

# AB194. SOH22ABS014. Factors associated with interns' career decision making regarding anaesthesiology, intensive care and pain medicine

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**Background:** Choosing a specialty for newly graduated doctors remains a challenging and multifactorial process. Exposure to a specialty during medical school has been shown to impact a doctor's attraction towards a specialty. Lack of accessibility and exposure to certain specialties, both in early clinical years and post qualification may therefore impact the interest and affinity towards pursuing a career in anaesthesia, intensive care medicine (ICM) and pain medicine.

**Methods:** An online questionnaire was distributed to recent medical graduates in Ireland's South Intern Group to investigate their exposure to anaesthesia, intensive care and pain medicine during their medical degree and whether this impacted their career plan.

**Results:** Fifty-four of 155 interns (35%) responded to the survey. Fifty-four percent of interns had chosen a specialty by graduation. Of those who had chosen a career 7% (n=2) had picked anaesthesiology. Fifty-nine percent had no interest in pain medicine. 67% felt there was inadequate teaching in anaesthesia, ICM and pain medicine as part of the undergraduate medical curriculum. Seventy-eight percent were not familiar with the specialist anaesthesiology training (SAT) programme in Ireland. Factors affecting career choice—gender and age were not found to be significant factors in whether an intern had already chosen a specialty. Seventy-five percent of those not interested in anaesthesia or ICM felt there was inadequate teaching at undergraduate level. Eleven percent had additional

experience (e.g., elective) in anaesthesia, ICM or pain medicine. Analysis of qualitative data in the form of free text answers suggest limited exposure to the career and poorly understood training pathways may impede the attractiveness of the specialty.

**Conclusions:** When choosing a career path in medicine, although multifactorial, a lack of exposure and insight to anaesthesia, ICM and predominantly pain medicine at an undergraduate level and during early postgraduate years may negatively affect the interest generated to this specialty.

**Keywords:** Medical interns; career decision making; undergraduate; anaesthesia; pain medicine

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## Footnote

*Conflicts of Interest:* The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

*Ethical Statement:* The author is accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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