

## Background

Postgraduate Doctors and Dentists in Training (DDIT) face multiple factors in the workplace that lead to challenging and stressful situations.

They may encounter a situation that is considered detrimental to themselves, colleagues or patients and this can have a negative and profound impact at all levels of their training<sup>(1)</sup>. Junior doctors and dentists struggle to report their concerns on quality and safety within the earlier years of their training<sup>(2)</sup> and gain confidence in speaking up with increasing clinical experiences<sup>(3)</sup>.

This project seeks to understand if knowledge of systems by which DDIT raise concerns remains a significant barrier despite the level of experience.

## Method

This project surveyed 3398 DDIT's online within the North East to explore perceptions of barriers when raising a concern. Survey via Microsoft Forms, advertised via email to all DDIT's. Open Dec 2021 – Jan 2022.

Survey evaluated 4 themes:

1. Inclination to formally raise a concern
2. Perceived barriers
3. Knowledge / accessibility of guidance
4. How involved and informed trainees after a concern was raised

## 5 Key Findings

### 1. Process

Only a quarter (27%) felt informed about the process of raising concerns.

### 2. Barriers

56 of the 83 trainees that raised a formal concern felt they did encounter barriers.

### 3. Repercussions

The greatest perceived barriers are **impact on professional relationships** and **concerns of repercussions**.

### 4. Consideration

Less than half (49.3%) who raised concerns felt these were given due consideration and attention.

### 5. Feedback

Only one-third (39.7%) received feedback that the concern they raised was acted upon and / or received an update on the outcome.

## Results

340 postgraduate doctors and dentists in training responded, (20 Dental, 320 Medical); 9.9% overall response rate.

Distribution by grade can be seen in fig 1. 87 (26%) of DDIT's reported having formally raised concern compared to 93 (27%) who reported to have previously wanted to but felt unable to do so due to barriers. Almost all respondents report encountering barriers when considering raising a concern. Barriers such as repercussions on professional relationships, concerns over repercussions and the impact of future training were most significant. Familiarity in the process and seeking support or guidance on raising a concern was considered a slight barrier in the majority of respondents (fig 2). 45 (52%) of the 87 DDIT that had raised a concern, felt their concerns were given due consideration 53 (61%) felt they were given adequate feedback .

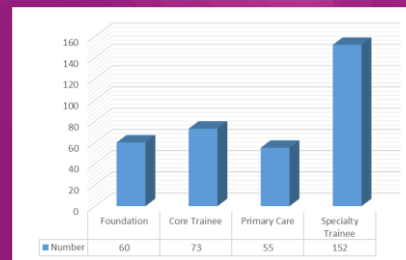


Fig 1 : Respondents grade

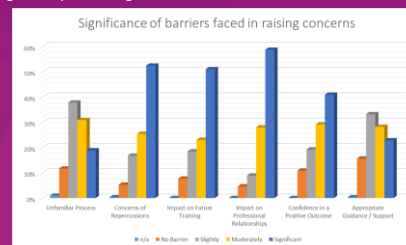


Fig 2 : Significance of barriers faced

## Conclusion

The results of the survey indicate that a significant proportion of trainees are unfamiliar with the process, policies and guidelines when wanting to raise a concern. Not having guidance and support to raise a concern is a significant barrier and has a great influence on more senior trainees.