12].  
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### 16 17 18 19 ***Design and Administration of Questionnaire*** 20

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22 The questionnaire comprised of 14 binary, non-Likert questions and 1 open question  
23 which enabled free text entry for the qualitative analysis of a trainee's experience of  
24 being mentored. The qualitative questions within the questionnaire also served as an  
25 internal check, so that quantitative results from the survey could be validated against  
26 trainee experience (e.g. MRCP or ARCP Pass rates vs. "Did mentoring help your career  
27 progression?"). The questionnaire was pretested on a small group of medical registrars  
28 not involved with the study to assess its ability at extracting the information required for  
29 the study. Minor revisions were made and a final Cronbach alpha score of 0.83 was  
30 achieved. The final questionnaire was sent via email as a link to an online survey to all  
31 core medical trainees (CMTs) within the East of England Deanery between 2015 and  
32 2017 (n=540 trainees, non-mentored group), and all CMTs who voluntarily registered  
33 with the RCP Mentoring scheme between 2015 and 2017 (n=160, mentored group).  
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35 None of the authors participated in the survey. The survey was subsequently conducted  
36 from 14 August 2017 to 15 September 2017 to capture data from trainees at the start of  
37 their posts. One reminder email was sent 2 weeks after the invitation email.  
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### ***Ethics***

Prior to designing the survey, the authors completed the Medical Research Council and NHS Health Research Authority decision tool ([www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk](http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk)) which determined ethical approval from a local research ethics committee (REC) was not required. This decision is attached as Appendix 1.

All participants were automatically anonymised by the online survey platform and trainees were made aware of this in their invitation email. Trainees were also informed the survey was for research purposes and participation was voluntary. Completion of the survey conferred implied consent and the authors only received anonymised responses with no trainee identifiable information. There was no risk posed to participants and participants were not paid for completed questionnaires.

### ***Patient and Public Involvement***

This study did not involve any members of the public or patients.

### ***Exclusion Criteria***

Of the 700 trainees that the invitations were sent to, responses from 117 trainees were received. Of the 117 responses, trainees who received mentoring at the start of higher speciality training; ST3 or above (n=2), incomplete responses (n=3) and trainees who were both a part of the East of England deanery and the RCP Mentoring scheme were excluded (n=2). Incomplete responses were defined as surveys with less than 50% of answered questions. The survey was conducted as a sequence of questions, one question

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3 at a time. The first half of the survey collected demographic data therefore surveys with  
4 less than 50% of answered questions were not interpretable. A total of 7 returned  
5 surveys were excluded. All of the other 110 surveys were adequately completed.  
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10 Other grades of junior doctors equivalent to CMTs (e.g. CMT grade Clinical Fellows  
11 and LAT SHOs) were classed "Others" but included in the analysis since these numbers  
12 were relatively small. The final numbers for comparison were 25 trainees in the  
13 mentored group and 85 trainees in the non-mentored group (summarised in Figure 1).  
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### 18 19 20 21 22 *Statistical and Qualitative Analyses* 23

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25 Graphpad 7.0 (by PRISM) was used to perform the statistical analyses between the two  
26 groups of trainees. The chi-squared test was used to examine whether mentoring was  
27 associated with outcomes, which were all binary, provided that frequencies within cells  
28 of a contingency table were all greater than five. Where this assumption of the chi-  
29 squared test was broken and there were fewer than five trainees in one or more cells of a  
30 contingency table, Fisher's exact test was used to calculate p-values. . The chi-squared  
31 test of association was performed for age, stage of training, qualification status and  
32 gender in mentored versus non-mentored groups. The significance level was set to 5%  
33 for all tests and all alternative hypotheses were two sided. The Koopman asymptotic  
34 method [13] was used to calculate the confidence intervals of the relative risk (RR) and  
35 the Baptista-Pike method was used to calculate confidence intervals for the Odd's Ratio  
36 (OR) [14]. Since our hypothesis tests were exploratory, we did not consider adjusting  
37 for multiple testing to be necessary. Our approach is supported by evidence that suggest  
38 making adjustments for multiple comparisons can lead to an increased number of errors  
39 of interpretation when data being evaluated are actual observations [15].  
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6 MedCalc version 18 was used to perform logistic regression. Older age of respondents  
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8 may have been a confounding factor to MRCP pass rates if respondents had more time  
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10 out of training to complete the exams. Lower pass rates of IMGs are usually observed in  
11  
12 the MRCP exams and the reason for this phenomenon is likely multi-factorial. For both  
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14 these reasons, age group (coded as 0=20-30yrs, 1=31-40yrs) and the country of the  
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16 primary medical degree (coded as UK=1, non-UK=0) of respondents were used as  
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18 covariates in the regression model together with exposure to mentoring in order to make  
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20 an assessment of any confounding of the relationship between mentoring and outcome.  
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22 Since completion of MRCP exams is expected with career progression, stage of training  
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24 was not used as a covariate in the regression model.  
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28 Qualitative responses were grouped into categories of "positive" or "negative" feedback  
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30 when applicable and descriptors provided by the trainees were summarised. Examples  
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32 of the feedback received have also been quoted verbatim in the results section for  
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34 readers to interpret.  
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## 40 **RESULTS**

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43 Of the 110 trainees in the study (85 non-mentored, 25 mentored), there were slightly  
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45 more female respondents than male in both arms of the study; 56.0% (14/25) vs. 44.0%  
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47 (11/25) in the mentored group and 51.8% (44/85) vs. 48.2% (41/85) in the non-  
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49 mentored group. There were no statistically significant differences in the career grades  
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51 of the respondents in both arms of the study and the majority of respondents were  
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53 graduates from the UK (see Table 1).  
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**Table 1.** Demographics of respondents grouped by gender, current stage of training, country of primary medical qualification and age group.

	<i>Mentored (1)</i>	<i>Non-mentored (2)</i>	<i>p-value (1) Vs (2)</i>
<b>Gender</b>			p=0.71
Male	44.0% (11/25)	48.2% (41/85)	
Female	56.0% (14/25)	51.8% (44/85)	
<b>Stage of training</b>			p=0.13
FY1	0.0% (0/25)	0.0% (0/85)	
FY2	0.0% (0/25)	0.0% (0/85)	
CMT1	16.0% (4/25)	36.5% (31/85)	
CMT2	32.0% (8/25)	34.1% (29/85)	
ST3 or above	28.0% (7/25)	17.6% (15/85)	
Others	24.0% (6/25)	11.8% (10/85)	
<b>Primary degree</b>			p=0.89
UK trained	72.0% (18/25)	70.6% (60/85)	
IMG	28.0% (7/25)	29.4% (25/85)	
<b>Age group</b>			p=0.96
20 – 30yrs	76.0% (19/25)	76.5% (65/85)	
31 – 40yrs	24.0% (6/25)	23.5% (20/85)	

*Significant differences were observed in the MRCP exam pass rates between mentored and non-mentored trainees.*

The pass rate of the MRCP Part 1 exam was observed to be significantly higher in trainees receiving mentorship compared to non-mentored East of England trainees; 84.0% (21/25) vs. 42.4% (36/85),  $p < 0.01$  (OR=7.1, 95% CI 2.4 - 20.3 and RR=2.0, 95% CI 1.4 - 2.7), see Table 2.

**Table 2.** MRCP(UK) Pass Rates for All Trainees and UK International Medical Graduates who participated in the study.

	<i>Pass Rate in all Trainees</i>			<i>Pass Rate in UK International Medical Graduates</i>			<i>2017 UK Pass Rates</i>
	<i>Mentored (1)</i>	<i>Non-Mentored (2)</i>	<i>p-value (1) vs (2)</i>	<i>Mentored (3)</i>	<i>Non-Mentored (4)</i>	<i>p-value (3) vs (4)</i>	
<i>MRCP Part 1 (Written)</i>	84.0% (21/25)	42.4% (36/85)	p < 0.01	71.4% (5/7)	32.0% (8/25)	p = 0.09	50.6% (2065/4079)
<i>MRCP Part 2 (Written)</i>	44.0% (11/25)	30.6% (26/85)	p = 0.21	71.4% (5/7)	24.0% (6/25)	p < 0.05	75.1% (1584/2110)
<i>MRCP Part 2 (PACES)</i>	44.0% (11/25)	29.4% (25/85)	p = 0.17	57.1% (4/7)	24.0% (6/25)	p = 0.17	56.1% (1594/2843)
<i>Full MRCP (UK)</i>	40.0% (10/25)	29.4% (25/85)	p = 0.32	57.1% (4/7)	24.0% (6/25)	p = 0.17	*

\* denotes information unavailable.

Logistic regression demonstrated mentoring to be strongly associated with higher pass rates of the MRCP Part 1 exam (p < 0.001) with a point estimate of effect size equating to adjusted OR=9.56, 95% CI 2.56 – 35.68 (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** Logistic Regression Table (All figures approximated to 2 decimal places).

<i>Dependent Variable</i>	<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Wald <math>\chi^2</math></i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
<i>MRCP Part 1 Outcome</i>	<i>Age</i>	0.99	0.57	0.00	0.98	0.33, 3.00
	<i>Mentoring status</i>	9.56	0.67	11.28	<0.001	2.56, 35.68
	<i>Primary qualification</i>	0.47	0.54	1.89	0.17	0.16, 1.37
<i>MRCP Part 2 (Written)</i>	<i>Age</i>	2.01	0.52	1.81	0.18	0.73, 5.53

<b>Outcome</b>	<i>Mentoring status</i>	1.67	0.49	1.13	0.29	0.65, 4.33
	<i>Primary qualification</i>	1.08	0.51	0.02	0.88	0.40, 2.90
<b>MRCP Part 2 (PACES) Outcome</b>	<i>Age</i>	1.67	0.52	0.97	0.32	0.60, 4.65
	<i>Mentoring status</i>	1.80	0.48	1.47	0.23	0.70, 4.65
	<i>Primary qualification</i>	0.91	0.51	0.03	0.85	0.33, 2.49

The MRCP Part 2 (Written) exam pass rates between mentored trainees and non-mentored East of England trainees showed no significant difference. This was further reflected in the logistic regression model ( $p = 0.29$  and adjusted OR 1.67). However, the MRCP Part 2 (Written) pass rate was lower than expected when compared to pass rates in the 2017 UK cohort. This difference may be explained by the timing of the survey which captured data from mentored CMT trainees at the start of their post and who may not have yet attempted the exam. In sub-population analyses, the pass rates of the MRCP Part 2 (Written) exam was observed to be significantly higher in mentored, international medical graduates (IMGs) compared to non-mentored IMGs; 71.4% (5/7) vs. 24.0% (6/25),  $p < 0.05$ . Supplementary Table 1 provides the MRCP pass rates by stage of training.

For the MRCP Part 2 (PACES) exam, no significant differences were observed between mentored and non-mentored groups. Non-significant results were also observed in the logistic regression model ( $p = 0.23$  and adjusted OR 1.80).

Logistic regression demonstrated that age and the country of primary qualification did not have any significant influence on the effects observed in mentoring for all components of the MRCP(UK) exam..

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6 ***Higher ARCP pass rates were observed in mentored trainees (Figure 2A).***  
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9 The ARCP review provides a comprehensive assessment of a trainee's progress in the  
10 core medical training educational curriculum and personal clinical practice. In our  
11 study, 97 trainees (24 mentored, 73 non-mentored) out of 110 had an ARCP within 12  
12 months. The ARCP pass rate (Outcome 1s) was observed to be significantly higher in  
13 mentored trainees compared to non-mentored trainees; 95.8% (23/24) vs. 69.9%  
14 (51/73),  $p < 0.05$  (OR=9.9, 95% CI 1.5 - 107 and RR=1.4, 95% CI 1.1 - 1.7).  
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25 ***Mentoring did not significantly decrease the number of Significant Events (SEs),***  
26 ***Clinical Incidents (CIs) or Complaints in Core Medical Trainees (Figure 2B).***  
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29 In our study, though the number of trainee involvement in such events were lower in the  
30 mentored group compared to the non-mentored group, 4.0% (1/25) vs. 9.4% (8/85)  
31 respectively, this was not statistically significant ( $p=0.68$ ).  
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41 ***Mentoring is associated with increased trainee confidence and better career***  
42 ***progression (Figure 3A and Figure 3B).***  
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46 In total, 69.6% (16/23) of mentored trainees in our study reported that mentoring had  
47 improved their confidence and 95.8% (23/24) reported mentoring had aided in their  
48 career progression in medicine. Exploration of reasons from the mentored trainees who  
49 did not find mentoring useful revealed their experience was limited by insufficient time,  
50 poor response from mentors and unmet expectations.  
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***The majority of mentored CMTs had a positive experience.***

When asked for their opinion on their mentoring experience, 88.0% (22/25) of mentored trainees provided positive feedback (Figure 3C). A total of 78.2% (86/110) of all trainees (mentored and non-mentored) agreed with the statement that mentoring should be made available to all CMTs. Only 1.8% (2/110) of responders agreed that mentoring should only be provided to trainees struggling with career progression or clinical work (Figure 3D). This suggests mentoring does not confer a negative connotation on the mentee by fellow colleagues. Positive and negative descriptors have been summarised in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Summary of descriptors from trainee feedback.

	<b>Descriptors</b>	<b>Phrases</b>
<b>Positive</b>	Useful	“reassuring to know that someone helpful and supportive is available”
	Reassuring	
	Enlightening	
	Immensely positive	“helped me streamline my focus and made me aware of personal weaknesses”
	Supportive	
	Excellent	
	Rewarding	“structured my career goals into attainable chunks”
	Helpful	
	Transformative	“made me more proactive”
	Confidence boosting	
<b>Negative</b>	Basic	“I did not receive the response from the mentor I requested”
	Not helpful	“limited use due to limited time”

Of the 22 mentored trainees who provided positive feedback, 81.8% (18/22) had passed MRCP Part 1, 45.5% (10/22) had passed MRCP Part 2 and 45.5% (10/22) had completed MRCP PACES. If compared to the 2017 UK cohort, the MRCP Part 1 pass

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3 rate is statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). 86.4% (19/22) of mentored trainees who had a  
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5 positive experience had received an outcome 1 for their most recent ARCP and none  
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7 had been involved in any SEs, CIs or complaints. The qualitative data discussed herein  
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9 reinforces our observations that mentoring did have a significant effect on trainees in  
10  
11 practice. Of the three mentored trainees that provided negative feedback, one trainee  
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13 described mentoring as "not helpful", one trainee described mentoring as "basic" and  
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15 one trainee did not provide any further comments.  
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22 ***Mentee selection of mentors improves compatibility and increases positive***  
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24 ***experiences.***  
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27 Analysis of positive feedback from mentored trainees provided valuable insight into the  
28  
29 importance of the specialty and gender of mentors. Two examples are provided below.  
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32 *"I was initially told there was no mentor in my speciality. After a year*  
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34 *I was re-contacted because there was a mentor in my specialty. This*  
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36 *relationship worked really well. We were able to discuss on Skype and*  
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38 *meet in person. It aided my confidence and also structured my career*  
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40 *goals into attainable chunks."*  
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43 *"This was a transformative experience for me. My mentor was an*  
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45 *excellent fit for me (I selected the gender of my mentor only and was*  
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47 *then allocated. It was important for me to be mentored by another*  
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49 *woman) and provided a space, encouragement, acceptance and deep*  
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51 *kindness whilst asking good questions. This allowed me to grow from a*  
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53 *personal perspective and steer my professional life more effectively. I*  
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3 *feel better than I have in years and am carving a path that is right for*  
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5 *me."*  
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## 10 **DISCUSSION**

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14 To our knowledge, this study is the first UK-specific study to provide quantitative data  
15 showing a positive association between mentoring of junior medical doctors and better  
16 training outcomes. Here, the effect of mentoring was assessed against clinically  
17 important parameters such as MRCP(UK) pass rates, ARCP pass rates, clinical  
18 incidents and significant events which has not been previously attempted in literature.  
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20 With regards to the MRCP exams, the strongest association of mentoring with higher  
21 pass rates was seen in the MRCP Part 1 exams where a statistically significant  
22 difference was detected when comparing mentored trainees to the non-mentored group.  
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24 Higher pass rates in the MRCP Part 2 Written exam were also observed in mentored  
25 IMGs compared to non-mentored IMG trainees, however the authors acknowledge that  
26 the sample size is small in the aforementioned group and these results should be  
27 interpreted with caution.  
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40 Interestingly, non-mentored IMGs (n=25) were observed to have statistically significant  
41 lower pass rates in the MRCP Part 2 exams (Written and PACES) compared to  
42 mentored IMGs. Also, most mentored IMG trainees began their mentoring relationship  
43 before core medical training - two trainees received mentorship as Foundation Year 2  
44 doctors and two as CMT-equivalent Clinical Fellows. Further research is needed to see  
45 if an earlier introduction of mentoring (e.g. during Foundation Training) in trainees  
46 keen on a career in medicine has any effect on training outcomes.  
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3 Although mentoring did not have a statistically significant association with trainee  
4 involvement in SEs, CIs or complaints, the vast majority of trainees who participated in  
5 mentoring found it to be a positive experience which improved confidence and aided in  
6 improved career progression. This positive feedback, considered cumulatively with  
7 current literature and our observed results, suggests that mentoring may have a  
8 genuinely positive effect on postgraduate medical education and development. Similar  
9 to current literature, qualitative analysis of feedback from our group of mentored  
10 trainees revealed that poor mentor-mentee communication and unmet expectations  
11 remain causes of a negative mentor-mentee experience. This could be addressed in the  
12 future by more frequent interval communications with the mentee to detect and address  
13 incipient problems.  
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17 It has been acknowledged that a facilitative approach is needed in order for a mentor-  
18 mentee relationship to be successful [3], [16], however this should extend not only to  
19 the mentor but also to the mentoring programme that the mentee is engaged in.  
20 Although the overall impact of gender specificity of mentors remains a debate in current  
21 literature [5], [17], there are clearly female mentees who seek female mentors as role  
22 models. It is therefore important for any mentoring programme to allow mentees the  
23 option to choose their mentors freely as well as recruit and utilise equal proportions of  
24 mentors from both genders.  
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28 The benefits of mentoring are not limited to the mentee. Mentoring provides the mentor  
29 with personal satisfaction [18], an avenue for reflection and the exchange of experiences  
30 [3] which will in turn enhance one's own professional development. It is important  
31 however to stress that mentoring should not be a therapeutic exercise for the senior  
32 clinician and that altruistic intentions should be coupled with appropriate training in  
33 mentoring, communication and adequate organisational support. Platforms that support  
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3 mentors or mentees in difficulty should be made easily accessible at any point during  
4  
5 the mentoring process.  
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8 Mentoring is centred on developing and empowering trainees to realise and achieve  
9  
10 their objectives. It should not be restricted to helping trainees in difficulty pass their  
11  
12 training, as often in the UK, trainees access mentoring programmes because of  
13  
14 compulsory, remedial action or through support offered by higher educational  
15  
16 authorities to address exam or domain failures. The majority of CMTs from our survey,  
17  
18 together with expert opinions from some RCP Tutors, believed that mentoring should be  
19  
20 made available to all trainees. It is therefore important to change perspectives amongst  
21  
22 senior medical educators who are opined that mentoring should be encouraged only in  
23  
24 trainees who are struggling to progress.  
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27  
28 With regard to career progression, our study has also shown that ARCP pass rates were  
29  
30 significantly higher in the mentored group though a contributory reason for this may be  
31  
32 that successful completion of the MRCP Part 1 exam is one of the pre-requisites for  
33  
34 obtaining an Outcome 1 (pass) at ARCP for the first year of core medical training.  
35  
36 However, the lower ARCP pass rates in the non-mentored group could also have been a  
37  
38 result of other domain failures. Therefore, further studies would be needed to identify  
39  
40 specifically the impact of mentoring on progression in the other domains.  
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#### 47 ***Limitations of the study and special considerations for future research.***

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49  
50 The main limitations of this study arise through the potential for self-selection bias and  
51  
52 non-response bias. Trainees within the mentored group have volunteered to be mentored  
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54 and as such they may be more motivated and highly engaged than those within the non-  
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3 mentored arm. This could have resulted in self-selection bias. Equally, the low response  
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5 rate of the survey may have resulted in non-response bias e.g. mentored trainees could  
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7 have failed their exams and did not respond to the survey causing a skew in the  
8  
9 observed results. Both biases would have been minimised if the survey was compulsory.  
10  
11 However, there are ethical considerations in making such a survey compulsory as  
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13 trainees may not give consent to providing non-essential and personal information,  
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15 especially if it involves potentially sensitive issues such as clinical incidents or  
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17 complaints. We sought to address these issues by keeping all responses anonymous and  
18  
19 keeping the survey concise. This would have encouraged more trainees to participate  
20  
21 and improved response rates so a better representation of the mentored and non-  
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23 mentored control groups could be obtained.  
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26  
27 A further limitation of the study was the absence of a perfectly matched control group.  
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29 In theory, the ideal control group for the study would be equally motivated CMTs who  
30  
31 had sought mentorship with the RCP but were then matched according to individual  
32  
33 attributes and randomised to not receive mentorship. However, this would have been  
34  
35 both unethical and against current GMC guidance. We therefore recruited CMTs within  
36  
37 the East of England deanery who had not received mentoring as our control group  
38  
39 though we acknowledge this may have introduced selection bias. For added rigor, we  
40  
41 have provided the MRCP performance data from 2017 (UK candidates) for comparison  
42  
43 and have discussed the reasons for doing so above.  
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46  
47 Response rates in unpaid, voluntary research surveys are well known to be poor. The  
48  
49 only exception to our knowledge is the GMC National Training Survey because its  
50  
51 completion is required before attendance at the ARCP interviews. As a result of the low  
52  
53 response rate, sample sizes in some subgroups in the study are small. Therefore, caution  
54  
55 is advised when interpreting results in subgroups where small sample sizes may have  
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3 affected statistical calculations and may not be accurately representative of the entire  
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5 population.  
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7  
8 Lastly, our study design was limited and influenced significantly by the lack of a central  
9  
10 platform for data collection and the availability of resources to collate the data.  
11  
12 Information on the exam pass rates is held by the MRCP(UK) body and information on  
13  
14 the ARCP pass rates, significant events, clinical incidents or complaints is held in  
15  
16 confidentiality by a separate body (the Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training  
17  
18 Board, JRCPTB). We found the most cost effective method of collating data from these  
19  
20 two bodies was therefore a survey targeted at trainees who are a common join between  
21  
22 the two. Other researchers would therefore need to consider these ethical and logistical  
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24 challenges in designing future studies.  
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### 31 **Conclusion**

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34 Our study provides new quantitative data in support of a positive association between  
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36 mentoring junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate training in  
37  
38 general medicine within the UK. Both quantitative and qualitative data from our study  
39  
40 supports and reinforces current qualitative literature with similar findings in mentee  
41  
42 experiences. Further studies are needed to investigate the causative effects of mentoring  
43  
44 on the outcomes of postgraduate medical training.  
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50  
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52  
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54  
55 Research (NIHR) Biomedical Research Centre based at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS  
56  
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7 (Royal College of Physicians) and Ms Sarah Munro (Basildon Hospital) for their  
8 assistance.  
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21  
22  
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26  
27 **Competing interests:** JO is a voluntary Mentor with the Royal College of Physicians  
28 Mentoring scheme described in this manuscript.  
29  
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34  
35 **Author's contributions:** JO and CS designed the study, conducted the literature search,  
36 performed the statistical and qualitative analyses, prepared the figures and wrote the  
37 manuscript. NM advised on statistical methods, checked the results of the analyses and  
38 edited the manuscript. SO and AD gave their expert opinion on medical education in the  
39 training of junior doctors and contributed to parts of the manuscript. YA and AS edited  
40 the manuscript prior to submission and gave their senior opinion on mentoring in  
41 medicine.  
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51 **Data sharing:** No additional data is available  
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### 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 **Figure and table legends:** 52

53  
54 Figure 1. Distribution of responses received into “mentored”, “not mentored” arms and  
55 responses excluded in the study.  
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3 Figure 2. (A) Higher rates of Outcome 1 at ARCP was observed in mentored trainees  
4 (p<0.05) but no statistically significant effect was observed in trainee involvement in  
5 SEs, CIs, or complaints (B).  
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10 Figure 3. The majority of trainees receiving mentorship reported it did help in their (A)  
11 confidence and (B) career progression. (C) The majority of mentored trainees provided  
12 positive feedback and (D) most trainees in the study were of the opinion that mentoring  
13 should be offered to all trainees.  
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22 Supplementary Table 1. In comparing equivalent career grades, higher pass rates in the  
23 MRCP(UK) Part 1 exam were observed in mentored CMT Year 1 and CMT Year 2  
24 trainees.  
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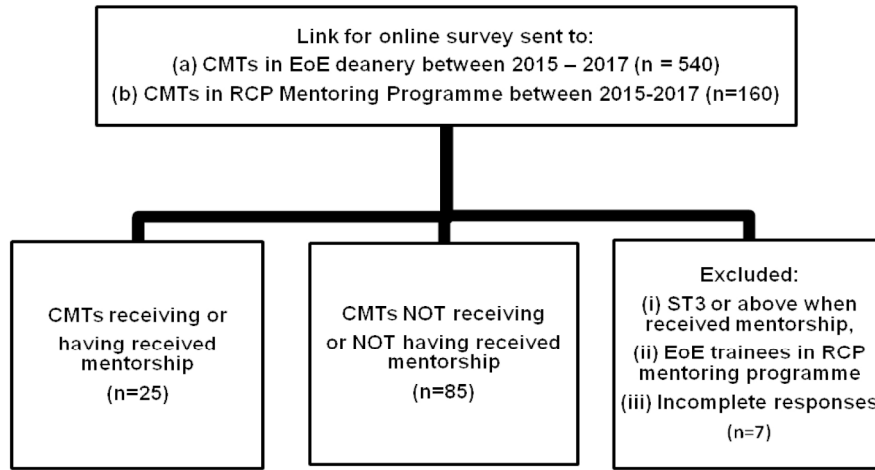


Figure 1. Distribution of responses received into "mentored", "not mentored" arms and responses excluded in the study.

184x110mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Review only

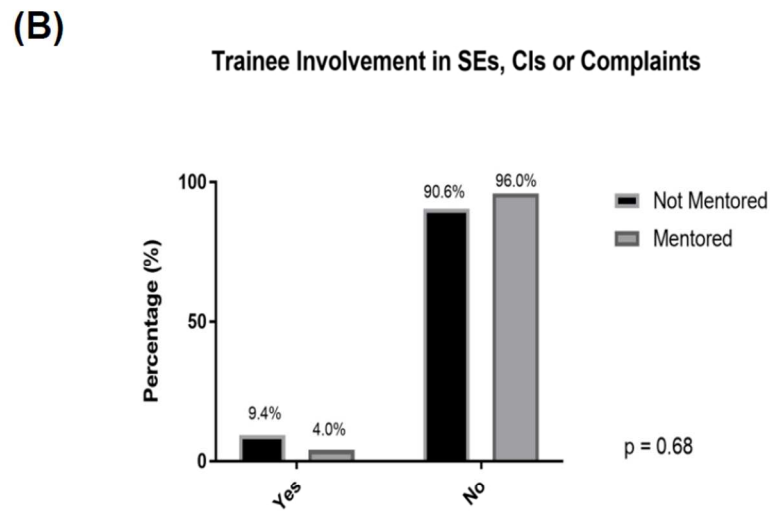
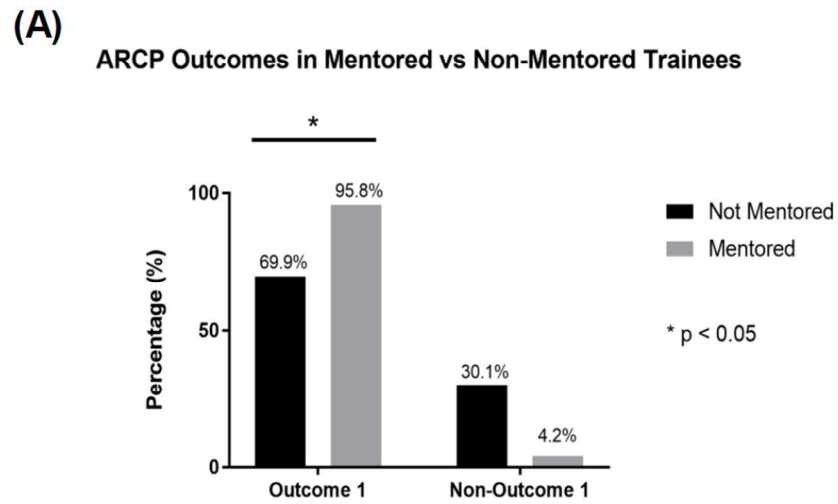


Figure 2. (A) Higher rates of Outcome 1 at ARCP was observed in mentored trainees ( $p < 0.05$ ) but no statistically significant effect was observed in trainee involvement in SEs, CIs, or complaints (B).

92x112mm (300 x 300 DPI)

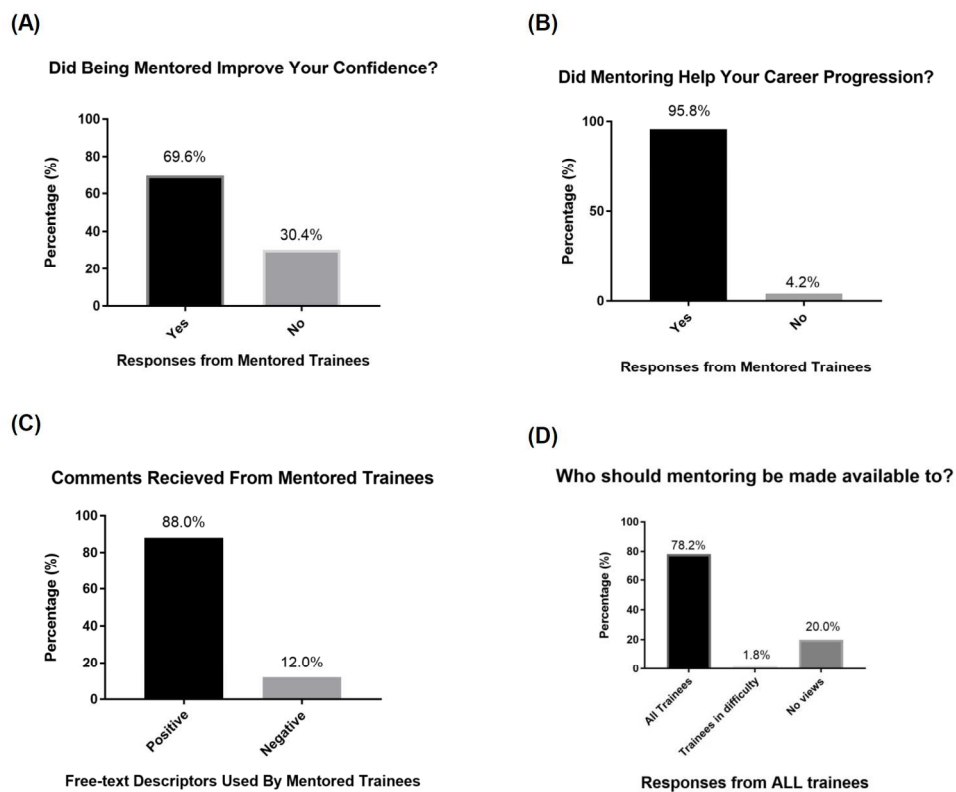


Figure 3. The majority of trainees receiving mentorship reported it did help in their (A) confidence and (B) career progression. (C) The majority of mentored trainees provided positive feedback and (D) most trainees in the study were of the opinion that mentoring should be offered to all trainees.

173x155mm (300 x 300 DPI)



## Appendix 1

**MRC** | Medical Research Council

**NHS**  
**Health Research Authority**

## Do I need NHS REC approval?

To print your result with title and IRAS Project ID please enter your details below:

**Title of your research:**

The Association Between Mentoring and Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in Medicine: An Observational Study

**IRAS Project ID (if available):**

Your answers to the following questions indicate that you **do not** need NHS REC approval for sites in England. However, you may need other approvals.

You have answered 'YES' to: Is your study research?

You answered 'NO' to all of these questions:

**Question Set 1**

- Is your study a clinical trial of an investigational medicinal product?
- Is your study one or more of the following: A non-CE marked medical device, or a device which has been modified or is being used outside of its CE mark intended purpose, and the study is conducted by or with the support of the manufacturer or another commercial company (including university spin-out company) to provide data for CE marking purposes?
- Does your study involve exposure to any ionising radiation?
- Does your study involve the processing of disclosable protected information on the Register of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority by researchers, without consent?
- Is your study a clinical trial involving the participation of practising midwives?

**Question Set 2**

- Will your study involve research participants identified from, or because of their past or present use of services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care), for which the UK health departments are responsible (including services provided under contract with the private or voluntary sectors), including participants recruited through these services as healthy controls?
- Will your research involve collection of tissue or information from any users of these services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care)? This may include users who have died within the last 100 years.
- Will your research involve the use of previously collected tissue or information from which the research team could identify individual past or present users of these services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care), either directly from that tissue or information, or from its combination with other tissue or information likely to come into their possession?
- Will your research involve research participants identified because of their status as relatives or carers of past or present users of these services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care)?

#### Question Set 3

- Will your research involve the storage of relevant material from the living or deceased on premises in the UK, but not Scotland, without an appropriate licence from the Human Tissue Authority (HTA)? This includes storage of imported material.
- Will your research involve storage or use of relevant material from the living, collected on or after 1st September 2006, and the research is not within the terms of consent from the donors, and the research does not come under another NHS REC approval?
- Will your research involve the analysis of DNA from bodily material, collected on or after 1st September 2006, and this analysis is not within the terms of consent for research from the donor?

#### Question Set 4

- Will your research involve at any stage intrusive procedures with adults who lack capacity to consent for themselves, including participants retained in study following the loss of capacity?
- Is your research health-related and involving prisoners?
- Does your research involve xenotransplantation?
- Is your research a social care project funded by the Department of Health?

If your research extends beyond England find out if you need NHS REC approval by selecting the 'OTHER UK COUNTRIES' button below.



**OTHER UK COUNTRIES**

**If, after visiting all relevant UK countries, this decision tool suggests that you do not require NHS REC approval [follow this link for final confirmation and further information.](#)**

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NOTE: If using Internet Explorer please use browser print function.

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8 **MRCP Exams: Pass Rates by Stage of Training**  
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	<i>Mentored (1)</i>	<i>Non-mentored (2)</i>	<i>p-value (1) Vs (2)</i>
<b>CMT Year 1</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	100.0% (4/4)	19.4% (6/31)	p < 0.01
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	75.0% (3/4)	6.5% (2/31)	p < 0.01
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	50.0% (2/4)	3.2% (1/31)	p < 0.05
Full MRCP (UK)	50.0% (2/4)	3.2% (1/31)	p < 0.05
<b>CMT Year 2</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	100.0% (8/8)	41.4% (12/29)	p < 0.01
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	25.0% (2/8)	31.0% (9/29)	p = 1.00
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	37.5% (3/8)	31.0% (9/29)	p = 1.00
Full MRCP (UK)	25.0% (2/8)	31.0% (9/29)	p = 1.00
<b>ST3 and above</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	71.4% (5/7)	86.7% (13/15)	p = 1.00
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	57.1% (4/7)	80.0% (12/15)	p = 0.33
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	57.1% (4/7)	80.0% (12/15)	p = 0.33
Full MRCP (UK)	57.1% (4/7)	80.0% (12/15)	p = 0.33
<b>Others</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	66.7% (4/6)	50.0% (5/10)	p = 0.63
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	33.3% (2/6)	30.0% (3/10)	p = 1.00
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	33.3% (2/6)	30.0% (3/10)	p = 1.00
Full MRCP (UK)	33.3% (2/6)	30.0% (3/10)	p = 1.00

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**STROBE 2007 (v4) checklist of items to be included in reports of observational studies in epidemiology\***  
**Checklist for cohort, case-control, and cross-sectional studies (combined)**

Section/Topic	Item #	Recommendation	Reported on page #
Title and abstract	1	(a) Indicate the study's design with a commonly used term in the title or the abstract	1, 2
		(b) Provide in the abstract an informative and balanced summary of what was done and what was found	2 - 3
<b>Introduction</b>			
Background/rationale	2	Explain the scientific background and rationale for the investigation being reported	3 - 5
Objectives	3	State specific objectives, including any pre-specified hypotheses	2, 5
<b>Methods</b>			
Study design	4	Present key elements of study design early in the paper	Abstract, 6-8
Setting	5	Describe the setting, locations, and relevant dates, including periods of recruitment, exposure, follow-up, and data collection	7, 8
Participants	6	(a) <i>Cohort study</i> —Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of selection of participants. Describe methods of follow-up <i>Case-control study</i> —Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of case ascertainment and control selection. Give the rationale for the choice of cases and controls <i>Cross-sectional study</i> —Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of selection of participants	7 - 10
		(b) <i>Cohort study</i> —For matched studies, give matching criteria and number of exposed and unexposed <i>Case-control study</i> —For matched studies, give matching criteria and the number of controls per case	-
Variables	7	Clearly define all outcomes, exposures, predictors, potential confounders, and effect modifiers. Give diagnostic criteria, if applicable	6, 7, 10, 11
Data sources/ measurement	8*	For each variable of interest, give sources of data and details of methods of assessment (measurement). Describe comparability of assessment methods if there is more than one group	6 - 8, 10, 11
Bias	9	Describe any efforts to address potential sources of bias	11, 20-22
Study size	10	Explain how the study size was arrived at	9, 10
Quantitative variables	11	Explain how quantitative variables were handled in the analyses. If applicable, describe which groupings were chosen and why	7, 8, 10
Statistical methods	12	(a) Describe all statistical methods, including those used to control for confounding	10, 11
		(b) Describe any methods used to examine subgroups and interactions	10, 11
		(c) Explain how missing data were addressed	9 - 10
		(d) <i>Cohort study</i> —If applicable, explain how loss to follow-up was addressed <i>Case-control study</i> —If applicable, explain how matching of cases and controls was addressed	7, 8, 10, 11

		<i>Cross-sectional study</i> —If applicable, describe analytical methods taking account of sampling strategy	
		(e) Describe any sensitivity analyses	Not applicable
<b>Results</b>			
Participants	13*	(a) Report numbers of individuals at each stage of study—eg numbers potentially eligible, examined for eligibility, confirmed eligible, included in the study, completing follow-up, and analysed	9, 10
		(b) Give reasons for non-participation at each stage	9, 10
		(c) Consider use of a flow diagram	Figure 1
Descriptive data	14*	(a) Give characteristics of study participants (eg demographic, clinical, social) and information on exposures and potential confounders	11, Table 1
		(b) Indicate number of participants with missing data for each variable of interest	9
		(c) <i>Cohort study</i> —Summarise follow-up time (eg, average and total amount)	Not applicable
Outcome data	15*	<i>Cohort study</i> —Report numbers of outcome events or summary measures over time	Not applicable
		<i>Case-control study</i> —Report numbers in each exposure category, or summary measures of exposure	Not applicable
		<i>Cross-sectional study</i> —Report numbers of outcome events or summary measures	12-17; Tables 2-4, Figures 2 & 3
Main results	16	(a) Give unadjusted estimates and, if applicable, confounder-adjusted estimates and their precision (eg, 95% confidence interval). Make clear which confounders were adjusted for and why they were included	12-16
		(b) Report category boundaries when continuous variables were categorized	Not applicable
		(c) If relevant, consider translating estimates of relative risk into absolute risk for a meaningful time period	Not applicable
Other analyses	17	Report other analyses done—eg analyses of subgroups and interactions, and sensitivity analyses	12-17
<b>Discussion</b>			
Key results	18	Summarise key results with reference to study objectives	18-20
Limitations	19	Discuss limitations of the study, taking into account sources of potential bias or imprecision. Discuss both direction and magnitude of any potential bias	20-22
Interpretation	20	Give a cautious overall interpretation of results considering objectives, limitations, multiplicity of analyses, results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence	18-22
Generalisability	21	Discuss the generalisability (external validity) of the study results	21-22
<b>Other information</b>			
Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study and, if applicable, for the original study on which the present article is based	23

\*Give information separately for cases and controls in case-control studies and, if applicable, for exposed and unexposed groups in cohort and cross-sectional studies.

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4 **Note:** An Explanation and Elaboration article discusses each checklist item and gives methodological background and published examples of transparent reporting. The STROBE  
5 checklist is best used in conjunction with this article (freely available on the Web sites of PLoS Medicine at <http://www.plosmedicine.org/>, Annals of Internal Medicine at  
6 <http://www.annals.org/>, and Epidemiology at <http://www.epidem.com/>). Information on the STROBE Initiative is available at [www.strobe-statement.org](http://www.strobe-statement.org).  
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For peer review only

# BMJ Open

## The Association Between Mentoring and Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in Medicine: An Observational Study

Journal:	<i>BMJ Open</i>
Manuscript ID	bmjopen-2017-020721.R3
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Manuscripts

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3 **The Association Between Mentoring and Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in**  
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5 **Medicine: An Observational Study**  
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## **ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** To determine quantitatively if a positive association exists between the mentoring of junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate medical training within the UK.

**Design:** Observational study

**Participants:** 117 trainees from the East of England Deanery (non-mentored group) and the recently established Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Mentoring scheme (mentored group) who were core medical trainees (CMTs) between 2015 and 2017 completed an online survey. Trainees who received mentoring at the start of higher speciality training, incomplete responses and trainees who were a part of both the East of England deanery and RCP Mentoring scheme were excluded leaving 85 trainees in the non-mentored arm and 25 trainees in the mentored arm. Responses from a total of 110 trainees were analysed.

**Main Outcome Measures:** Pass rates of the various components of the MRCP(UK) examination (MRCP Part 1, MRCP Part 2 Written and MRCP Part 2 PACES), pass rates at the Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP), trainee involvement in significant events, clinical incidents or complaints, and trainee feedback on career progression and confidence.

**Results:** Mentored trainees reported higher pass rates of the MRCP Part 1 exam versus non-mentored trainees (84.0% vs. 42.4%,  $p < 0.01$ ). Mentored international medical graduates (IMGs) reported higher pass rates than non-mentored IMGs in the MRCP Part 2 Written exam (71.4% vs. 24.0%,  $p < 0.05$ ). ARCP pass rates in mentored trainees were observed to be higher than non-mentored trainees (95.8% vs. 69.9%,  $p < 0.05$ ).



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3 Rates of involvement in significant events, clinical incidents and complaints in both  
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5 groups did not show any statistical difference. Mentored trainees reported higher  
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7 confidence and career progression.  
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10 **Conclusions:** A positive association is observed between the mentoring of CMTs and  
11  
12 better training outcomes. Further studies are needed to investigate the causative effects  
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14 of mentoring in postgraduate medical training within the UK.  
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### 17 18 19 20 **Strengths and limitations of this study**

- 21  
22 • Novel quantitative data demonstrating a positive association between mentoring  
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24 and better training-specific outcomes in core medical trainees.  
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28 • Adds to the limited qualitative data on the effects of mentoring in postgraduate  
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30 medical training within the UK.  
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- 33  
34 • Potential for non-response bias and self-selection bias.  
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38 • Small sample size of International Medical Graduates who received mentoring.  
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42 • Provides preliminary evidence to support further studies investigating the  
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44 causative effects of mentoring in UK medical trainees.  
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## 47 48 49 50 **INTRODUCTION**

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52 Work based mentoring is a growing and encouraged practice in UK postgraduate  
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54 medical training [1]. Though qualitative data suggests that mentored trainees do  
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56 generally have a positive experience, there is little quantitative evidence to suggest this  
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58 directly and positively impacts on training-specific outcomes in postgraduate medicine  
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60 [2]. Here we studied two groups of junior medical doctors in training and compared

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3 targeted training outcomes in a group of trainees who have received mentorship in a  
4 structured mentoring programme versus a non-mentored group. By default, mentoring is  
5 not provided to all trainees in the UK.  
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10 Mentoring is defined as "a process whereby an experienced, highly regarded, empathic  
11 person (the mentor) guides another usually younger individual (the mentee) in the  
12 development and re-examination of their own ideas, learning, and personal or  
13 professional development" [3]. It describes a voluntary and synergistic relationship  
14 which requires commitment from both parties in order to be effective [4]. Its ultimate  
15 purpose is to empower an individual to achieve set goals [4], though these goals  
16 inevitably evolve over time as the mentee develops [3].  
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26 In many studies in literature, failed mentor-mentee relationships are a result of poor  
27 communication, lack of commitment, personality differences, competition, conflicts of  
28 interest, mentor inexperience [5] and unrealistic mentee expectations [4],[6]. To  
29 minimise these problems, we included trainees from the Royal College of Physicians  
30 (RCP) Mentoring scheme, an optional and recently established mentoring programme  
31 made available to any interested core medical trainee in the UK. The programme was  
32 advertised through RCP newsletters, social media or peer recommendations. Interested  
33 trainees accessed and applied to join the scheme online. Once accepted into the  
34 programme, mentees chose their mentors based on online mentor profiles to improve  
35 mentor-mentee compatibility. Mentors in the scheme comprise senior registrars and  
36 consultants from different medical specialties. They were recruited via RCP newsletters,  
37 screened then received formal, compulsory training in mentorship and effective  
38 communication over two days of training prior to accepting mentees. Mentoring was  
39 voluntary and no financial incentives were offered to the mentors.  
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3 At the start of the mentor-mentee relationship, mentors engaged in goal setting (e.g.  
4 S.M.A.R.T objectives) to avoid unrealistic expectations by mentees. Subsequently,  
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6 mentors employed effective questioning techniques to encourage mentee reflection,  
7  
8 planning and decision making before dispensing advice or intervention depending on  
9  
10 which approach was most appropriate (e.g. facilitative or directive). Mentors were also  
11  
12 provided with a platform to obtain confidential, third party advice to ensure difficult  
13  
14 situations are dealt with appropriately.  
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18 As easy accessibility and open communication are important factors for a successful  
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20 mentor-mentee relationship [5], mentors and mentees in the RCP mentoring scheme  
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22 were provided the option to conduct mentor-mentee meetings either in person, online or  
23  
24 both. Mentees determined the mode, frequency and duration of the meetings. The most  
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26 frequent method of communication was email but this was often combined with online  
27  
28 conferencing and in-person meetings. Though some studies question the quality and  
29  
30 validity of online mentoring [7], [8], others have argued it can still be effective [9], [10]  
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32 and provides opportunities for mentoring when it would otherwise not be possible [9].  
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34 We have chosen not to investigate the mode of how mentoring was delivered in this  
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36 study because it makes quantitative analysis difficult and does not answer the research  
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38 question posed by this study.  
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43 The objective of our study is to determine quantitatively if a positive association exists  
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45 between the mentoring of junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate  
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47 medical training within the UK.  
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## 53 **METHODS**

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### ***Rationale of Study Design***

A questionnaire was designed to enable the quantitative analysis of training-specific outcomes and the qualitative analysis of trainee feedback. Parameters for quantitative analysis were the (i) pass rates of the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCP) UK exams, (ii) pass rates of the Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) and (iii) the rate of trainee involvement in significant events (SEs), clinical incidents (CIs) and complaints.

The MRCP(UK) exam is a postgraduate exam in general internal medicine which comprises three parts: MRCP Part 1 Written, MRCP Part 2 Written and the MRCP Part 2 PACES (practical component). The MRCP(UK) diploma is awarded upon completion of all three exams and completion of the MRCP Part 1 Written exam is required before a trainee can sit for the other two exams. Completion of the MRCP(UK) diploma is expected by the end of core medical training and is a pre-requisite to joining a higher specialty training programme in medicine within the UK. Completion of these examinations is an objective indicator that a trainee has achieved the medical knowledge required for their stage of training.

In postgraduate medical training in the United States, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) assesses trainee progress in the six domains of patient care, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism and system-based practice. Each domain has "milestones" which trainees are expected to achieve at different stages of training. In the UK, a similar approach is adopted and progress is determined by the ARCP review. The ARCP review occurs annually and involves a panel of senior clinical educators and physicians assessing a trainee's progress in the domains of

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3 multiple consultant reports, educational supervisor report, advanced life support,  
4 supervised learning events, multi-source feedback, research and audit, common  
5 procedural competencies, non-procedural competencies (e.g. communication skills,  
6 history taking etc), top medical presentations, emergency medical presentations, other  
7 medical presentations, clinics and teaching attendance. The trainee submits evidence to  
8 the panel to demonstrate the domain requirements have been achieved and an outcome  
9 is awarded to the trainee after the entire review process. Outcome 1, the equivalent of a  
10 pass, is described as "satisfactory progress - achieving progress and competencies at  
11 expected rate". Other outcomes relevant to core medical training are similar to a fail.  
12 The ARCP pass rate was chosen as a parameter of interest because it is an indirect but  
13 objective indicator of a trainee's all-rounded development in both the educational  
14 curriculum and clinical practice.

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30 The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) in the UK defines a significant event (SE)  
31 as "any event (negative) thought by anyone in the team to be significant in the care of  
32 patients or conduct of practice" [11]. The term "clinical incident" (CI) is often used to  
33 describe an unintentional or unexpected event that is less severe in nature and which  
34 does not cause significant harm to a patient or member of staff. As part of the ARCP  
35 process, it is mandatory for all trainees to declare any involvement in SEs, CIs or  
36 complaints received to the ARCP panel. In this study, we also investigated if mentoring  
37 or the lack thereof, had any association with trainee involvement in SEs, CIs or  
38 complaints.

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50 Trainees from the RCP mentoring programme were chosen as the mentored group  
51 because of its nationwide recruitment which reduces the risk of inter-deanery variability  
52 if any. East of England trainees were chosen as a control group because, at the time of  
53 the study, no mentoring programme for medicine was active within the region. In

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3 contrast, other regional deaneries had separate mentoring programmes for junior doctors  
4 (e.g. London deanery, Health Education England Thames Valley deanery). This would  
5 have limited standardisation of mentored and non-mentored groups (e.g. Career grade of  
6 mentors, level of training delivered to mentors, mentees from other mentoring  
7 programmes responding to our survey etc). To provide context to our results, we also  
8 provide the pass rates for all UK candidates in the 2017 MRCP exams [12].  
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### 19 ***Design and Administration of Questionnaire***

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22 The questionnaire comprised of 14 binary, non-Likert questions and 1 open question  
23 which enabled free text entry for the qualitative analysis of a trainee's experience of  
24 being mentored. The qualitative questions within the questionnaire also served as an  
25 internal check, so that quantitative results from the survey could be validated against  
26 trainee experience (e.g. MRCP or ARCP Pass rates vs. “Did mentoring help your career  
27 progression?”). The questionnaire was pretested on a small group of medical registrars  
28 not involved with the study to assess its ability at extracting the information required for  
29 the study. Minor revisions were made and a final Cronbach alpha score of 0.83 was  
30 achieved. The final questionnaire was sent via email as a link to an online survey to all  
31 core medical trainees (CMTs) within the East of England Deanery between 2015 and  
32 2017 (n=540 trainees, non-mentored group), and all CMTs who voluntarily registered  
33 with the RCP Mentoring scheme between 2015 and 2017 (n=160, mentored group).  
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None of the authors participated in the survey. The survey was subsequently conducted from 14 August 2017 to 15 September 2017 to capture data from trainees at the start of their posts. One reminder email was sent 2 weeks after the invitation email.

### ***Ethics***

Prior to designing the survey, the authors completed the Medical Research Council and NHS Health Research Authority decision tool ([www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk](http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk)) which determined ethical approval from a local research ethics committee (REC) was not required. This decision is attached as Appendix 1.

All participants were automatically anonymised by the online survey platform and trainees were made aware of this in their invitation email. Trainees were also informed the survey was for research purposes and participation was voluntary. Completion of the survey conferred implied consent and the authors only received anonymised responses with no trainee identifiable information. There was no risk posed to participants and participants were not paid for completed questionnaires.

### ***Patient and Public Involvement***

This study did not involve any members of the public or patients.

### ***Exclusion Criteria***

Of the 700 trainees that the invitations were sent to, responses from 117 trainees were received. Of the 117 responses, trainees who received mentoring at the start of higher speciality training; ST3 or above (n=2), incomplete responses (n=3) and trainees who were both a part of the East of England deanery and the RCP Mentoring scheme (n=2) were excluded. Incomplete responses were defined as surveys with less than 50% of answered questions. The survey was conducted as a sequence of questions, one question

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3 at a time. The first half of the survey collected demographic data therefore surveys with  
4 less than 50% of answered questions were not interpretable. A total of 7 returned  
5 surveys were excluded. All of the other 110 surveys were adequately completed.  
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10 Other grades of junior doctors equivalent to CMTs (e.g. CMT grade Clinical Fellows  
11 and LAT SHOs) were classed "Others" but included in the analysis since these numbers  
12 were relatively small. The final numbers for comparison were 25 trainees in the  
13 mentored group and 85 trainees in the non-mentored group (summarised in Figure 1).  
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### 18 19 20 21 22 *Statistical and Qualitative Analyses* 23

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25 Graphpad 7.0 (by PRISM) was used to perform the statistical analyses between the two  
26 groups of trainees. The chi-squared test was used to examine whether mentoring was  
27 associated with outcomes, which were all binary, provided that frequencies within cells  
28 of a contingency table were all greater than five. Where this assumption of the chi-  
29 squared test was broken and there were fewer than five trainees in one or more cells of a  
30 contingency table, Fisher's exact test was used to calculate p-values. . The chi-squared  
31 test of association was performed for age, stage of training, qualification status and  
32 gender in mentored versus non-mentored groups. The significance level was set to 5%  
33 for all tests and all alternative hypotheses were two sided. The Koopman asymptotic  
34 method [13] was used to calculate the confidence intervals of the relative risk (RR) and  
35 the Baptista-Pike method was used to calculate confidence intervals for the Odd's Ratio  
36 (OR) [14]. Since our hypothesis tests were exploratory, we did not consider adjusting  
37 for multiple testing to be necessary. Our approach is supported by evidence that suggest  
38 making adjustments for multiple comparisons can lead to an increased number of errors  
39 of interpretation when data being evaluated are actual observations [15].  
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6 MedCalc version 18 was used to perform logistic regression. Older age of respondents  
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8 may have been a confounding factor to MRCP pass rates if respondents had more time  
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10 out of training to complete the exams. Lower pass rates of IMGs are usually observed in  
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12 the MRCP exams and the reason for this phenomenon is likely multi-factorial. For both  
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14 these reasons, age group (coded as 0=20-30yrs, 1=31-40yrs) and the country of the  
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16 primary medical degree (coded as UK=1, non-UK=0) of respondents were used as  
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18 covariates in the regression model together with exposure to mentoring in order to make  
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20 an assessment of any confounding of the relationship between mentoring and outcome.  
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22 Since completion of MRCP exams is expected with career progression, stage of training  
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24 was not used as a covariate in the regression model.  
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28 Qualitative responses were grouped into categories of "positive" or "negative" feedback  
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30 when applicable and descriptors provided by the trainees were summarised. Examples  
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32 of the feedback received have also been quoted verbatim in the results section for  
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34 readers to interpret.  
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## 40 **RESULTS**

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43 Of the 110 trainees in the study (85 non-mentored, 25 mentored), there were slightly  
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45 more female respondents than male in both arms of the study; 56.0% (14/25) vs. 44.0%  
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47 (11/25) in the mentored group and 51.8% (44/85) vs. 48.2% (41/85) in the non-  
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49 mentored group. There were no statistically significant differences in the career grades  
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51 of the respondents in both arms of the study and the majority of respondents were  
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53 graduates from the UK (see Table 1).  
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**Table 1.** Demographics of respondents grouped by gender, current stage of training, country of primary medical qualification and age group.

	<i>Mentored (1)</i>	<i>Non-mentored (2)</i>	<i>p-value (1) Vs (2)</i>
<b>Gender</b>			p=0.71
Male	44.0% (11/25)	48.2% (41/85)	
Female	56.0% (14/25)	51.8% (44/85)	
<b>Stage of training</b>			p=0.13
FY1	0.0% (0/25)	0.0% (0/85)	
FY2	0.0% (0/25)	0.0% (0/85)	
CMT1	16.0% (4/25)	36.5% (31/85)	
CMT2	32.0% (8/25)	34.1% (29/85)	
ST3 or above	28.0% (7/25)	17.6% (15/85)	
Others	24.0% (6/25)	11.8% (10/85)	
<b>Primary degree</b>			p=0.89
UK trained	72.0% (18/25)	70.6% (60/85)	
IMG	28.0% (7/25)	29.4% (25/85)	
<b>Age group</b>			p=0.96
20 – 30yrs	76.0% (19/25)	76.5% (65/85)	
31 – 40yrs	24.0% (6/25)	23.5% (20/85)	

**Significant differences were observed in the MRCP exam pass rates between mentored and non-mentored trainees.**

The pass rate of the MRCP Part 1 exam was observed to be significantly higher in trainees receiving mentorship compared to non-mentored East of England trainees; 84.0% (21/25) vs. 42.4% (36/85),  $p < 0.01$  (OR=7.1, 95% CI 2.4 - 20.3 and RR=2.0, 95% CI 1.4 - 2.7), see Table 2.

**Table 2.** MRCP(UK) Pass Rates for All Trainees and UK International Medical Graduates who participated in the study.

	<i>Pass Rate in all Trainees</i>			<i>Pass Rate in UK International Medical Graduates</i>			<i>2017 UK Pass Rates</i>
	<i>Mentored (1)</i>	<i>Non-Mentored (2)</i>	<i>p-value (1) vs (2)</i>	<i>Mentored (3)</i>	<i>Non-Mentored (4)</i>	<i>p-value (3) vs (4)</i>	
<i>MRCP Part 1 (Written)</i>	84.0% (21/25)	42.4% (36/85)	p < 0.01	71.4% (5/7)	32.0% (8/25)	p = 0.09	50.6% (2065/4079)
<i>MRCP Part 2 (Written)</i>	44.0% (11/25)	30.6% (26/85)	p = 0.21	71.4% (5/7)	24.0% (6/25)	p < 0.05	75.1% (1584/2110)
<i>MRCP Part 2 (PACES)</i>	44.0% (11/25)	29.4% (25/85)	p = 0.17	57.1% (4/7)	24.0% (6/25)	p = 0.17	56.1% (1594/2843)
<i>Full MRCP (UK)</i>	40.0% (10/25)	29.4% (25/85)	p = 0.32	57.1% (4/7)	24.0% (6/25)	p = 0.17	*

\* denotes information unavailable.

Logistic regression demonstrated mentoring to be strongly associated with higher pass rates of the MRCP Part 1 exam ( $p < 0.001$ ) with a point estimate of effect size equating to adjusted OR=9.56, 95% CI 2.56 – 35.68 (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** Logistic Regression Table (All figures approximated to 2 decimal places).

<i>Dependent Variable</i>	<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Wald <math>\chi^2</math></i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
<i>MRCP Part 1 Outcome</i>	<i>Age</i>	0.99	0.57	0.00	0.98	0.33, 3.00
	<i>Mentoring status</i>	9.56	0.67	11.28	<0.001	2.56, 35.68
	<i>Primary qualification</i>	0.47	0.54	1.89	0.17	0.16, 1.37
<i>MRCP Part 2 (Written)</i>	<i>Age</i>	2.01	0.52	1.81	0.18	0.73, 5.53

<b>Outcome</b>	<i>Mentoring status</i>	1.67	0.49	1.13	0.29	0.65, 4.33
	<i>Primary qualification</i>	1.08	0.51	0.02	0.88	0.40, 2.90
<b>MRCP Part 2 (PACES) Outcome</b>	<i>Age</i>	1.67	0.52	0.97	0.32	0.60, 4.65
	<i>Mentoring status</i>	1.80	0.48	1.47	0.23	0.70, 4.65
	<i>Primary qualification</i>	0.91	0.51	0.03	0.85	0.33, 2.49

*Note: MRCP Part 2 (Written) and MRCP Part 2 (PACES) outcomes were omitted when MRCP Part 1 Outcome was used as the dependent variable and vice versa.*

The MRCP Part 2 (Written) exam pass rates between mentored trainees and non-mentored East of England trainees showed no significant difference. This was further reflected in the logistic regression model ( $p = 0.29$  and adjusted OR 1.67). However, the MRCP Part 2 (Written) pass rate was lower than expected when compared to pass rates in the 2017 UK cohort. This difference may be explained by the timing of the survey which captured data from mentored CMT trainees at the start of their post and who may not have yet attempted the exam. In sub-population analyses, the pass rates of the MRCP Part 2 (Written) exam was observed to be significantly higher in mentored, international medical graduates (IMGs) compared to non-mentored IMGs; 71.4% (5/7) vs. 24.0% (6/25),  $p < 0.05$ . Supplementary Table 1 provides the MRCP pass rates by stage of training.

For the MRCP Part 2 (PACES) exam, no significant differences were observed between mentored and non-mentored groups. Non-significant results were also observed in the logistic regression model ( $p = 0.23$  and adjusted OR 1.80).

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3 Logistic regression demonstrated that age and the country of primary qualification did  
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5 not have any significant influence on the effects observed in mentoring for all  
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7 components of the MRCP(UK) exam..  
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13 ***Higher ARCP pass rates were observed in mentored trainees.***  
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16 The ARCP review provides a comprehensive assessment of a trainee's progress in the  
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18 core medical training educational curriculum and personal clinical practice. In our  
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20 study, 97 trainees (24 mentored, 73 non-mentored) out of 110 had an ARCP within 12  
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22 months. The ARCP pass rate (Outcome 1s) was observed to be significantly higher in  
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24 mentored trainees (Figure 2A) compared to non-mentored trainees; 95.8% (23/24) vs.  
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26 69.9% (51/73),  $p < 0.05$  (OR=9.9, 95% CI 1.5 - 107 and RR=1.4, 95% CI 1.1 - 1.7).  
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33 ***Mentoring did not significantly decrease the number of Significant Events (SEs),***  
34  
35 ***Clinical Incidents (CIs) or Complaints in Core Medical Trainees.***  
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38 In our study, though the number of trainee involvement in such events were lower in the  
39  
40 mentored group compared to the non-mentored group (Figure 2B), 4.0% (1/25) vs.  
41  
42 9.4% (8/85) respectively, this was not statistically significant ( $p=0.68$ ).  
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49 ***Mentoring is associated with increased trainee confidence and better career***  
50  
51 ***progression.***  
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54 In total, 69.6% (16/23) of mentored trainees in our study reported that mentoring had  
55  
56 improved their confidence (Figure 3A) and 95.8% (23/24) reported mentoring had aided  
57

in their career progression in medicine (Figure 3B). Exploration of reasons from the mentored trainees who did not find mentoring useful revealed their experience was limited by insufficient time, poor response from mentors and unmet expectations.

***The majority of mentored CMTs had a positive experience.***

When asked for their opinion on their mentoring experience, 88.0% (22/25) of mentored trainees provided positive feedback (Figure 3C). A total of 78.2% (86/110) of all trainees (mentored and non-mentored) agreed with the statement that mentoring should be made available to all CMTs. Only 1.8% (2/110) of responders agreed that mentoring should only be provided to trainees struggling with career progression or clinical work (Figure 3D). This suggests mentoring does not confer a negative connotation on the mentee by fellow colleagues. Positive and negative descriptors have been summarised in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Summary of descriptors from trainee feedback.

	<b>Descriptors</b>	<b>Phrases</b>
<b>Positive</b>	Useful	“reassuring to know that someone helpful and supportive is available”
	Reassuring	
	Enlightening	
	Immensely positive	“helped me streamline my focus and made me aware of personal weaknesses”
	Supportive	
	Excellent	
	Rewarding	“structured my career goals into attainable chunks”
	Helpful	
	Transformative	“made me more proactive”
Confidence boosting		
<b>Negative</b>	Basic	“I did not receive the response from the mentor I requested”
	Not helpful	“limited use due to limited time”

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3 Of the 22 mentored trainees who provided positive feedback, 81.8% (18/22) had passed  
4 MRCP Part 1, 45.5% (10/22) had passed MRCP Part 2 and 45.5% (10/22) had  
5 completed MRCP PACES. If compared to the 2017 UK cohort, the MRCP Part 1 pass  
6 rate is statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). 86.4% (19/22) of mentored trainees who had a  
7 positive experience had received an outcome 1 for their most recent ARCP and none  
8 had been involved in any SEs, CIs or complaints. The qualitative data discussed herein  
9 reinforces our observations that mentoring did have a significant effect on trainees in  
10 practice. Of the three mentored trainees that provided negative feedback, one trainee  
11 described mentoring as "not helpful", one trainee described mentoring as "basic" and  
12 one trainee did not provide any further comments.  
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28 ***Mentee selection of mentors improves compatibility and increases positive***  
29 ***experiences.***  
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32  
33 Analysis of positive feedback from mentored trainees provided valuable insight into the  
34 importance of the specialty and gender of mentors. Two examples are provided below.  
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37

38 *"I was initially told there was no mentor in my speciality. After a year*  
39 *I was re-contacted because there was a mentor in my speciality. This*  
40 *relationship worked really well. We were able to discuss on Skype and*  
41 *meet in person. It aided my confidence and also structured my career*  
42 *goals into attainable chunks."*  
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50 *"This was a transformative experience for me. My mentor was an*  
51 *excellent fit for me (I selected the gender of my mentor only and was*  
52 *then allocated. It was important for me to be mentored by another*  
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3 *woman) and provided a space, encouragement, acceptance and deep*  
4 *kindness whilst asking good questions. This allowed me to grow from a*  
5 *personal perspective and steer my professional life more effectively. I*  
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7 *feel better than I have in years and am carving a path that is right for*  
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9 *me."*  
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## 18 **DISCUSSION**

19  
20 To our knowledge, this study is the first UK-specific study to provide quantitative data  
21 showing a positive association between mentoring of junior medical doctors and better  
22 training outcomes. Here, the effect of mentoring was assessed against clinically  
23 important parameters such as MRCP(UK) pass rates, ARCP pass rates, clinical  
24 incidents and significant events which has not been previously attempted in literature.  
25  
26 With regards to the MRCP exams, the strongest association of mentoring with higher  
27 pass rates was seen in the MRCP Part 1 exams where a statistically significant  
28 difference was detected when comparing mentored trainees to the non-mentored group.  
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30 Higher pass rates in the MRCP Part 2 Written exam were also observed in mentored  
31 IMGs compared to non-mentored IMG trainees, however the authors acknowledge that  
32 the sample size is small in the aforementioned group and these results should be  
33 interpreted with caution.  
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47 Interestingly, non-mentored IMGs (n=25) were observed to have statistically significant  
48 lower pass rates in the MRCP Part 2 exams (Written and PACES) compared to  
49 mentored IMGs. Also, most mentored IMG trainees began their mentoring relationship  
50 before core medical training - two trainees received mentorship as Foundation Year 2  
51 doctors and two as CMT-equivalent Clinical Fellows. Further research is needed to see  
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3 if an earlier introduction of mentoring (e.g. during Foundation Training) in trainees  
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5 keen on a career in medicine has any effect on training outcomes.  
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8 Although mentoring did not have a statistically significant association with trainee  
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10 involvement in SEs, CIs or complaints, the vast majority of trainees who participated in  
11  
12 mentoring found it to be a positive experience which improved confidence and aided in  
13  
14 improved career progression. This positive feedback, considered cumulatively with  
15  
16 current literature and our observed results, suggests that mentoring may have a  
17  
18 genuinely positive effect on postgraduate medical education and development. Similar  
19  
20 to current literature, qualitative analysis of feedback from our group of mentored  
21  
22 trainees revealed that poor mentor-mentee communication and unmet expectations  
23  
24 remain causes of a negative mentor-mentee experience. This could be addressed in the  
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26 future by more frequent interval communications with the mentee to detect and address  
27  
28 incipient problems.  
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32 It has been acknowledged that a facilitative approach is needed in order for a mentor-  
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34 mentee relationship to be successful [3], [16], however this should extend not only to  
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36 the mentor but also to the mentoring programme that the mentee is engaged in.  
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38 Although the overall impact of gender specificity of mentors remains a debate in current  
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40 literature [5], [17], there are clearly female mentees who seek female mentors as role  
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42 models. It is therefore important for any mentoring programme to allow mentees the  
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44 option to choose their mentors freely as well as recruit and utilise equal proportions of  
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46 mentors from both genders.  
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50 The benefits of mentoring are not limited to the mentee. Mentoring provides the mentor  
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52 with personal satisfaction [18], an avenue for reflection and the exchange of experiences  
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54 [3] which will in turn enhance one's own professional development. It is important  
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3 however to stress that mentoring should not be a therapeutic exercise for the senior  
4 clinician and that altruistic intentions should be coupled with appropriate training in  
5 mentoring, communication and adequate organisational support. Platforms that support  
6 mentors or mentees in difficulty should be made easily accessible at any point during  
7 the mentoring process.  
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14 Mentoring is centred on developing and empowering trainees to realise and achieve  
15 their objectives. It should not be restricted to helping trainees in difficulty pass their  
16 training, as often in the UK, trainees access mentoring programmes because of  
17 compulsory, remedial action or through support offered by higher educational  
18 authorities to address exam or domain failures. The majority of CMTs from our survey,  
19 together with expert opinions from some RCP Tutors, believed that mentoring should be  
20 made available to all trainees. It is therefore important to change perspectives amongst  
21 senior medical educators who are opined that mentoring should be encouraged only in  
22 trainees who are struggling to progress.  
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34 With regard to career progression, our study has also shown that ARCP pass rates were  
35 significantly higher in the mentored group though a contributory reason for this may be  
36 that successful completion of the MRCP Part 1 exam is one of the pre-requisites for  
37 obtaining an Outcome 1 (pass) at ARCP for the first year of core medical training.  
38 However, the lower ARCP pass rates in the non-mentored group could also have been a  
39 result of other domain failures. Therefore, further studies would be needed to identify  
40 specifically the impact of mentoring on progression in the other domains.  
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53 ***Limitations of the study and special considerations for future research.***  
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3 The main limitations of this study arise through the potential for self-selection bias and  
4 non-response bias. Trainees within the mentored group have volunteered to be mentored  
5 and as such they may be more motivated and highly engaged than those within the non-  
6 mentored arm. This could have resulted in self-selection bias. Equally, the low response  
7 rate of the survey may have resulted in non-response bias e.g. mentored trainees could  
8 have failed their exams and did not respond to the survey causing a skew in the  
9 observed results. Both biases would have been minimised if the survey was compulsory.  
10 However, there are ethical considerations in making such a survey compulsory as  
11 trainees may not give consent to providing non-essential and personal information,  
12 especially if it involves potentially sensitive issues such as clinical incidents or  
13 complaints. We sought to address these issues by keeping all responses anonymous and  
14 keeping the survey concise. This would have encouraged more trainees to participate  
15 and improved response rates so a better representation of the mentored and non-  
16 mentored control groups could be obtained.

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34 A further limitation of the study was the absence of a perfectly matched control group.  
35 In theory, the ideal control group for the study would be equally motivated CMTs who  
36 had sought mentorship with the RCP but were then matched according to individual  
37 attributes and randomised to not receive mentorship. However, this would have been  
38 both unethical and against current GMC guidance. We therefore recruited CMTs within  
39 the East of England deanery who had not received mentoring as our control group  
40 though we acknowledge this may have introduced selection bias. For added rigor, we  
41 have provided the MRCP performance data from 2017 (UK candidates) for comparison  
42 and have discussed the reasons for doing so above.

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54 Response rates in unpaid, voluntary research surveys are well known to be poor. The  
55 only exception to our knowledge is the GMC National Training Survey because its

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3 completion is required before attendance at the ARCP interviews. As a result of the low  
4  
5 response rate, sample sizes in some subgroups in the study are small. Therefore, caution  
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7 is advised when interpreting results in subgroups where small sample sizes may have  
8  
9 affected statistical calculations and may not be accurately representative of the entire  
10  
11 population.  
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14 Lastly, our study design was limited and influenced significantly by the lack of a central  
15  
16 platform for data collection and the availability of resources to collate the data.  
17  
18 Information on the exam pass rates is held by the MRCP(UK) body and information on  
19  
20 the ARCP pass rates, significant events, clinical incidents or complaints is held in  
21  
22 confidentiality by a separate body (the Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training  
23  
24 Board, JRCPTB). We found the most cost effective method of collating data from these  
25  
26 two bodies was therefore a survey targeted at trainees who are a common join between  
27  
28 the two. Other researchers would therefore need to consider these ethical and logistical  
29  
30 challenges in designing future studies.  
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### 33 34 35 36 37 **Conclusion**

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40 Our study provides new quantitative data in support of a positive association between  
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42 mentoring junior doctors and better training outcomes in postgraduate training in  
43  
44 general medicine within the UK. Both quantitative and qualitative data from our study  
45  
46 supports and reinforces current qualitative literature with similar findings in mentee  
47  
48 experiences. Further studies are needed to investigate the causative effects of mentoring  
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50 on the outcomes of postgraduate medical training.  
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28  
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35 Mentoring scheme described in this manuscript.  
36  
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42 **Author's contributions:** JO and CS designed the study, conducted the literature search,  
43 performed the statistical and qualitative analyses, prepared the figures and wrote the  
44 manuscript. NM advised on statistical methods, checked the results of the analyses and  
45 edited the manuscript. SO and AD gave their expert opinion on medical education in the  
46 training of junior doctors and contributed to parts of the manuscript. YA and AS edited  
47 the manuscript prior to submission and gave their senior opinion on mentoring in  
48 medicine.  
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3 **Data sharing:** No additional data is available  
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55 **Figure and table legends:**  
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3 Figure 1. Distribution of responses received into “mentored”, “not mentored” arms and  
4 responses excluded in the study.  
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8 Figure 2. (A) Higher rates of Outcome 1 at ARCP was observed in mentored trainees  
9 (p<0.05) but no statistically significant effect was observed in trainee involvement in  
10 SEs, CIs, or complaints (B).  
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15 Figure 3. The majority of trainees receiving mentorship reported it did help in their (A)  
16 confidence and (B) career progression. (C) The majority of mentored trainees provided  
17 positive feedback and (D) most trainees in the study were of the opinion that mentoring  
18 should be offered to all trainees.  
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27 Supplementary Table 1. In comparing equivalent career grades, higher pass rates in the  
28 MRCP(UK) Part 1 exam were observed in mentored CMT Year 1 and CMT Year 2  
29 trainees.  
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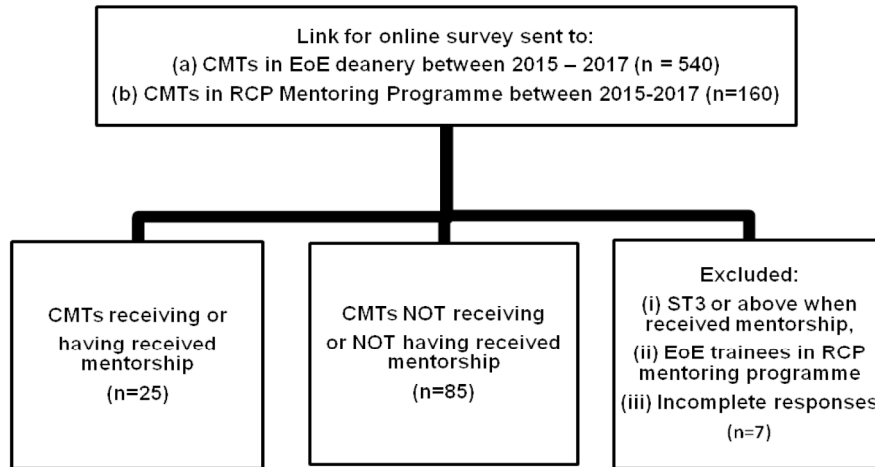


Figure 1. Distribution of responses received into “mentored”, “not mentored” arms and responses excluded in the study.

184x110mm (300 x 300 DPI)

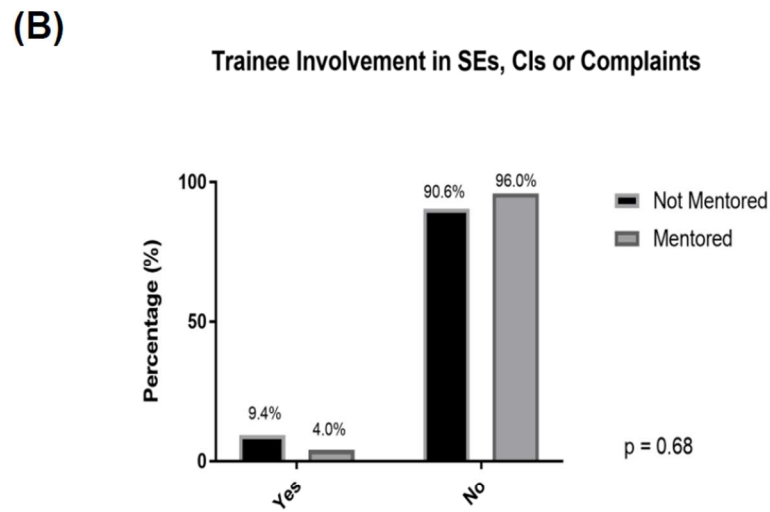
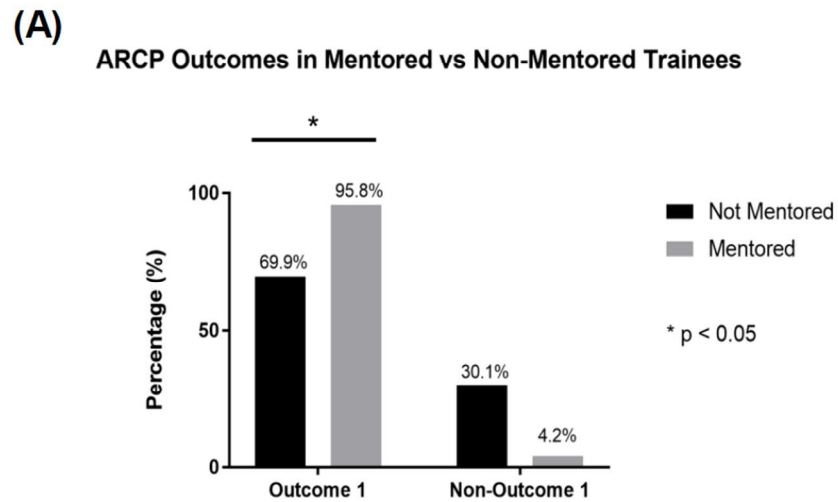


Figure 2. (A) Higher rates of Outcome 1 at ARCP was observed in mentored trainees ( $p < 0.05$ ) but no statistically significant effect was observed in trainee involvement in SEs, CIs, or complaints (B).

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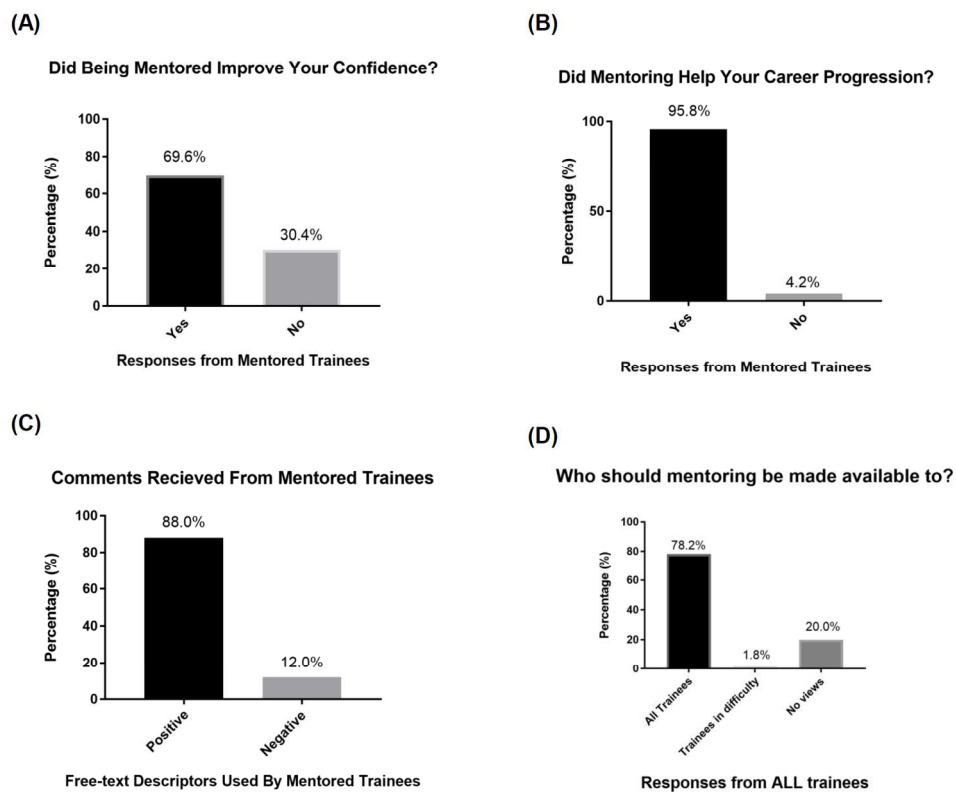


Figure 3. The majority of trainees receiving mentorship reported it did help in their (A) confidence and (B) career progression. (C) The majority of mentored trainees provided positive feedback and (D) most trainees in the study were of the opinion that mentoring should be offered to all trainees.

173x155mm (300 x 300 DPI)



## MRCP Exams: Pass Rates by Stage of Training

	<i>Mentored (1)</i>	<i>Non-mentored (2)</i>	<i>p-value (1) Vs (2)</i>
<b>CMT Year 1</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	100.0% (4/4)	19.4% (6/31)	p < 0.01
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	75.0% (3/4)	6.5% (2/31)	p < 0.01
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	50.0% (2/4)	3.2% (1/31)	p < 0.05
Full MRCP (UK)	50.0% (2/4)	3.2% (1/31)	p < 0.05
<b>CMT Year 2</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	100.0% (8/8)	41.4% (12/29)	p < 0.01
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	25.0% (2/8)	31.0% (9/29)	p = 1.00
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	37.5% (3/8)	31.0% (9/29)	p = 1.00
Full MRCP (UK)	25.0% (2/8)	31.0% (9/29)	p = 1.00
<b>ST3 and above</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	71.4% (5/7)	86.7% (13/15)	p = 1.00
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	57.1% (4/7)	80.0% (12/15)	p = 0.33
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	57.1% (4/7)	80.0% (12/15)	p = 0.33
Full MRCP (UK)	57.1% (4/7)	80.0% (12/15)	p = 0.33
<b>Others</b>			
MRCP Part 1 (Written)	66.7% (4/6)	50.0% (5/10)	p = 0.63
MRCP Part 2 (Written)	33.3% (2/6)	30.0% (3/10)	p = 1.00
MRCP Part 2 (PACES)	33.3% (2/6)	30.0% (3/10)	p = 1.00
Full MRCP (UK)	33.3% (2/6)	30.0% (3/10)	p = 1.00
For peer review only - <a href="http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/guidelines.xhtml">http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/guidelines.xhtml</a>			

## Appendix 1

**MRC** | Medical Research Council

**NHS**  
**Health Research Authority**

**Do I need NHS REC approval?**

**To print your result with title and IRAS Project ID please enter your details below:**

**Title of your research:**

The Association Between Mentoring and Training Outcomes in Junior Doctors in Medicine: An Observational Study

**IRAS Project ID (if available):**

**Your answers to the following questions indicate that you do not need NHS REC approval for sites in England. However, you may need other approvals.**

**You have answered 'YES' to: Is your study research?**

**You answered 'NO' to all of these questions:**

**Question Set 1**

- Is your study a clinical trial of an investigational medicinal product?
- Is your study one or more of the following: A non-CE marked medical device, or a device which has been modified or is being used outside of its CE mark intended purpose, and the study is conducted by or with the support of the manufacturer or another commercial company (including university spin-out company) to provide data for CE marking purposes?
- Does your study involve exposure to any ionising radiation?
- Does your study involve the processing of disclosable protected information on the Register of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority by researchers, without consent?
- Is your study a clinical trial involving the participation of practising midwives?

**Question Set 2**

- Will your study involve research participants identified from, or because of their past or present use of services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care), for which the UK health departments are responsible (including services provided under contract with the private or voluntary sectors), including participants recruited through these services as healthy controls?
- Will your research involve collection of tissue or information from any users of these services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care)? This may include users who have died within the last 100 years.
- Will your research involve the use of previously collected tissue or information from which the research team could identify individual past or present users of these services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care), either directly from that tissue or information, or from its combination with other tissue or information likely to come into their possession?
- Will your research involve research participants identified because of their status as relatives or carers of past or present users of these services (adult and children's healthcare within the NHS and adult social care)?

#### Question Set 3

- Will your research involve the storage of relevant material from the living or deceased on premises in the UK, but not Scotland, without an appropriate licence from the Human Tissue Authority (HTA)? This includes storage of imported material.
- Will your research involve storage or use of relevant material from the living, collected on or after 1st September 2006, and the research is not within the terms of consent from the donors, and the research does not come under another NHS REC approval?
- Will your research involve the analysis of DNA from bodily material, collected on or after 1st September 2006, and this analysis is not within the terms of consent for research from the donor?

#### Question Set 4

- Will your research involve at any stage intrusive procedures with adults who lack capacity to consent for themselves, including participants retained in study following the loss of capacity?
- Is your research health-related and involving prisoners?
- Does your research involve xenotransplantation?
- Is your research a social care project funded by the Department of Health?

If your research extends beyond England find out if you need NHS REC approval by selecting the 'OTHER UK COUNTRIES' button below.

**OTHER UK COUNTRIES**

**If, after visiting all relevant UK countries, this decision tool suggests that you do not require NHS REC approval [follow this link for final confirmation and further information.](#)**

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**STROBE 2007 (v4) checklist of items to be included in reports of observational studies in epidemiology\***  
**Checklist for cohort, case-control, and cross-sectional studies (combined)**

Section/Topic	Item #	Recommendation	Reported on page #
Title and abstract	1	(a) Indicate the study's design with a commonly used term in the title or the abstract	1, 2
		(b) Provide in the abstract an informative and balanced summary of what was done and what was found	2 - 3
<b>Introduction</b>			
Background/rationale	2	Explain the scientific background and rationale for the investigation being reported	3 - 5
Objectives	3	State specific objectives, including any pre-specified hypotheses	2, 5
<b>Methods</b>			
Study design	4	Present key elements of study design early in the paper	Abstract, 6-8
Setting	5	Describe the setting, locations, and relevant dates, including periods of recruitment, exposure, follow-up, and data collection	7, 8
Participants	6	(a) <i>Cohort study</i> —Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of selection of participants. Describe methods of follow-up <i>Case-control study</i> —Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of case ascertainment and control selection. Give the rationale for the choice of cases and controls <i>Cross-sectional study</i> —Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of selection of participants	7 - 10
		(b) <i>Cohort study</i> —For matched studies, give matching criteria and number of exposed and unexposed <i>Case-control study</i> —For matched studies, give matching criteria and the number of controls per case	-
Variables	7	Clearly define all outcomes, exposures, predictors, potential confounders, and effect modifiers. Give diagnostic criteria, if applicable	6, 7, 10, 11
Data sources/ measurement	8*	For each variable of interest, give sources of data and details of methods of assessment (measurement). Describe comparability of assessment methods if there is more than one group	6 - 8, 10, 11
Bias	9	Describe any efforts to address potential sources of bias	11, 20-22
Study size	10	Explain how the study size was arrived at	9, 10
Quantitative variables	11	Explain how quantitative variables were handled in the analyses. If applicable, describe which groupings were chosen and why	7, 8, 10
Statistical methods	12	(a) Describe all statistical methods, including those used to control for confounding	10, 11
		(b) Describe any methods used to examine subgroups and interactions	10, 11
		(c) Explain how missing data were addressed	9 - 10
		(d) <i>Cohort study</i> —If applicable, explain how loss to follow-up was addressed <i>Case-control study</i> —If applicable, explain how matching of cases and controls was addressed	7, 8, 10, 11



		<i>Cross-sectional study</i> —If applicable, describe analytical methods taking account of sampling strategy	
		(e) Describe any sensitivity analyses	Not applicable
<b>Results</b>			
Participants	13*	(a) Report numbers of individuals at each stage of study—eg numbers potentially eligible, examined for eligibility, confirmed eligible, included in the study, completing follow-up, and analysed	9, 10
		(b) Give reasons for non-participation at each stage	9, 10
		(c) Consider use of a flow diagram	Figure 1
Descriptive data	14*	(a) Give characteristics of study participants (eg demographic, clinical, social) and information on exposures and potential confounders	11, Table 1
		(b) Indicate number of participants with missing data for each variable of interest	9
		(c) <i>Cohort study</i> —Summarise follow-up time (eg, average and total amount)	Not applicable
Outcome data	15*	<i>Cohort study</i> —Report numbers of outcome events or summary measures over time	Not applicable
		<i>Case-control study</i> —Report numbers in each exposure category, or summary measures of exposure	Not applicable
		<i>Cross-sectional study</i> —Report numbers of outcome events or summary measures	12-17; Tables 2-4, Figures 2 & 3
Main results	16	(a) Give unadjusted estimates and, if applicable, confounder-adjusted estimates and their precision (eg, 95% confidence interval). Make clear which confounders were adjusted for and why they were included	12-16
		(b) Report category boundaries when continuous variables were categorized	Not applicable
		(c) If relevant, consider translating estimates of relative risk into absolute risk for a meaningful time period	Not applicable
Other analyses	17	Report other analyses done—eg analyses of subgroups and interactions, and sensitivity analyses	12-17
<b>Discussion</b>			
Key results	18	Summarise key results with reference to study objectives	18-20
Limitations	19	Discuss limitations of the study, taking into account sources of potential bias or imprecision. Discuss both direction and magnitude of any potential bias	20-22
Interpretation	20	Give a cautious overall interpretation of results considering objectives, limitations, multiplicity of analyses, results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence	18-22
Generalisability	21	Discuss the generalisability (external validity) of the study results	21-22
<b>Other information</b>			
Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study and, if applicable, for the original study on which the present article is based	23

\*Give information separately for cases and controls in case-control studies and, if applicable, for exposed and unexposed groups in cohort and cross-sectional studies.

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4 **Note:** An Explanation and Elaboration article discusses each checklist item and gives methodological background and published examples of transparent reporting. The STROBE  
5 checklist is best used in conjunction with this article (freely available on the Web sites of PLoS Medicine at <http://www.plosmedicine.org/>, Annals of Internal Medicine at  
6 <http://www.annals.org/>, and Epidemiology at <http://www.epidem.com/>). Information on the STROBE Initiative is available at [www.strobe-statement.org](http://www.strobe-statement.org).  
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