

**OP07**

**Demystifying the MRCP exams for IMGs: the impact of five Nigerian Specialist Registrars through a virtual medical academy**

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*Abstract*

‘There is a loftier ambition than to stand tall in the world, it is to stoop down and raise mankind higher’ – Henry Van Dyke.

The MRCP PACES exam is the last hurdle to climb for internal medicine registrars before they become a prestigious Member of the Royal College of Physicians United Kingdom. However, most International Medical Graduates (IMGs) do shy away from the medical specialty because of the failure rate of these exams. According to the Paces Spring Performance Report 2023, the failure rate of IMG in Paces was alarming compared with British Medical Graduates; Around 60% of IMGs failed the exam-700 IMGs in comparison to approximately 30–200% UK graduates [1, 2]. These disparities invigorated five Nigerian IMG registrars to bridge this gap through a free weekly virtual PACES exam for the last 40 weeks. We also started monthly MRCP Courses and PACES-centred MRCP Masterclasses to support International Medical Graduates to ace their PACE exams. Furthermore, through the power of representation, we are inspiring and attracting IMG doctors to the physician specialty [3].

Five Nigerian IMG registrars – ST4 to ST5, trainees of HEE in Acute Medicine, Neurology, Cardiology, and Stroke Medicine across diverse regions in England facilitated weekly tutorials up to three times weekly since June 2023 through the Zoom Platform. The success of the free tutorials led to the development of the Virtual PACES and created a need to start a Virtual MRCP PACES Course. We have facilitated more than 10 PACES courses, 15 Paces Mocks, 4 Neurology Masterclasses, and 4 Communication Master Classes. To the best of our knowledge,

we are the first group to conduct a Successful Virtual PACES Mock exam. We have more than 500 International Medical Graduates on our social media platform who participate actively in all our educational courses. The majority of them live in the United Kingdom and completed their medical school in Asia, Africa, or Europe.

To rate the impacts of our weekly IMG Paces tutorials, we decided to conduct an anonymous online survey. More than 50 doctors responded. More than 96% of the respondents were IMGs. A third of the respondents were Internal Medicine Trainees (IMTs) in the UK. About a third were trainee registrars and a third were in a non-training role. A third of our respondents have attempted paces before. More than about half of the respondents had attended more than five weekly sessions.

**When asked to ‘rate their strength in the paces content before attending Free PACES teaching’;** more than half of respondents rated themselves as either poor or fair across all pace components, especially in Neurology, Communication, and Consultation [4].

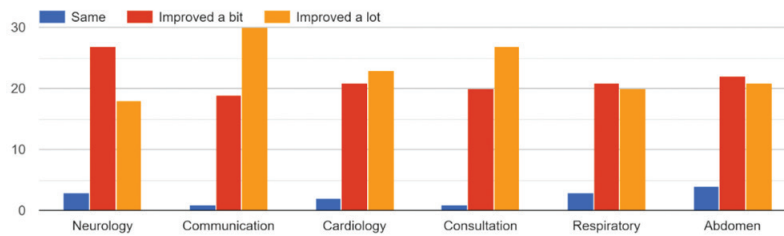
**When asked to rate their improvement in the PACES content after attending our free PACES teaching.** More than 90% rated improvement across all the paces and approximately 60% of respondents said they ‘improved a lot’ in Communication, Consultation, and Neurology.

When asked ‘**how do you feel seeing fellow IMG Registrars taking you through the Sessions?**’ More than 90% of respondents feel more confident, more supported, inspired, and more included to pass paces. Almost all respondents now have a more positive perception of IMG registrars following the tutorials [5].

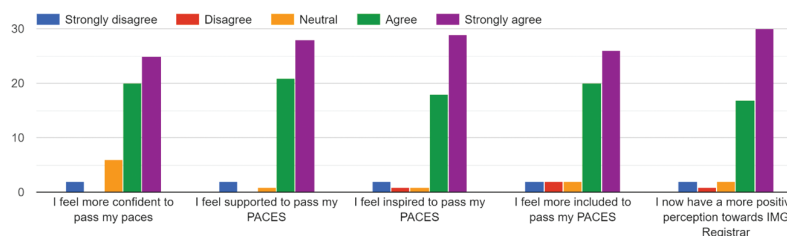
Finally, for people who attend our courses and mocks, we have a success rate of more than 50% in the MRCP exams which is higher than the national average for IMGs.

This bold and altruistic step taken by five Nigerian Specialist Registrars has bridged the gap to improve the success rates of IMGs in

Rate your improvement in the PACES Content after you started attending the ACE PACES WEEKLY TUTORIALS



How do you feel seeing fellow IMG Registrars taking you through the Sessions?



completing the MRCP PACES exam. We hope to extend this innovative platform to other specialties who are willing to collaborate with us in our quest to empower IMGs. Beyond that, we believe we are changing narratives and shaping the perception of Nigerian doctors, Nigeria, and Africa as a whole. That to us, becomes an ‘icing on the cake’.

Keywords: *MRCP; MRCPUK; MRCP PACES; Royal college of Physicians; virtual academy; international medical graduates; medical registrars; Nigerian doctors; internal medicine; tutoring; postgraduate exam*

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