Outcomes of The Émigré Physician Program Graduates of NYITCOM as compared to International Medical Graduates

Karen Sheflin, DO, FACOFP; Andrea Liu Gerytch, OMS III; Alfred Aiyanyor, OMS III; Sonia Rivera-Martinez, DO, FACOFP.
New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine, Old Westbury, NY, 11568

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Approximately one million immigrants arrive in the United States every year. Among those, many are skilled physicians that now have the difficult task of passing the licensing board exams and matching into any residency position to continue their careers in the U.S. Recognizing the significance of this issue and the importance of a diverse medical community, NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine (NYITCOM) created the Émigré Physician Program (EPP), a highly competitive program, where international medical graduates (IMG) are provided with a unique opportunity to retrain as Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine. Throughout their medical training at NYITCOM they acquire new skills and acculturation to the American healthcare system. The students in the Émigré physician program train under the same curriculum as their American college graduate counterparts.

Aim: To determine the residency match outcomes of the NYITCOM EPP graduates as compared to the International Medical Graduates (IMG’s).

Methods: We collected and compiled specific data on the NYITCOM EPP graduates from the NYIT databases, match information provided by the American Osteopathic Association and National Residency Matching Program (NRMP).

Results: The graduates of NYITCOM EPP program match to a residency at a significantly higher rate than the IMG’s (EPP 100%, US-IMG’s 54.8% and Non-US IMG’s 52.4%, p value = 0.00017). While EPP’s tend to match at a higher percentage rate in primary care specialties than the IMG’s the difference was non-significant (p-value = 0.971).

Conclusions: This diverse but cohesive group has proven to have outstanding outcomes during the match season when compared to IMGs that applied directly to residency programs. The Émigré physician graduates represent NYITCOM in many different fields of specialties in multiple states across the U.S. Foreign medical graduates when given the opportunity to retrain as Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine, acquiring acculturation with the American medical system, become as competitive as American medical graduates in residency placement and match rates, overcoming the hurdles that IMGs face on their pathway to become licensed physicians.

INTRODUCTION

There is a gap between the number of American medical graduates coming out of US schools each year, and the number of first year post-graduate residency training positions, the latter still being a much larger number. There is a need for International medical graduates to take these remaining positions that would otherwise go unfilled, and increase even more the shortage of practicing physicians, especially in the rural areas of the US. But still, there is a lack of confidence from the general population, that sometimes view these foreign trained physicians as not as well acculturated, and with difficulties in social and communication skills. Programs that retrain these foreign doctors, sometimes older graduates, provide them with up to date medical information and tools, so that culturally competent care can be provided, an important adjustment to the US healthcare system.

Neiterman et al. published a research study about the professional integration of International medical graduates in Canada and noticed that in addition to the difficulties in obtaining residency positions, IMGs also faced challenges once in residency such as cultural and ethnic discriminations, lack of cultural capital and communication barriers. Some provinces established bridging programs pre-residency training to address these concerns and to try to close these gaps.

METHODS

Demographic data was provided by NYITCOM of Émigré Physician graduates between the years of 2007 and 2017. Field of specialization, states where the residency training was done and outcomes on the match were compared to IMGs with data collected from the AOA match database and NRMP statistical data. All collected data has been included.

RESULTS

• NYITCOM match and placement rate for their graduates have consistently been 100% between the years of 2007 and 2017 as compared to US IMGs that had a 54.8% and Non USIMGs 52.4% (p-value = 0.00017) 1.
• Most of The Émigré Physician Graduates 56% stay on the State of NY to complete their residency training as compared to 15% of the IMGs 2.
• The majority of the graduates from NYITCOM EPP train in primary care fields like Family Medicine (31%) and Internal Medicine (27%) as compared to 9.6%(FM) and 23%(IM) of the IMGs that participated in the match process3.

DISCUSSION

Looking into the data collected from the Charting Outcomes in the Match for International Medical Graduates in the years of 2016 and 2017 published by the National Resident Matching Program, we can conclude that NYITCOM Émigré Physicians Program graduates have consistently had a match/placement rate of 100% when as compared to USIMGs that had much lower numbers of 54.8% and Non-US IMGs of 52.4% of match/placement in 2017, an all-time high as compared to 2016 when only 51.9% of the IMG candidates were able to find a position. NYITCOM graduates have historically been matched to residency programs in the Northeast, mostly NY, where 56% of the graduates stay after their four years of medical school. This is also true for the IMGs that participated in the match, with 15% finding a position in NY. Around 30% of the NYITCOM graduates go into a Family Medicine residency, a specialty that traditionally only takes around 9% of the IMGs that participate in the match. The EPP has a very diverse community of students with 67.5% of males and 32.5% of females. Most students self identify as White (45%), Asian (15.7%) or Black (15.2%). The mean age on graduation of the students were 31-34 years old (37%) and 41-50 years old (49.8%). The majority of the EPP students are from countries like Pakistan (12.9%), Nigeria (11.7%) and Russia (11.2%). Students that weren’t successful in obtaining graduation from the EPP program were not included in our study.

CONCLUSION

The United States has traditionally attracted people from different countries, races and religious beliefs that pursue a better quality of life, freedom and security. Thousands of IMGs are never able to become licensed physicians in the United States due to the lack of alternative pathways. Programs that retrain professionals with previous experience, provide acculturation and adaptation of these professionals to their new homes and job requirements, so that their skills can be applied in a safe manner and with a strong foundation. The NYITCOM EPP program is a viable option for IMG’s who have challenges matching into a residency program.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge Dr. Min-Kyung Jung for her contributions to the poster and NYITCOM for creating this program that provides a second chance to foreign doctors and their careers.

REFERENCES

1. Neiterman E, Bourgeault I, Covell C. What do we know and not know about the professional integration of international medical graduates (IMGs) in Canada? Healthcare policy 2017 12(4):18-32 Majeed F, Majeed M, Kousar N. Easing International Medical Graduates
2. Entry into US training. Journal of Graduate Medical Education June 2011:269