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Research Summary

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Title Work challenges and opportunities faced by medical intern doctors in Vanuatu: A qualitative study

Abstract

Background & aim

Medical internship training is a vital phase in the lives of the intern doctors. It offers very important foundation and opportunity for personal development and career planning. However, factors in terms of opportunities and challenges affect the efficiency of training, and the views of the interns are rarely considered. The aim of this study is to explore the experience of the intern doctors in terms of opportunities and challenges they faced during their internship.

Methodology

A qualitative phenomenological study conducted in Vanuatu's two main referral hospitals - Vila Central Hospital (VCH) and Northern Provincial Hospital (NPH). A convenience sample of 27 intern doctors participated in this study. Ethical approval was obtained from the College of Health Research Ethics Committee in Fiji National University and the Research Ethics Committee in Vanuatu Ministry of Health (MoH). Participants were informed and consented for. Data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire through one on one in-depth interviews. All recorded data was transcribed verbatim by the principal researcher, data was interpreted using the thematic analysis method.

Results

The study findings were reflected in three main themes and were then further divided into subthemes and categories: 1) Transitional experience of medical student to medical intern doctor. 2) Opportunities experienced by medical interns during the internship program. 3) Challenges encountered during the medical internship.

Conclusion

The study reveals that the transitional experience going into medical internship is a dynamic phase in the lives of the interns by which they endured challenges and opportunities. Interns need the support of the consultants, nurses, colleagues and even family support to have a successful transition and become a proficient medical doctor. The findings of this study will help the Vanuatu MoH and the relevant stakeholders to improve and accommodate a smooth transitional experience for the intern doctors to not only benefit themselves but providing a quality and efficient health care delivery to the nation.