

CMT and the half-term holidays

Wednesday, 26 November 2008

Anyone applying for Core Medical Training (CMT in newspeak, formerly known as a medical SHO) will be expected to sit the GP Knowledge Test on February 21st. This is the same test that is taken by applicants to General Practice, and is taken under exam conditions.

The applicants to CMT will sit the exam, but their scores will not count towards their overall score. They are sitting it as a research exercise in order to set a benchmark and to figure out whether the test correlates with traditional recruitment methods. More details can be found [here](#).

Remedy supports the idea of a centralised matching/allocation process, and also supports the idea of a more uniform approach. But there are two issues that we are unhappy about.

It is estimated that up to 9,500 applicants will sit this exam. Some will be applying to CMT, some to General Practice and some to both, and the overall numbers will not be known until the applications have closed. Anything involving this number of people is bound to have some effect on service, especially in A/E Departments which are largely staffed by FY2 doctors. An email sent to all Clinical Tutors has warned that "Please note that Saturday February 21st is going to be VERY difficult for service provision". Departments will be looking anxiously at their leave diaries, which are already filling up - the weekend in question lies in the middle of half term.

Our other worry is that some CMT applicants could find it difficult or impossible to take part in this research project. The Royal College of Physicians have stated that although the knowledge test does not count towards the overall recruitment score, it is still an essential part of the recruitment process, and applicants who do not have a score will not be eligible for interview. Individuals can only be exempted under 'extraordinary circumstances' and this does not include rota duties.