Medical Board of Australia

Report on specialist medical colleges' specialist pathway data

Reporting period: 1 January 2016 – 31 December 2016



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1 Introduction

The specialist pathway is for international medical graduates (IMGs) who are overseas-trained specialists seeking specialist registration in Australia (specialist recognition) or who are applying for an area of need specialist level position in Australia.

The Medical Board of Australia (the Board) has developed guidance for the specialist medical colleges on the current specialist pathway assessment process. The *Good practice guidelines for the specialist international medical graduate assessment process* aim to support specialist medical colleges in their role of assessing specialist international medical graduates. The guidelines came into effect on 2 November 2015.

More information about the specialist pathway and the *Good practice guidelines* are available on the Board's website.

On 1 July 2014 changes were made to the specialist pathway for IMGs. IMGs now apply directly to the relevant specialist medical college for assessment rather than through the Australian Medical Council (AMC). The AMC previously collected a range of data on specialist pathway applications. As the AMC no longer collect pathway data, colleges now report their data directly to the Board.

Reporting is annual by calendar year:

- the first report covered the initial six month period 1 July 1 December 2014
- the second report covered the period 1 January 31 December 2015 and is available at www.medicalboard.gov.au/News/Statistics
- this is the third report covering the period 1 January 31 December 2016.

All colleges report against the same metrics. The data requested for 2016 includes:

- number and type of applications received in 2016 (application for specialist recognition, area of need or combined (specialist recognition and area of need))
- applicant's (IMG) country of training (for applications received in 2016)
- number of applications received which were incomplete on first submission
- number of applications withdrawn by the applicant (IMG)
- outcome of college's interim comparability assessment (IMG found to be not comparable, partially comparable or substantially comparable)
- outcome of college's area of need assessment (IMG found to be suitable or not suitable for the area of need position)
- outcome of final assessment for specialist recognition (IMG recommended for specialist recognition or not recommended for specialist recognition)
- time from interim assessment to final assessment (from the date of decision of interim assessment, to the date the decision of final assessment is made by college)
- number of fellowships awarded to IMGs on the specialist pathway
- number of appeals of college decision by IMGs.

In 2016, colleges also reported against a number of performance benchmarks. These include:

- time to first available assessment interview for interim assessment (from the date a complete application is received to the date of first available interview that is offered)
 - benchmark interview available within 3 months

- time from interview to interim assessment decision (from the date the IMG attends interview to the date the decision of interim assessment is made by college)
 - benchmark interim assessment completed within 14 days after interview
- time for specialist recognition interim assessment (from the date a complete application is received to the date the decision of interim assessment is made by college)
 - benchmark interim assessment completed within 3 months & 14 days
- time for area of need assessment (from the date a complete application is received to the date the
 decision of suitability for area of need position is made by college) (excludes combined
 assessments)
 - benchmark area of need assessment completed within 2 months
- time for specialist recognition final assessment decision (from the date the IMG notifies the college that they have completed the requirements to the date the decision of final assessment is made by college)
 - benchmark decision on final assessment completed within 2 months.

Colleges also reported against a set of compliance measures to confirm compliance with the *Good practice guidelines*. These include:

- period of practice required by the college
 compliance measure up to 12 months FTE peer review (substantially comparable IMGs) or
 24 months supervised practice (partially comparable IMGs)
- requirement for substantially comparable IMGs to complete an examination
 compliance measure only partially comparable IMGs may be required to complete an examination
- maximum timeframes for completing college requirements

 compliance measure up to two years to complete up to 12 months FTE peer review
 (substantially comparable IMGs) or up to four years to complete up to 24 months supervised practice (partially comparable IMGs).

Note that this is the first year colleges are reporting against the benchmarks and compliance measures. The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, on behalf of the Board, has appointed an external reviewer to review specialist medical colleges' performance in relation to assessments of IMGs. The Board has asked the external reviewer to report on the suitability and appropriateness of the benchmarks and measures and they may need to be amended in the future.

1.1 How to interpret the data

The specialist college data report is a report of all college 'activities' during the period and reflects point in time reporting as IMGs are unlikely to complete all the processes within one reporting period. Therefore, denominators are unable to be defined and percentages cannot be calculated. A college may have more assessment outcomes than applications received for the period.

Delays can occur during the assessment process which are outside the control of the college, for example, an IMG may choose to defer their interview. There are IMGs who are still on the specialist pathway who have exceeded the maximum timeframes, however they commenced the pathway before the *Good practice guidelines* were released.

The data have been collated and summarised in graphs and tables.

2 Summary of the results

Highlights from the 2016 data include:

- IMGs have gained their specialist qualifications in a range of countries with highest numbers of applications from United Kingdom, India and South Africa.
- the colleges with the highest number of applications in the twelve month period were the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) (292 applications) and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) (204 applications).
- the colleges with the lowest number of applications in the twelve month period were the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons (RACDS) (two applications) and the Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (ACSEP) (three applications)
- across all colleges, 86 per cent of IMGs from the UK and Ireland were assessed as 'substantially comparable'
- across all colleges, 95 per cent of IMGs from the UK and Ireland who were assessed as partially comparable or substantially comparable fulfilled the college requirements and were recommended for specialist recognition
- the majority of applicants for the specialist pathway area of need were found suitable for the position
- the majority of requests for review/reconsideration and appeals relate to the interim assessment of comparability (i.e. IMG appealing assessment outcome 'not comparable' or 'partially comparable')

Highlights from the performance benchmark data include:

- most colleges were able to offer the majority of their IMGs an interview within three months of receiving a complete application
- the time taken from the interview to the interim assessment decision varies with some colleges
 meeting the benchmark for all their IMGs and other colleges outside the benchmark for all their
 IMGs. For those colleges who don't meet the benchmark for any of their IMGs, the reason this
 was not met is because of the approval processes required within the college before the decision
 is confirmed
- the time for interim assessment was outside the benchmark for many IMGs, however this can
 result when an IMG is offered an interview early in the process but they chose to defer the
 interview, thus extending the total time for interim assessment. In other cases the delay was due
 to college internal processes.
- of the five colleges who assessed area of need applications (excluding combined assessments), three colleges completed all their area of need assessments within the benchmark (two months) and the other two colleges completed half of their area of need assessments within the benchmark
- the majority of IMGs received the outcome of their final assessment (recommended or not recommended for specialist recognition) within two months of completing their requirements.

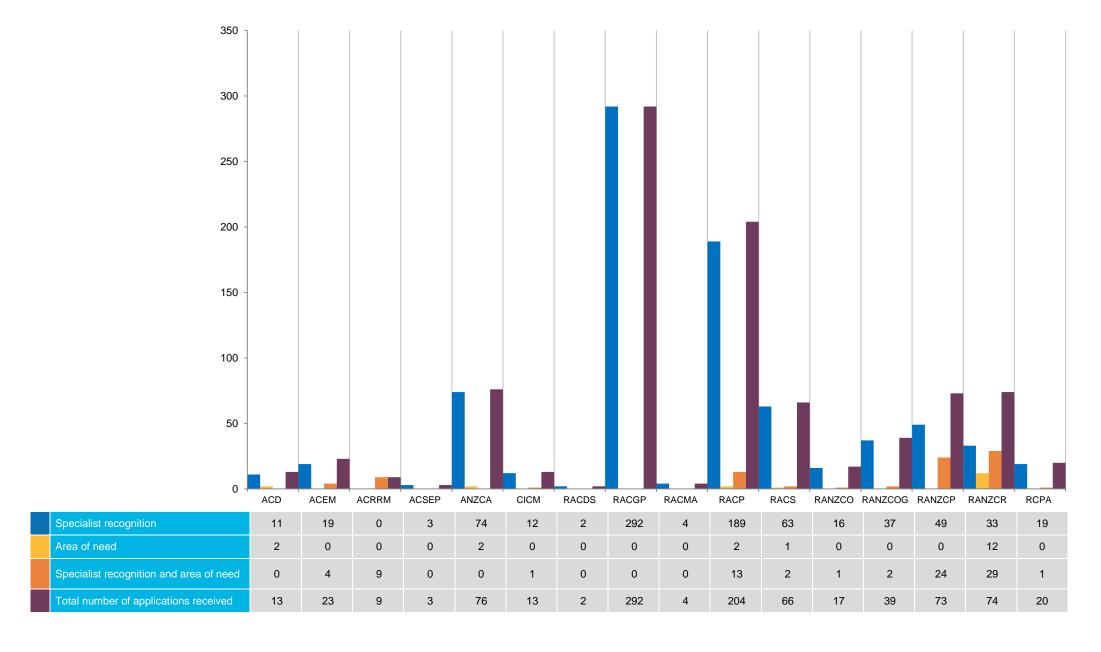
Highlights from the compliance data include:

- all colleges, except for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS), met the compliance measure for the period of practice required for substantially comparable IMGs. All colleges met the compliance measure for the period of practice required for partially comparable IMGs.
- no colleges required their substantially comparable IMGs to complete a formal examination, thereby meeting the compliance measure.
- the majority of IMGs are completing the pathway process within the maximum timeframes set by the Board.

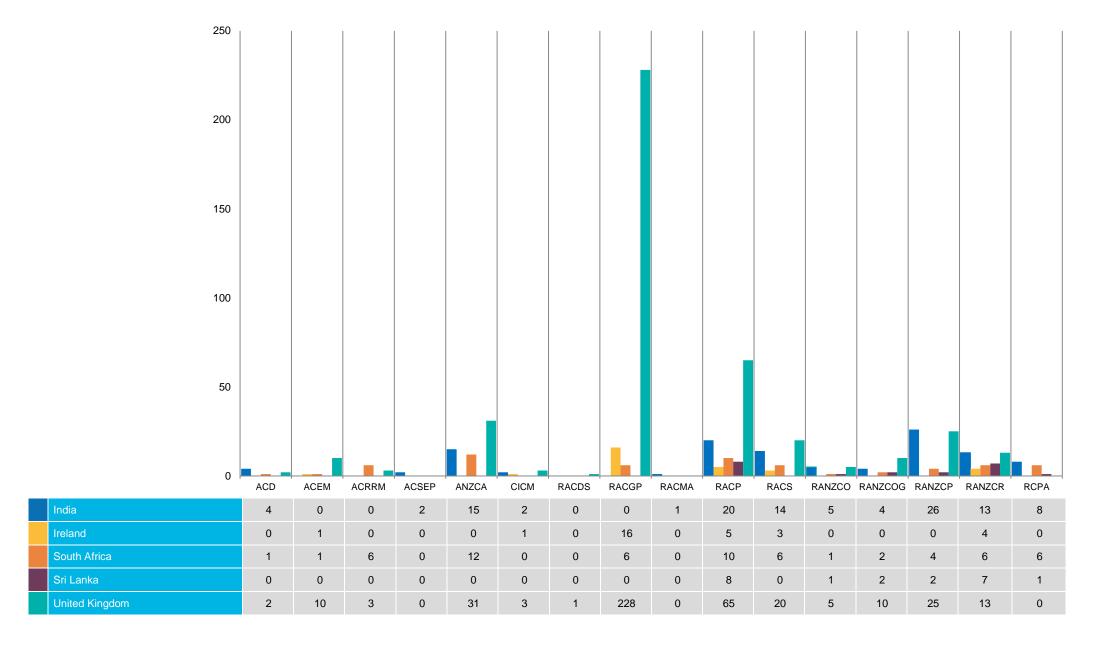
3 List of college abbreviations

| ACD Australasian College of Dermatologists ACEM Australasian College for Emergency Medicine ACSEP Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians ANZCA Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists ACRRM Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine CICM College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand RACDS Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons |
|--|
| ACSEP Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians ANZCA Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists ACRRM Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine CICM College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand |
| ANZCA Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists ACRRM Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine CICM College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand |
| ACRRM Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine CICM College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand |
| CICM College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand |
| |
| RACDS Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons |
| |
| RACS Royal Australasian College of Surgeons |
| RACGP The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners |
| RACMA The Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators |
| RACP The Royal Australasian College of Physicians |
| RANZCP The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists |
| RANZCOG The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists |
| RANZCO The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists |
| RANZCR The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists |
| RCPA The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia |

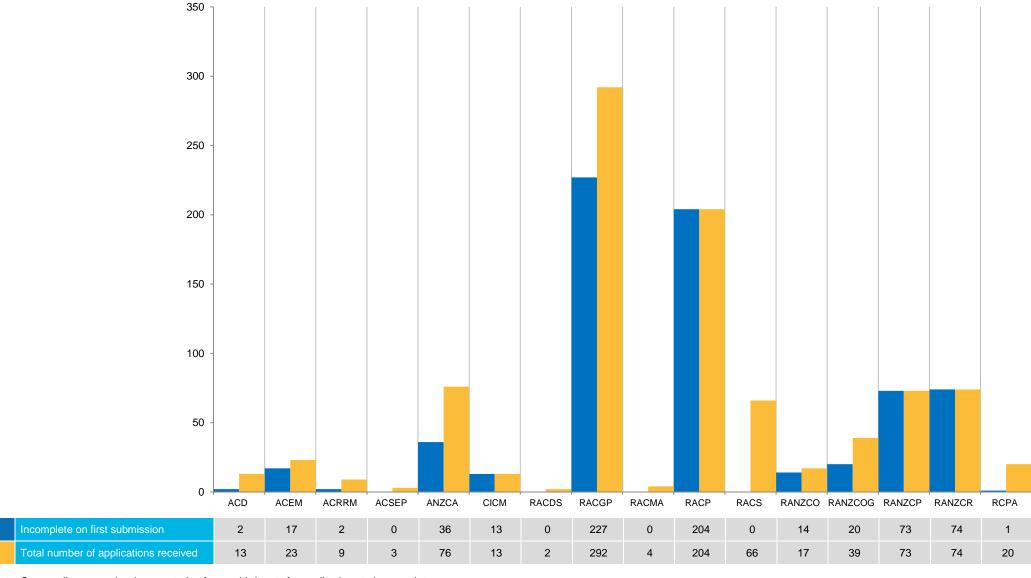
4.1 Applications: Number of applications received



4.2 Applications: Top five countries by number of applications received

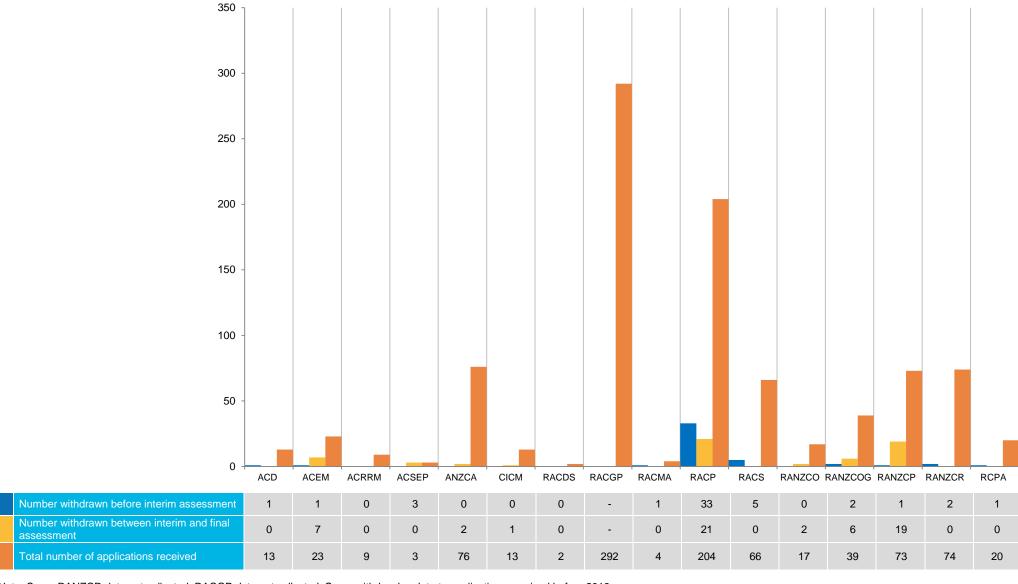


4.3 Applications: Number of applications incomplete on first submission



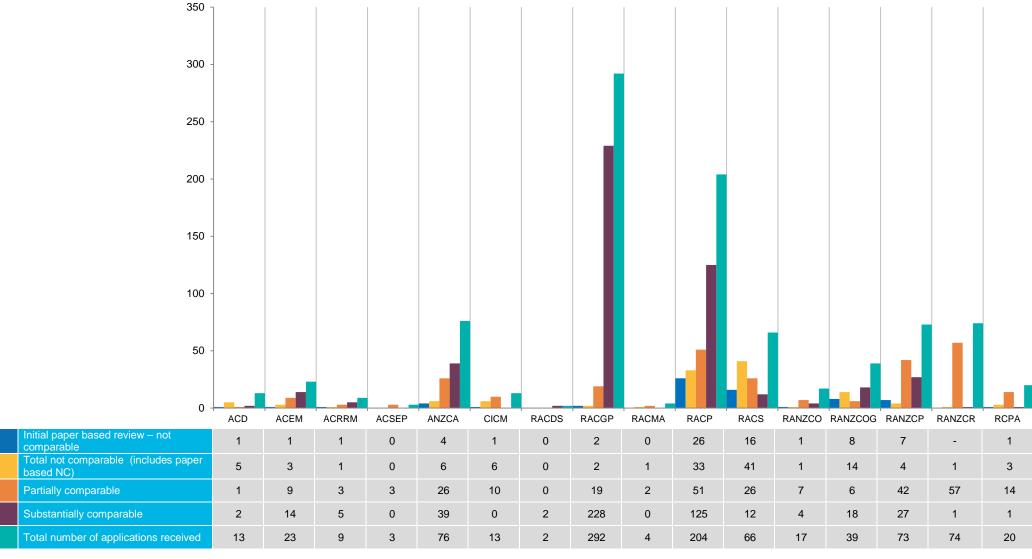
Note: Some colleges require documentation from a third party for applications to be complete.

4.4 Applications: Number of applications withdrawn by the IMG



Note: Some RANZCR data not collected. RACGP data not collected. Some withdrawls relate to applications received before 2016.

5.1 Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of interim assessment



Note: RANZCR do not do paper based assessments. RACP and RANZCP allow IMGs who were not comparable after a paper based assessment to opt for interview. Outcomes of assessment may not total 'Total number of applications received' as some assessments were still in progress.

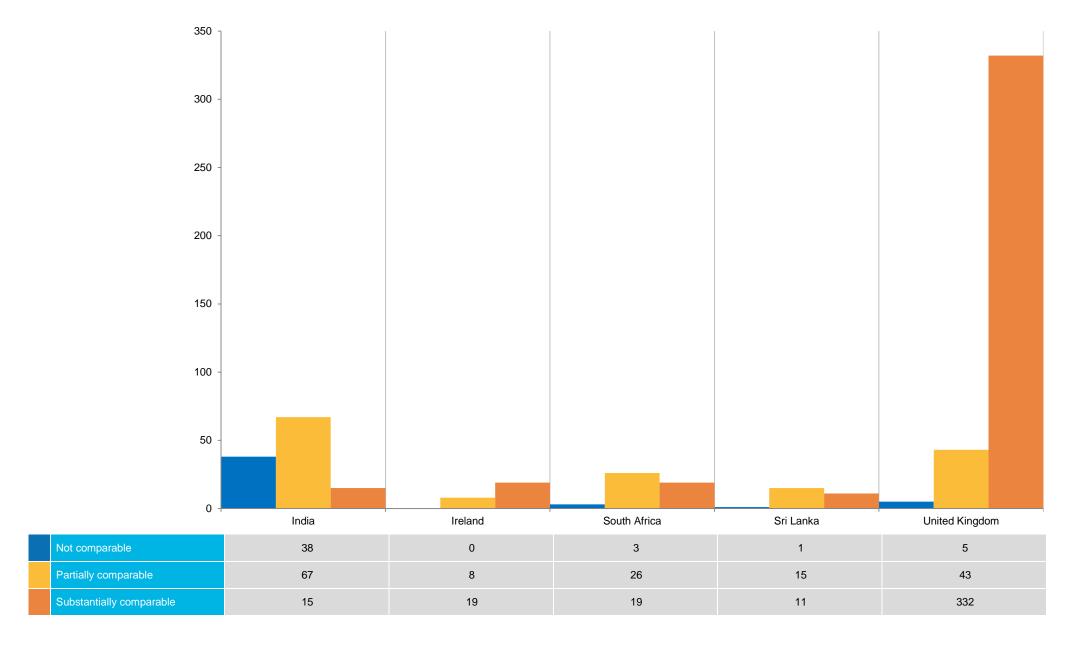
5.1.1 Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of interim assessment: By country of highest specialist qualification – all colleges

| Country | Not comparable | Partially comparable | Substantially comparable |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Argentina | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Austria | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Bangladesh | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Belgium | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Brazil | 5 | 11 | 3 |
| Canada | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| Chile | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| China | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| Colombia | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Czech Republic | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Denmark | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Egypt | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| Finland | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| France | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Germany | 0 | 6 | 1 |
| Greece | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Grenada | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| India | 38 | 67 | 15 |

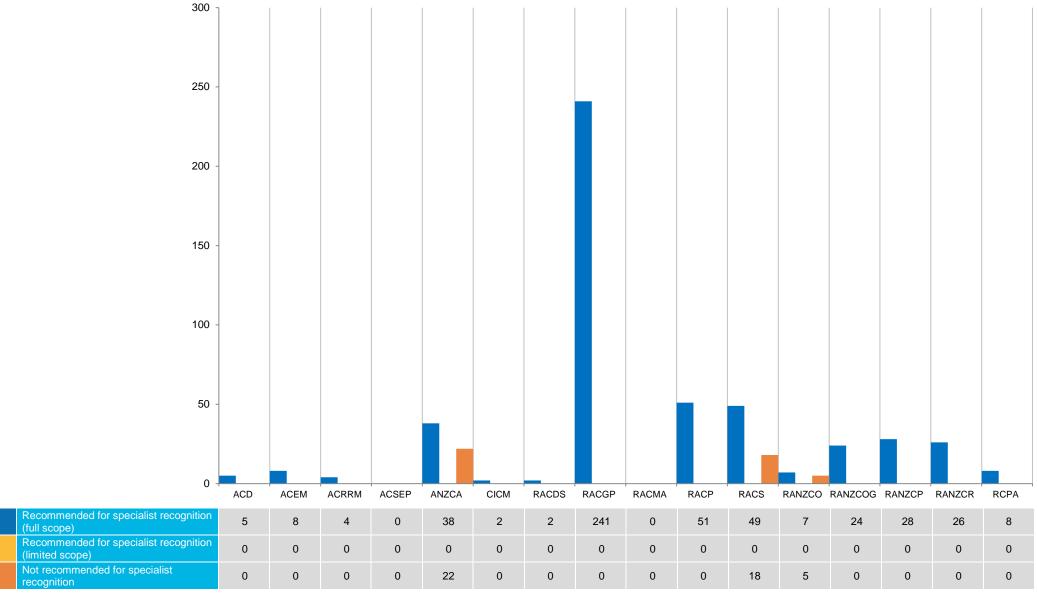
| Country | Not comparable | Partially comparable | Substantially comparable |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Iran | 5 | 7 | 4 |
| Iraq | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Ireland | 0 | 8 | 19 |
| Israel | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Italy | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Japan | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Jordan | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Lebanon | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Malaysia | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| Nepal | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Netherlands | 1 | 5 | 8 |
| New Zealand | 0 | 0 | 16 |
| Nigeria | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Pakistan | 12 | 8 | 1 |
| Philippines | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Poland | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Qatar | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Romania | 1 | 1 | 0 |

| Country | Not comparable | Partially comparable | Substantially comparable |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Russia | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Saudi Arabia | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Singapore | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Slovakia | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| South Africa | 3 | 26 | 19 |
| South Korea | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Spain | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Sri Lanka | 1 | 15 | 11 |
| Sweden | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Switzerland | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Syria | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Taiwan | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Tanzania | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Turkey | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| United Kingdom | 5 | 43 | 332 |
| United States of America | 4 | 11 | 8 |
| Yugoslavia | 1 | 0 | 0 |

5.1.2 Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of interim assessment: Top five countries by number of applications



5.2 Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of final assessment



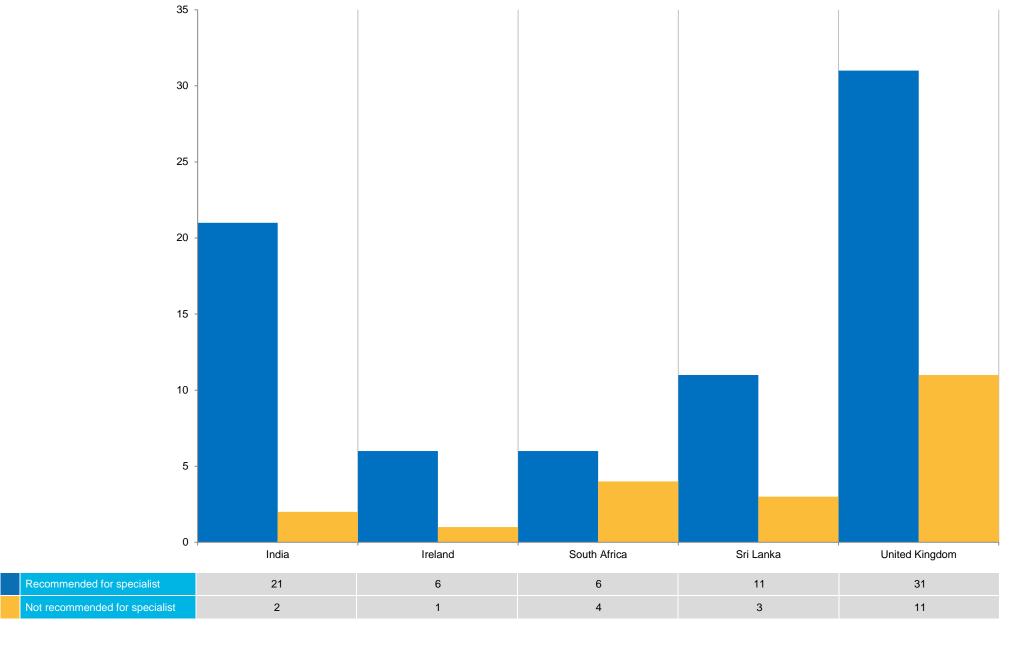
Note: ANZCA data includes applicants who had exceeded the maximum timeframe.

5.2.1. Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of final assessment: By country of highest specialist qualification – all colleges

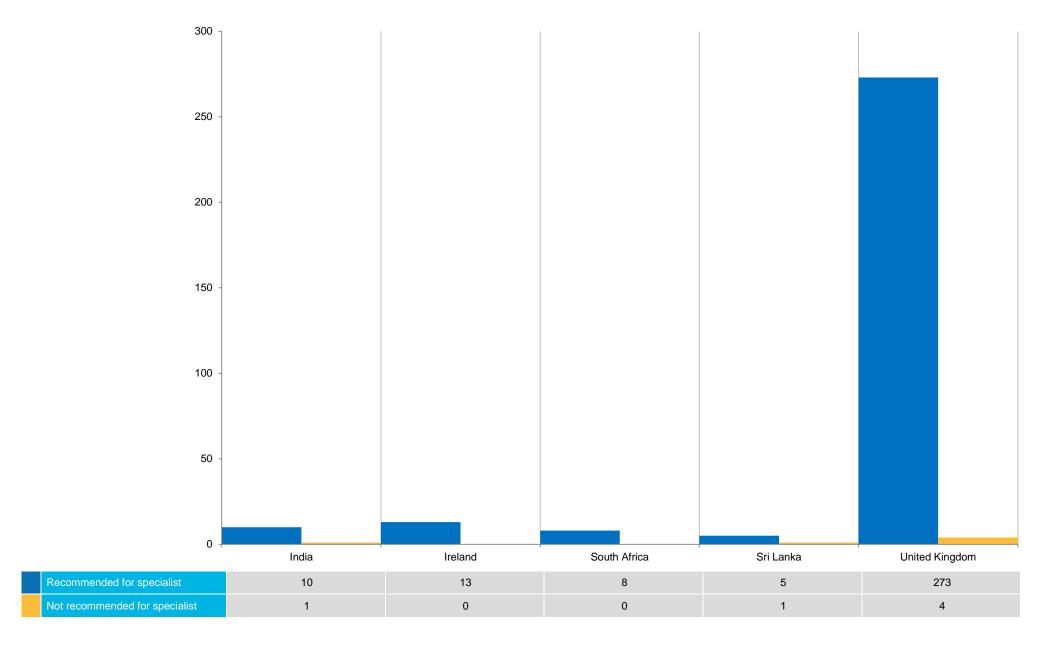
| Country | Partially comparable | | Substantially comparable | |
|-------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Country | Recommended | Not recommended | Recommended | Not recommended |
| Belgium | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Brazil | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Canada | 2 | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| China | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Egypt | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Fiji | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Finland | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| France | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Germany | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Greece | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hungary | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| India | 21 | 2 | 10 | 1 |
| Iran | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Ireland | 6 | 1 | 13 | 0 |
| Israel | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Italy | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Jordan | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Malaysia | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Mexico | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Netherlands | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| New Zealand | 0 | 0 | 16 | 0 |

| Country | Partially comparable | | Substantially comparable | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Country | Recommended | Not recommended | Recommended | Not recommended |
| Nigeria | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Pakistan | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Serbia | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Singapore | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| South Africa | 6 | 4 | 8 | 0 |
| Spain | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sri Lanka | 11 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| Sweden | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Switzerland | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| United Kingdom | 31 | 11 | 273 | 4 |
| United States of America | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 |

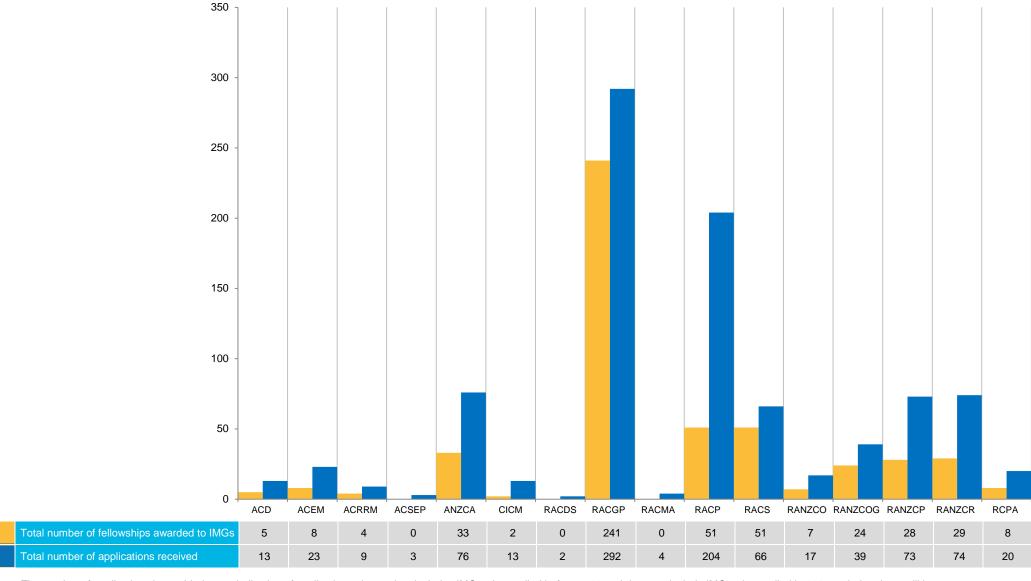
5.2.2 Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of final assessment: Top five countries by number of final assessments – interim assessment - partially comparable



5.2.3 Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of final assessment: Top five countries by number of final assessments – interim assessment - substantially comparable

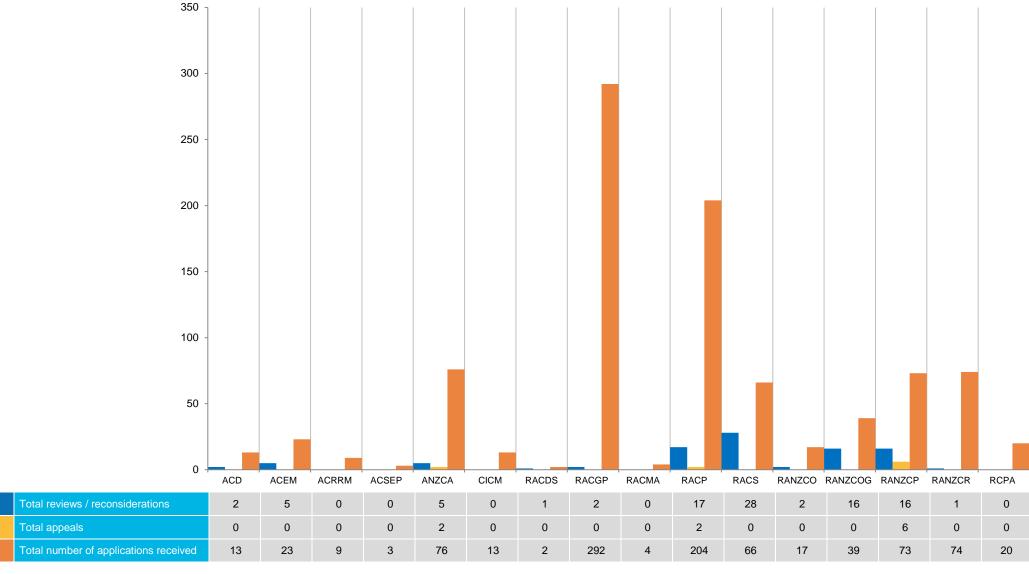


5.3 Specialist recognition outcomes: Number of fellowships awarded to IMGs



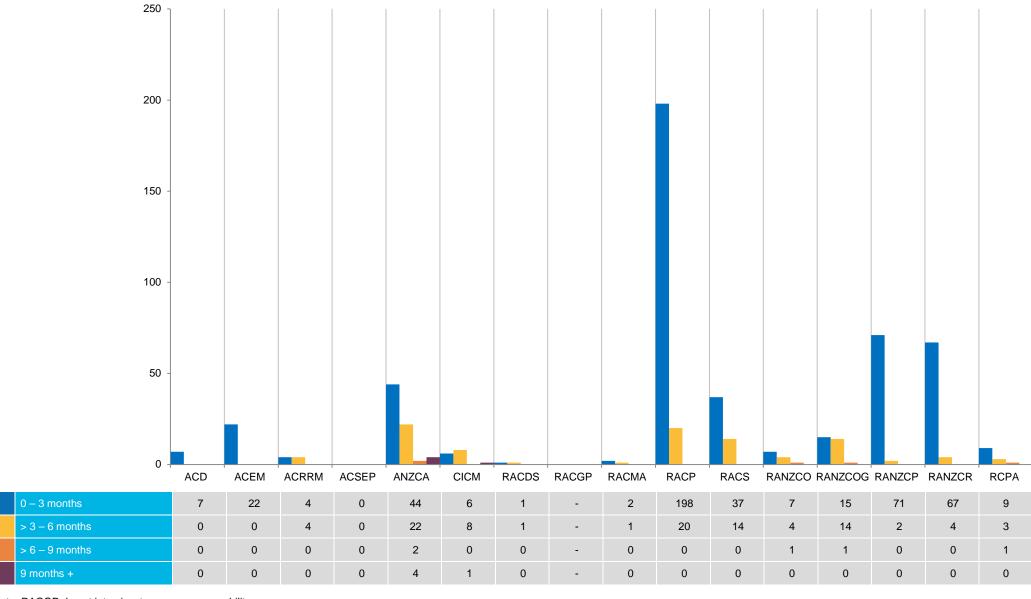
Note: The number of applications is provided as an indication of application volume; data includes IMGs who applied before 2016 and does not include IMGs who applied in 2016 period and are still in progress.

5.4 Specialist recognition outcomes: Number of reviews/reconsiderations and appeals of college decision requested by IMGs



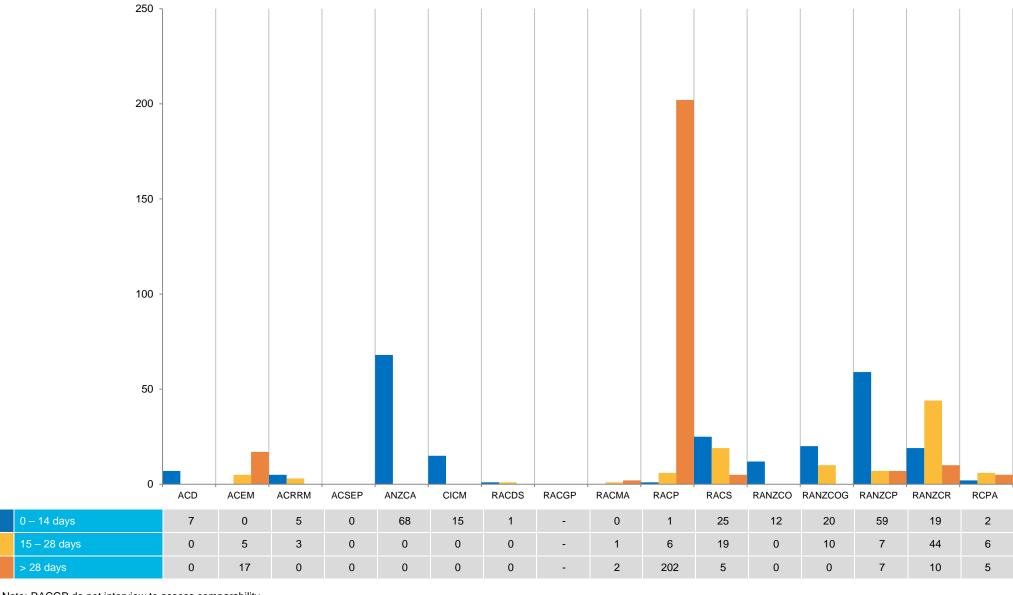
Note: Colleges have different appeals process and classification of 'reviews/reconsideration and appeals' varies. The number of applications is provided as an indication of volume, appeals may relate to IMGs who applied in 2016 or before 2016.

6.1.1 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Interim assessment: Time to first available interview

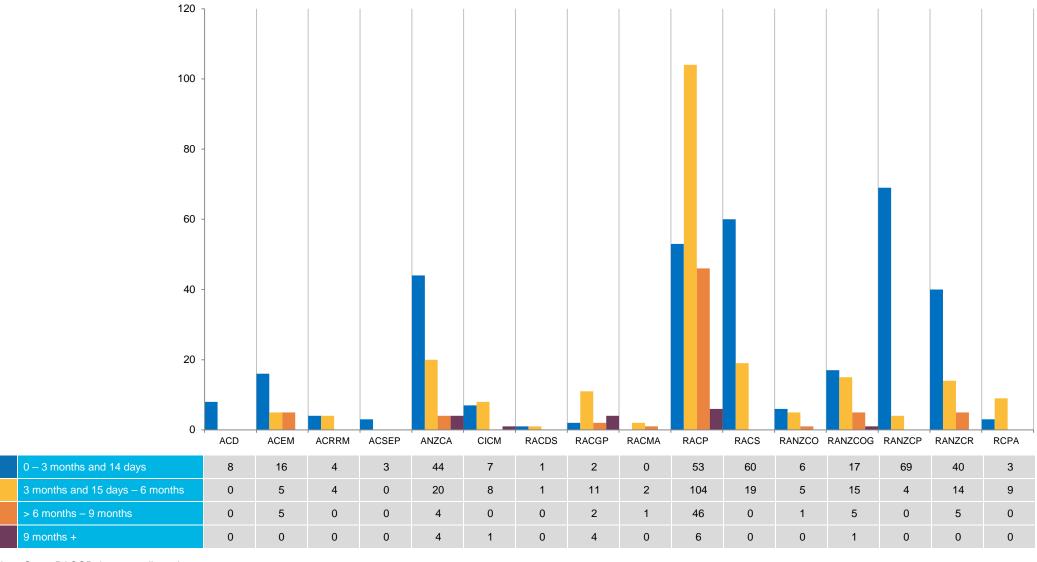


Note: RACGP do not interview to assess comparability.

6.1.2 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Interim assessment: Time from interview to interim assessment decision

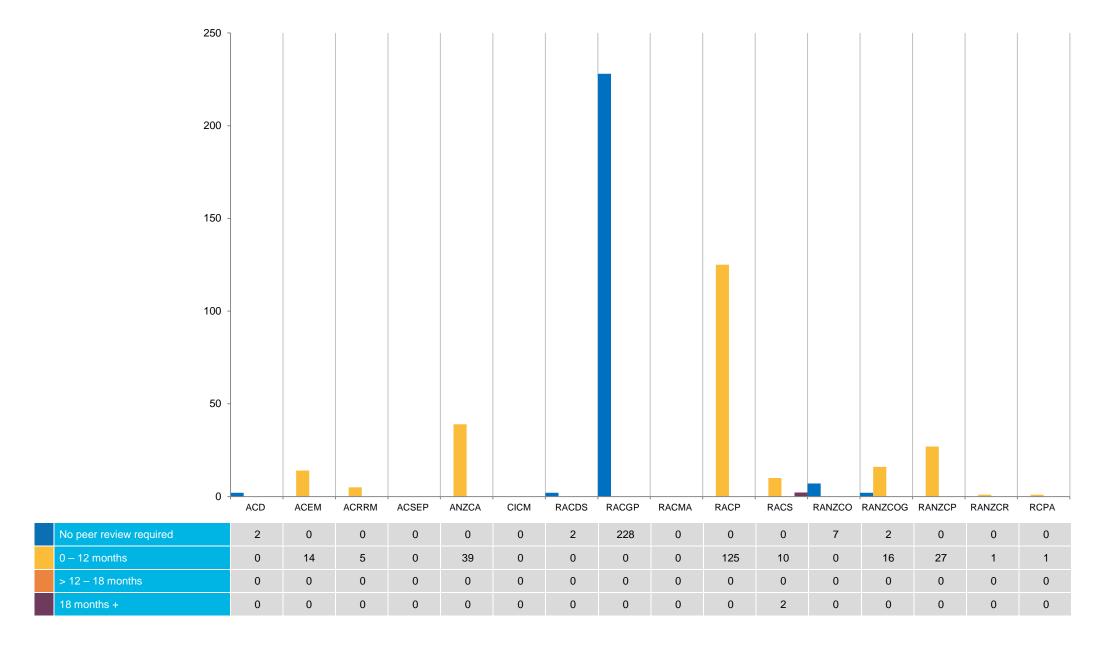


Note: RACGP do not interview to assess comparability.



Note: Some RACGP data not collected.

6.2.1 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Substantially comparable IMGs: Period of peer review required by college

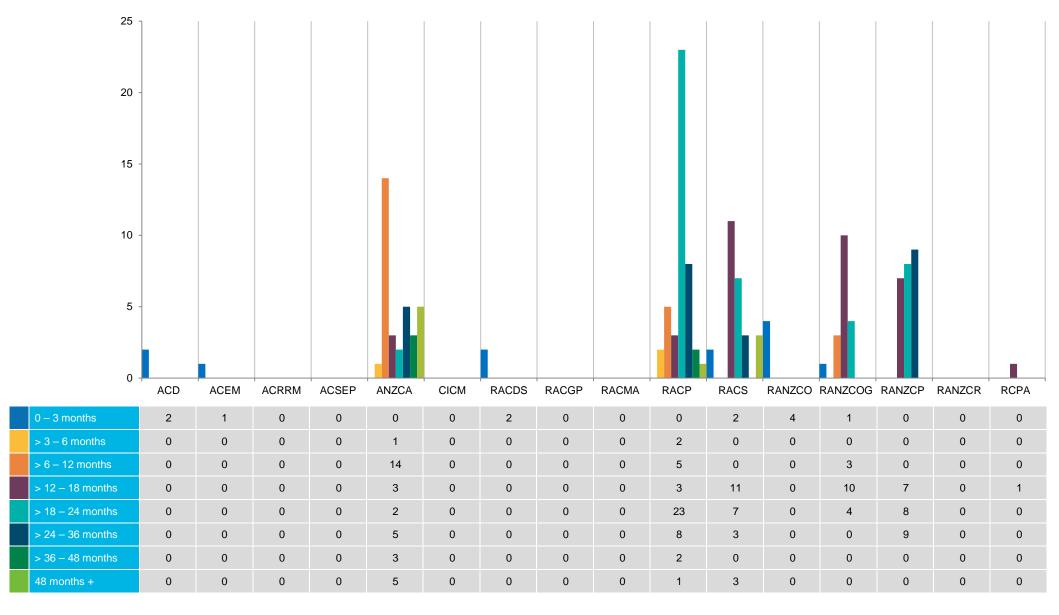


| All specialist medical colleges reported that no substantially comparable IMGs were required to comple | ete a formal examination. |
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Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Substantially comparable IMGs: Number required to complete exam

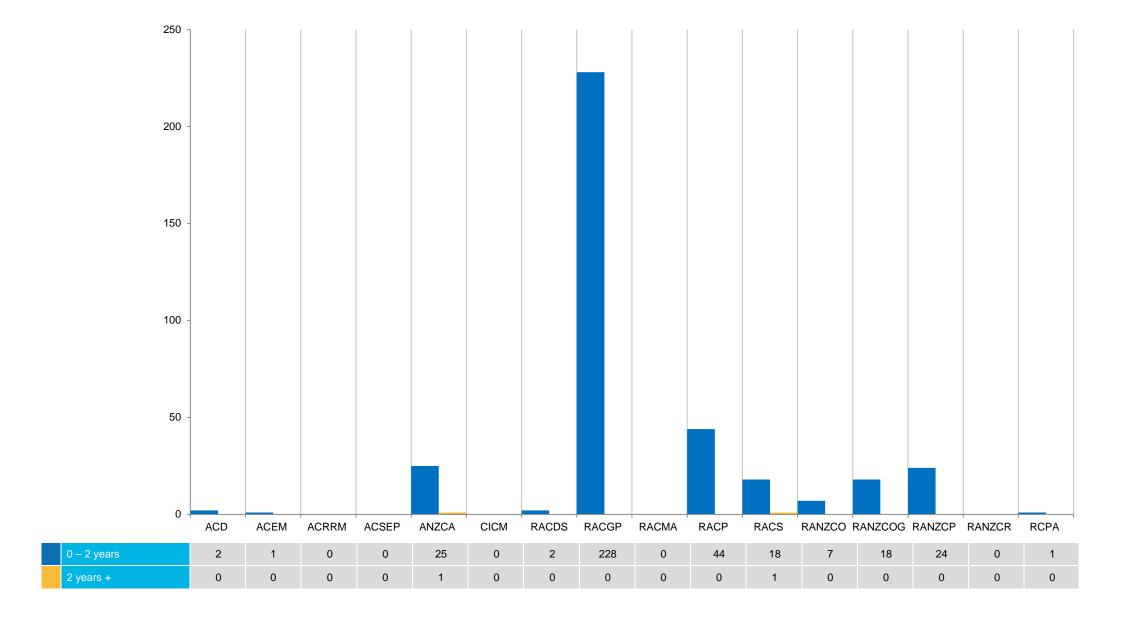
6.2.2

6.2.3 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Substantially comparable IMGs: Time for final assessment

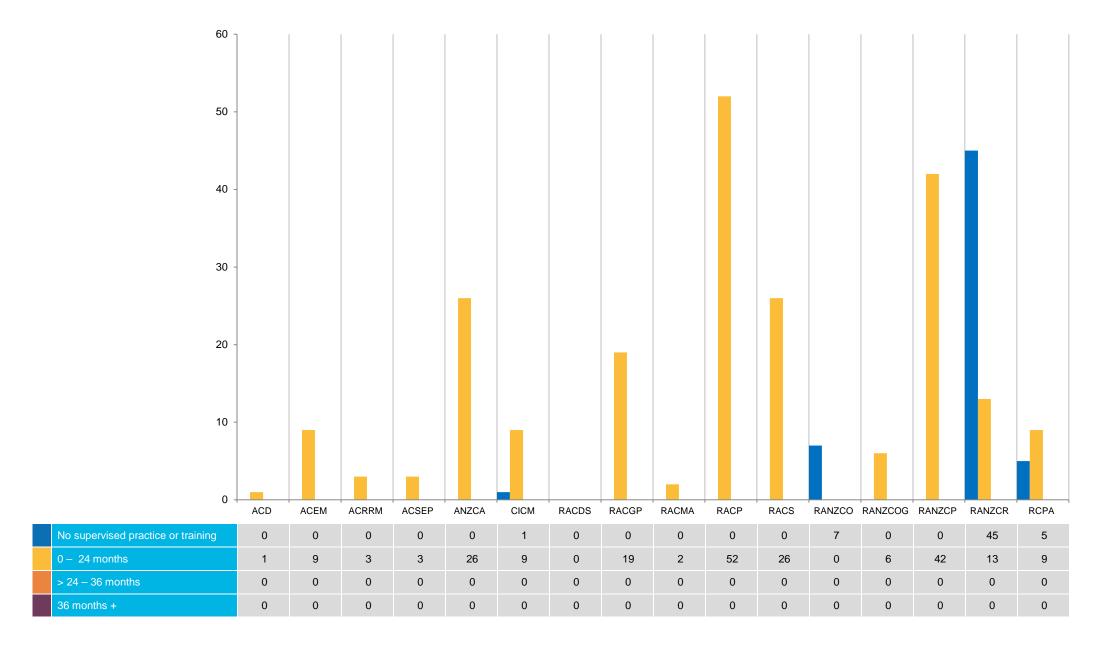


Note: RACGP data not collected.

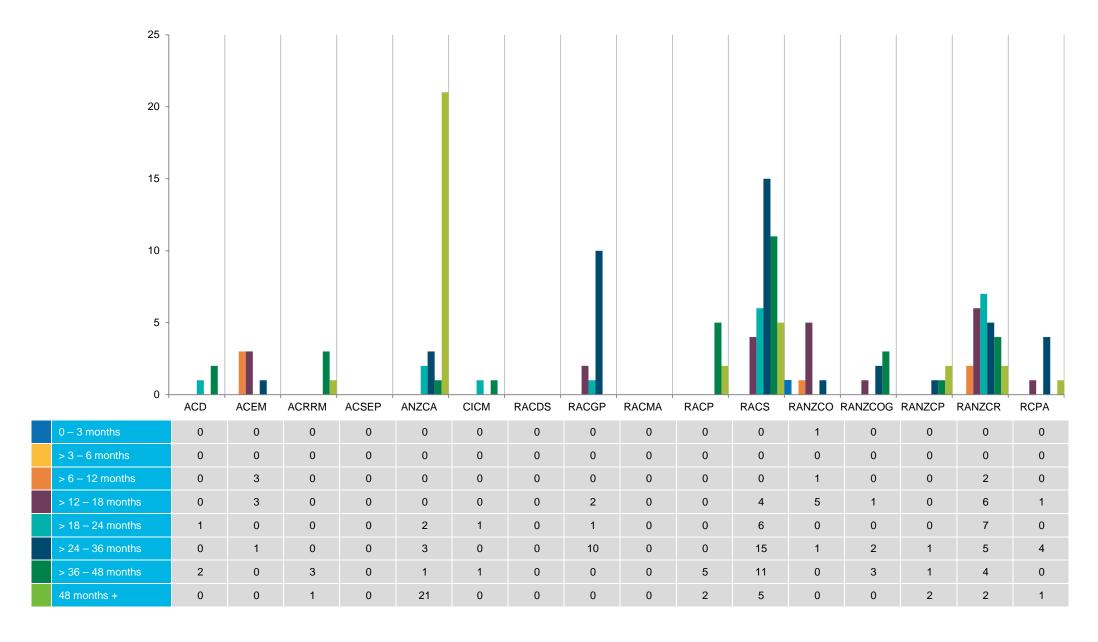
6.2.4 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Substantially comparable IMGs: Maximum timeframes for completing college requirements



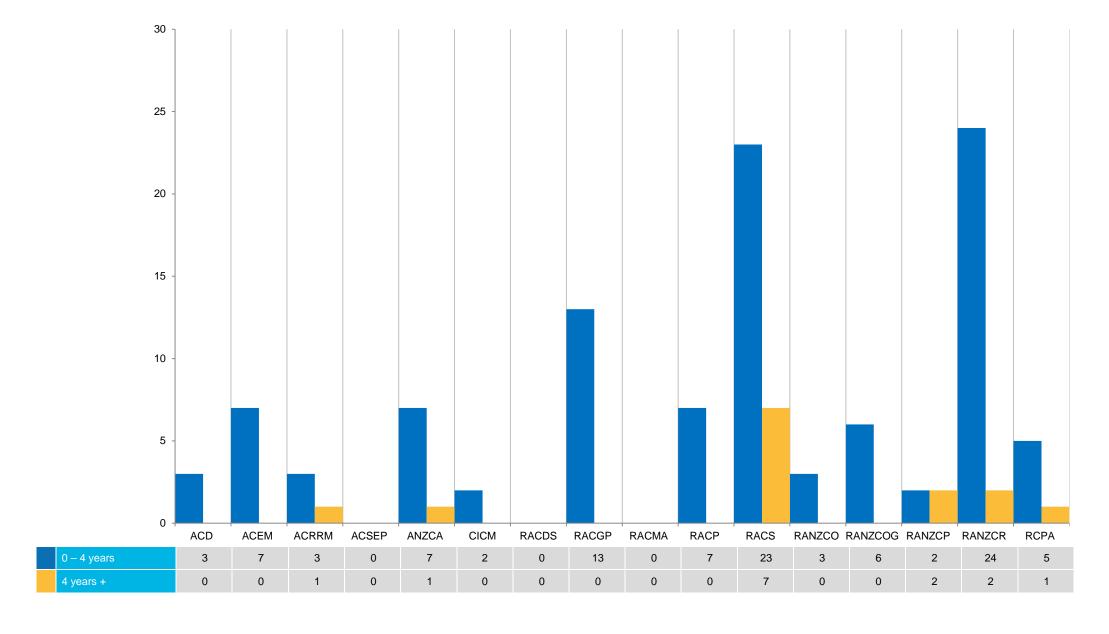
6.3.1 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Partially comparable IMGs: Period of supervised practice and/or training required by college



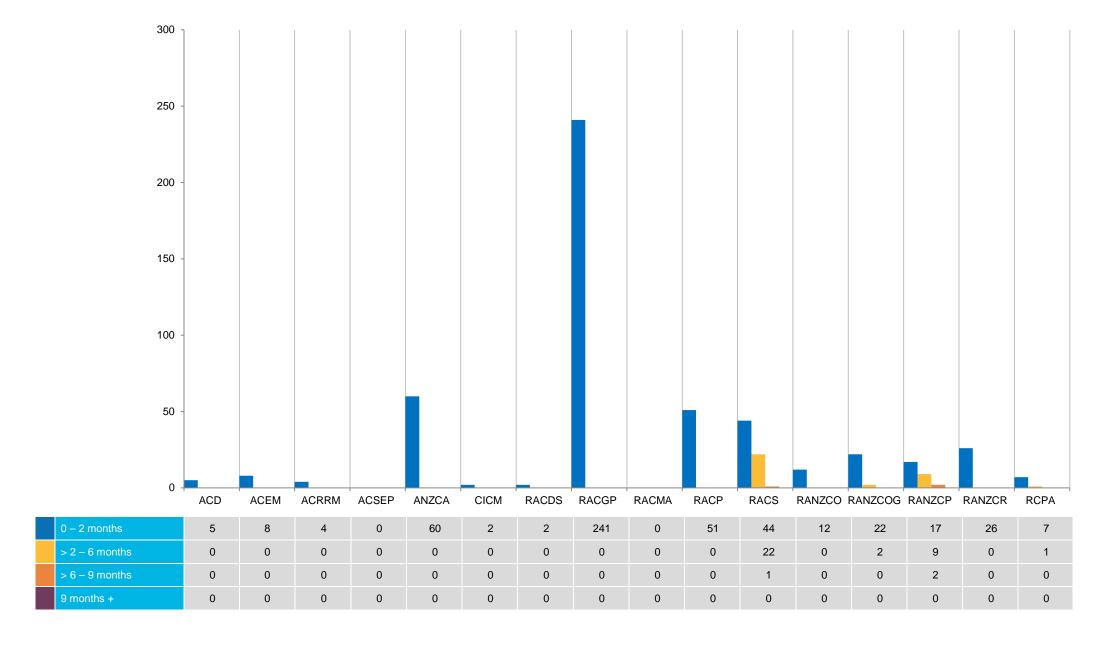
6.3.2 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Partially comparable IMGs: Time for final assessment



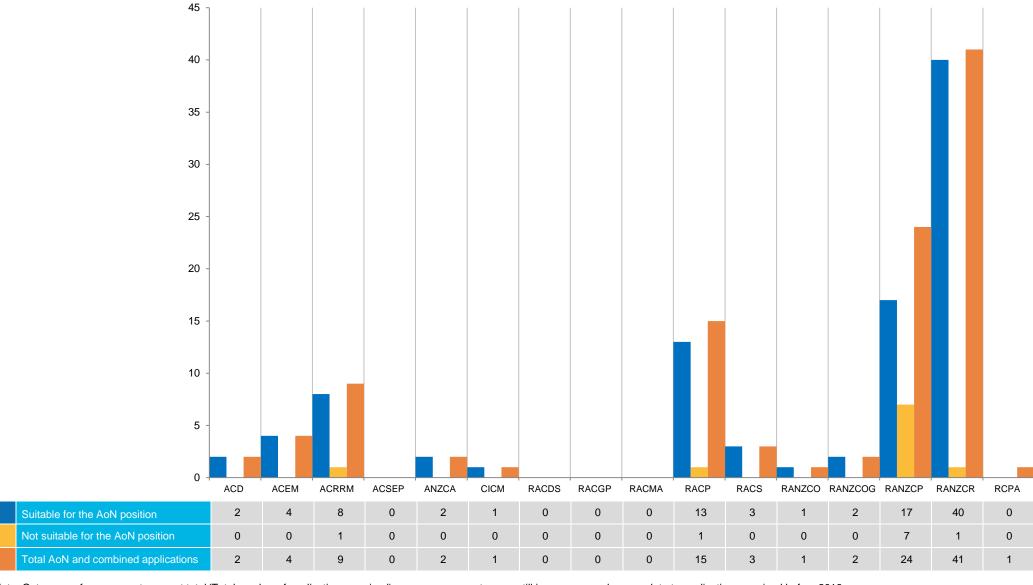
6.3.3 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Partially comparable IMGs: Maximum timeframes for completing college requirements



6.4 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Time for specialist recognition final assessment decision

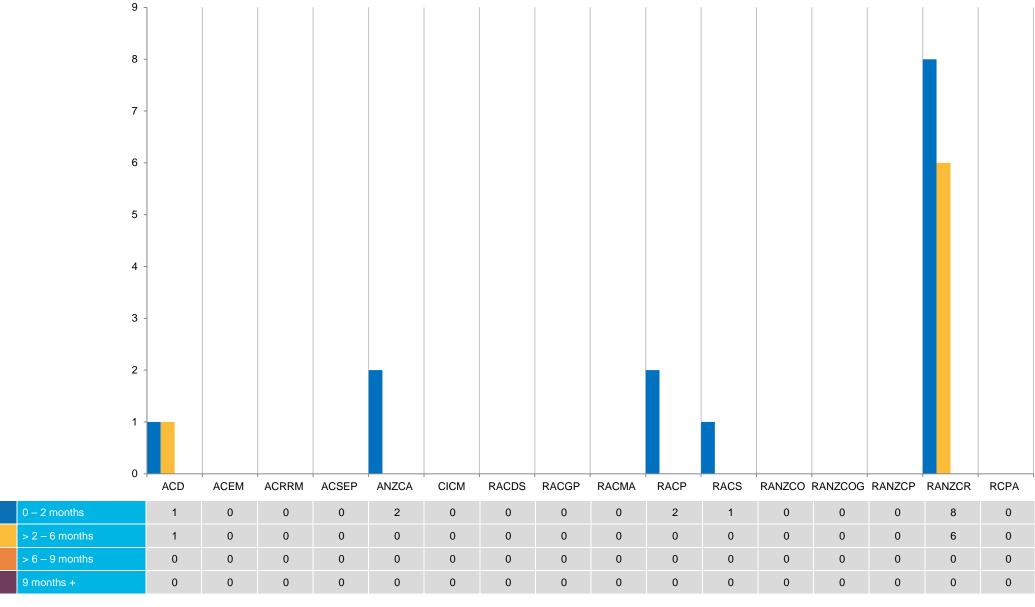


7.1 Area of need outcomes and timeframes: Outcome of assessment



Note: Outcomes of assessment may not total 'Total number of applications received'; some assessments were still in progress and some relate to applications received before 2016.

7.2 Area of need outcomes and timeframes: Time for assessment



Note: Excludes combined assessments (where IMG applied for specialist recognition and area of need).

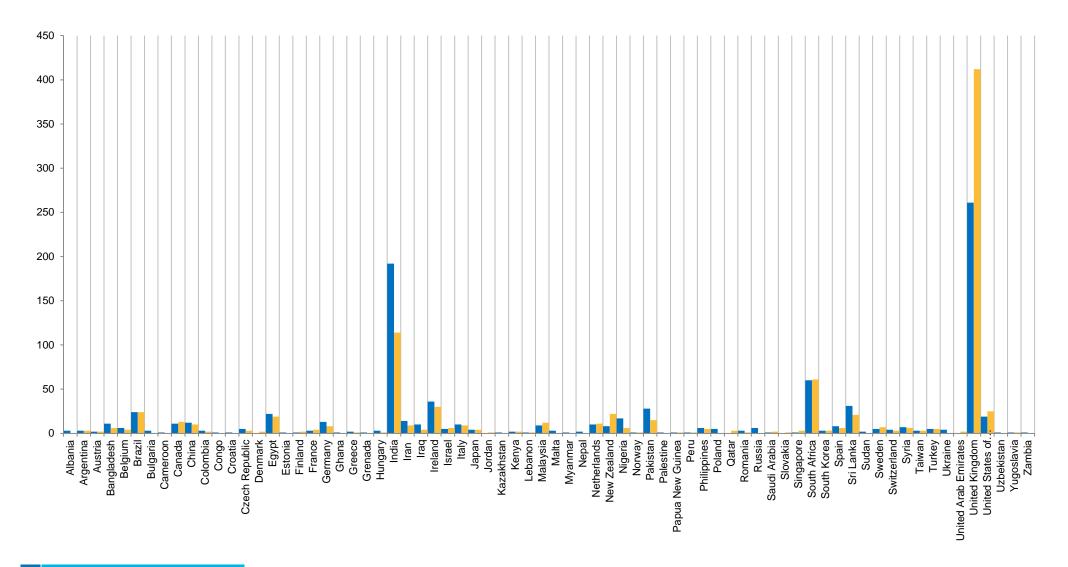
8.1 IMG country of qualifications: Primary medical degree and specialist qualification - all colleges (data)

| Country | Primary | Specialist |
|----------------|---------|------------|
| Albania | 3 | 0 |
| Argentina | 3 | 3 |
| Austria | 2 | 2 |
| Bangladesh | 11 | 6 |
| Belgium | 6 | 4 |
| Brazil | 24 | 24 |
| Bulgaria | 3 | 0 |
| Cameroon | 1 | 0 |
| Canada | 11 | 13 |
| China | 12 | 10 |
| Colombia | 3 | 2 |
| Congo | 1 | 0 |
| Croatia | 1 | 0 |
| Czech Republic | 5 | 3 |
| Denmark | 0 | 2 |
| Egypt | 22 | 19 |
| Estonia | 1 | 0 |
| Finland | 1 | 2 |
| France | 3 | 4 |
| Germany | 13 | 8 |
| Ghana | 1 | 0 |
| Greece | 2 | 1 |
| Grenada | 1 | 0 |
| Hungary | 3 | 1 |
| India | 192 | 114 |

| Country | Primary | Specialist |
|------------------|---------|------------|
| Iran | 14 | 9 |
| Iraq | 10 | 4 |
| Ireland | 36 | 30 |
| Israel | 5 | 6 |
| Italy | 10 | 9 |
| Japan | 4 | 4 |
| Jordan | 0 | 1 |
| Kazakhstan | 1 | 0 |
| Kenya | 2 | 2 |
| Lebanon | 1 | 1 |
| Malaysia | 9 | 12 |
| Malta | 3 | 0 |
| Myanmar | 1 | 0 |
| Nepal | 2 | 0 |
| Netherlands | 10 | 11 |
| New Zealand | 8 | 22 |
| Nigeria | 17 | 6 |
| Norway | 1 | 1 |
| Pakistan | 28 | 15 |
| Palestine | 1 | 0 |
| Papua New Guinea | 1 | 1 |
| Peru | 1 | 1 |
| Philippines | 6 | 5 |
| Poland | 5 | 0 |
| Qatar | 0 | 3 |

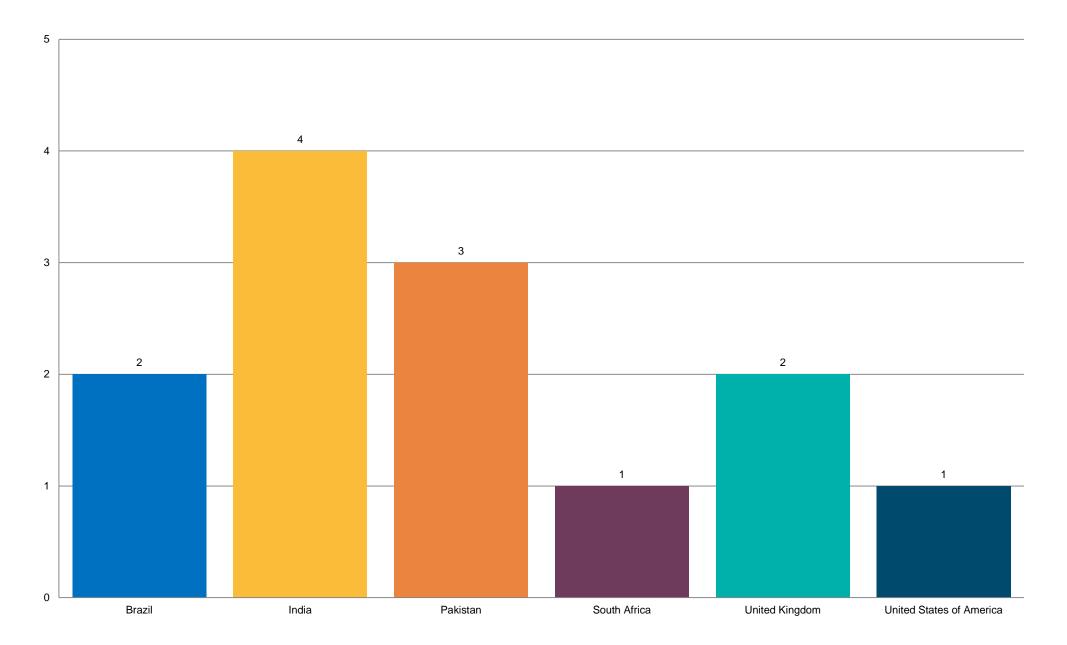
| Romania | 3 | |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 |
| Russia | 6 | 0 |
| Saudi Arabia | 1 | 2 |
| Slovakia | 0 | 1 |
| Singapore | 1 | 3 |
| South Africa | 60 | 61 |
| South Korea | 3 | 3 |
| Spain | 8 | 6 |
| Sri Lanka | 31 | 21 |
| Sudan | 2 | 0 |
| Sweden | 5 | 7 |
| Switzerland | 4 | 3 |
| Syria | 7 | 6 |
| Taiwan | 3 | 3 |
| Turkey | 5 | 5 |
| Ukraine | 4 | 0 |
| United Arab Emirates | 0 | 2 |
| United Kingdom | 261 | 412 |
| United States of America | 19 | 25 |
| Uzbekistan | 1 | 0 |
| Yugoslavia | 1 | 1 |
| Zambia | 1 | 0 |

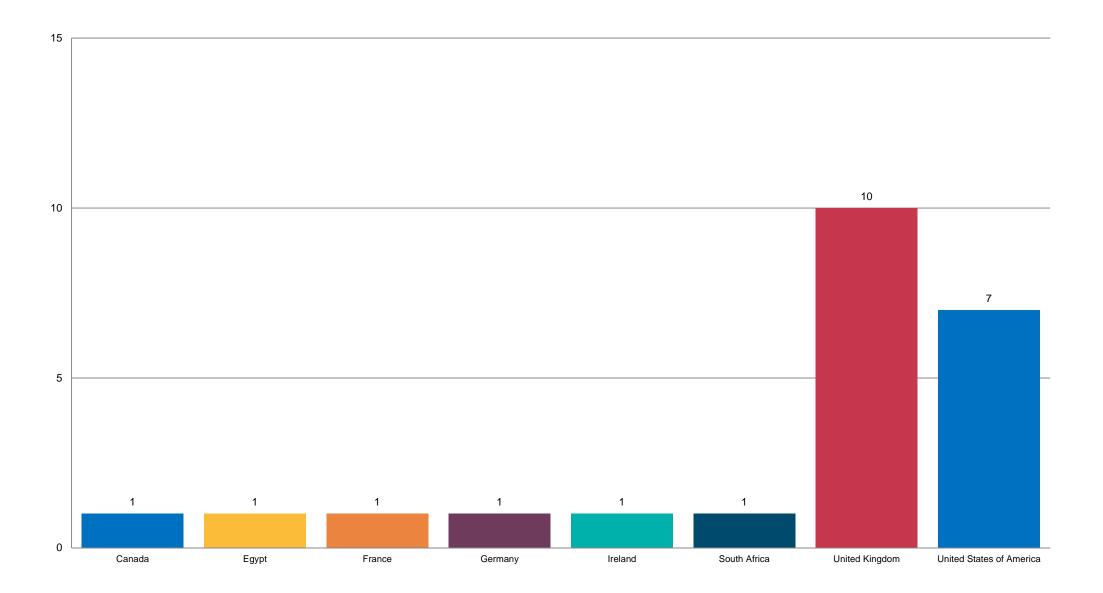
8.2 IMG country of qualifications: Primary medical degree and specialist qualification - all colleges (graph)

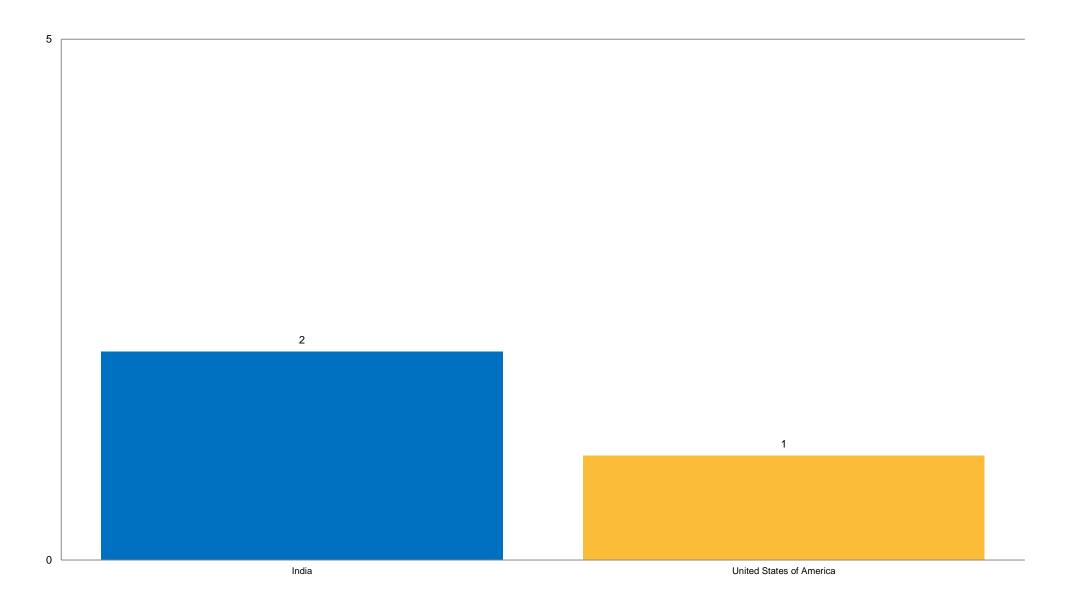


Primary medical qualification

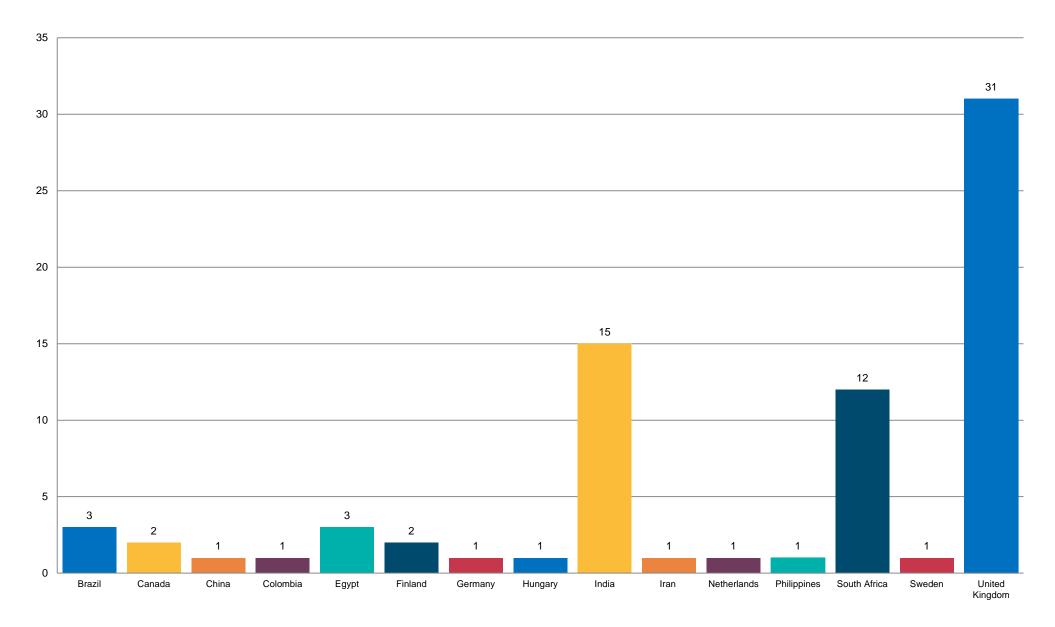
Specialist medical qualification

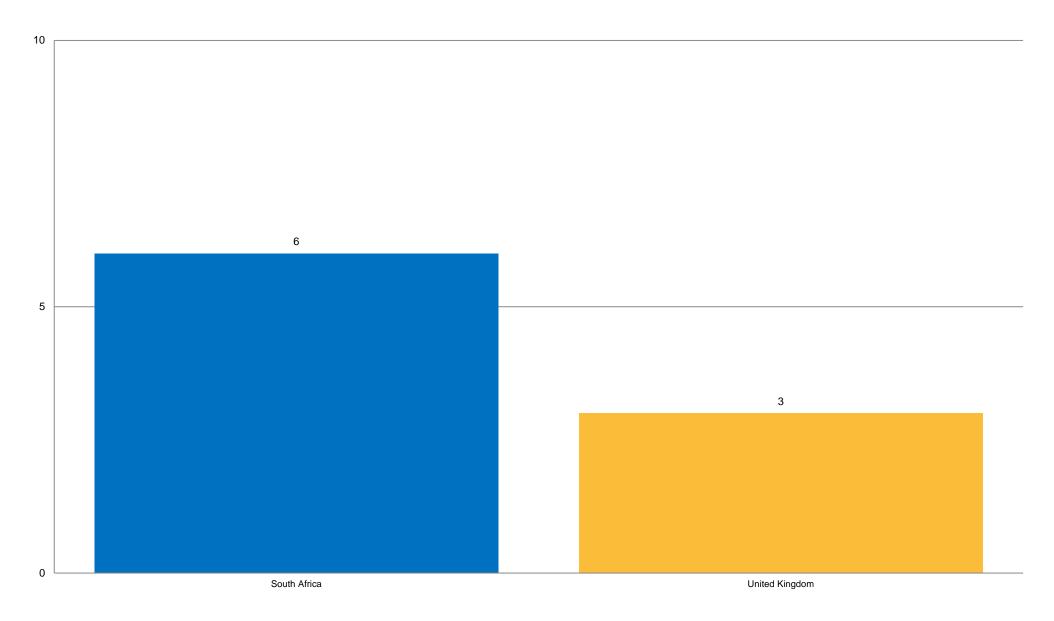


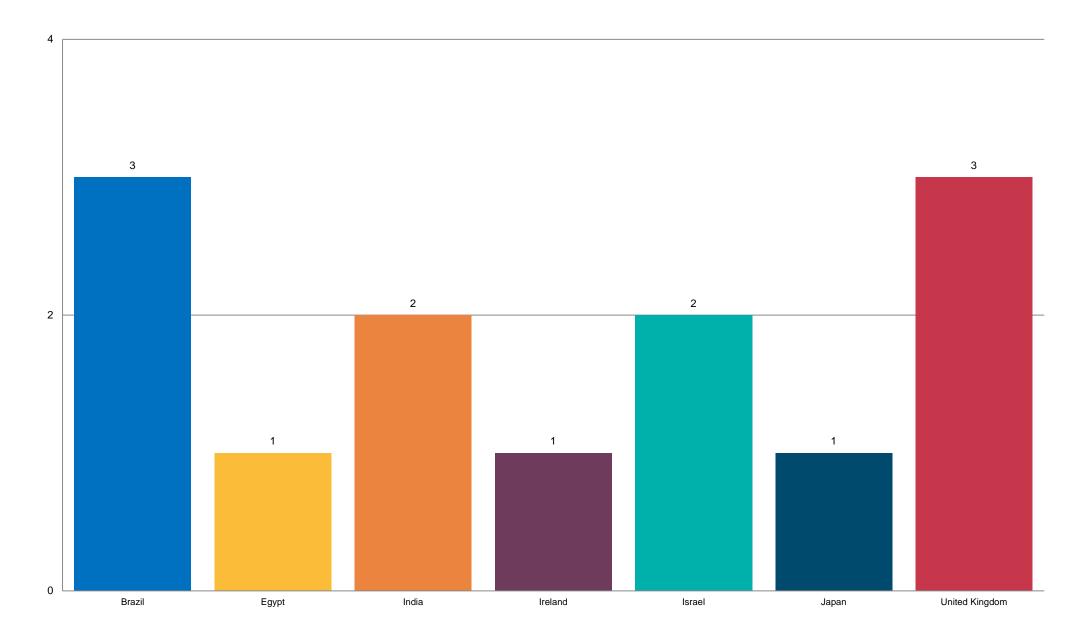


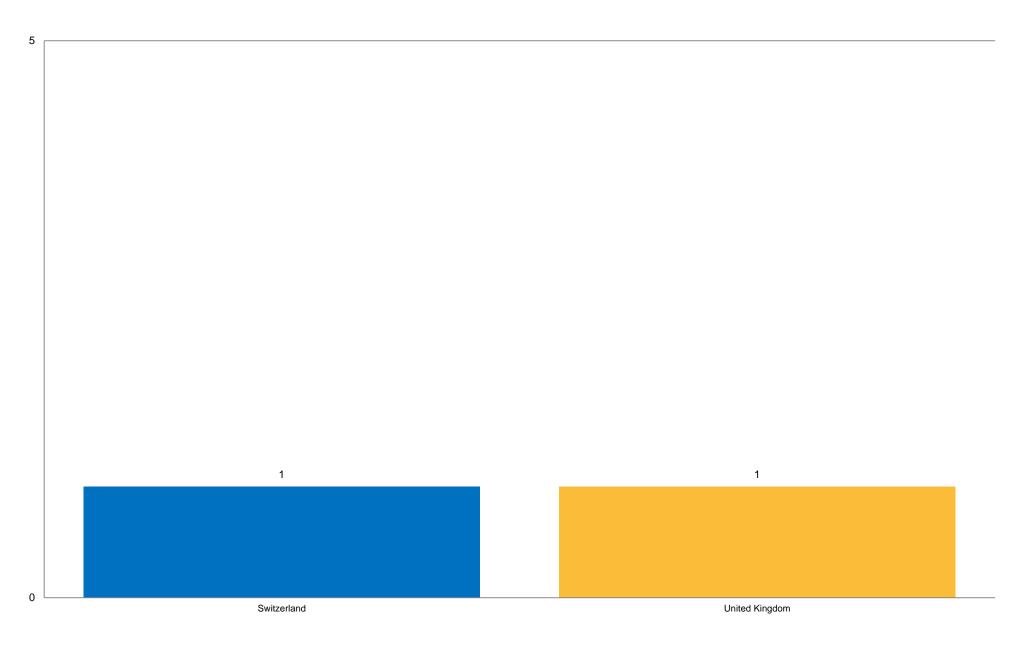


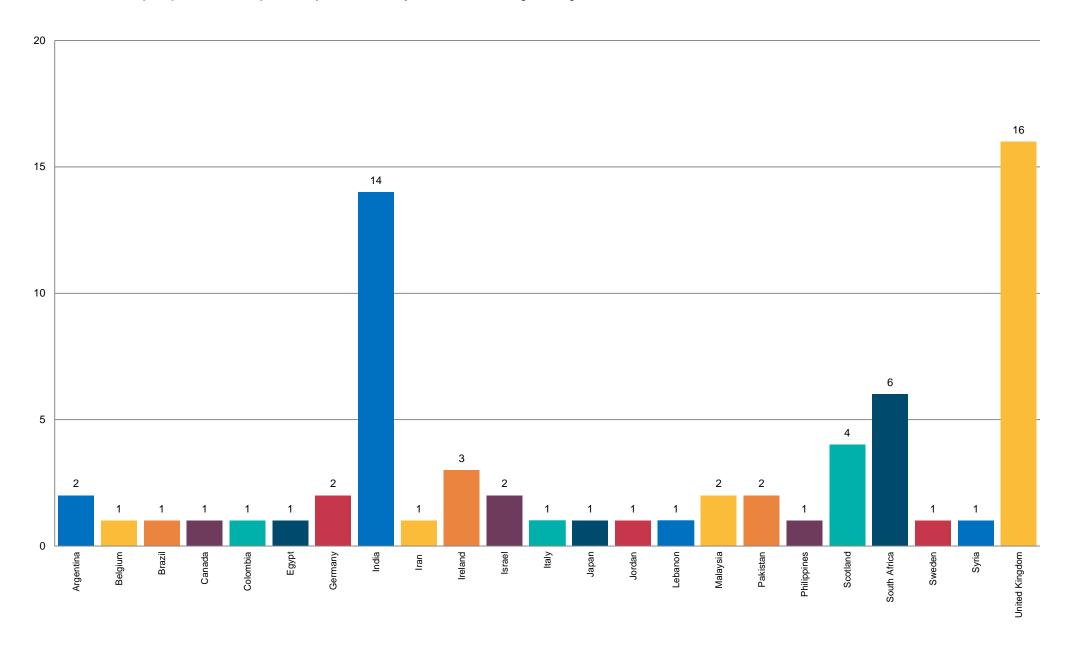
8.3.4 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Australia and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists



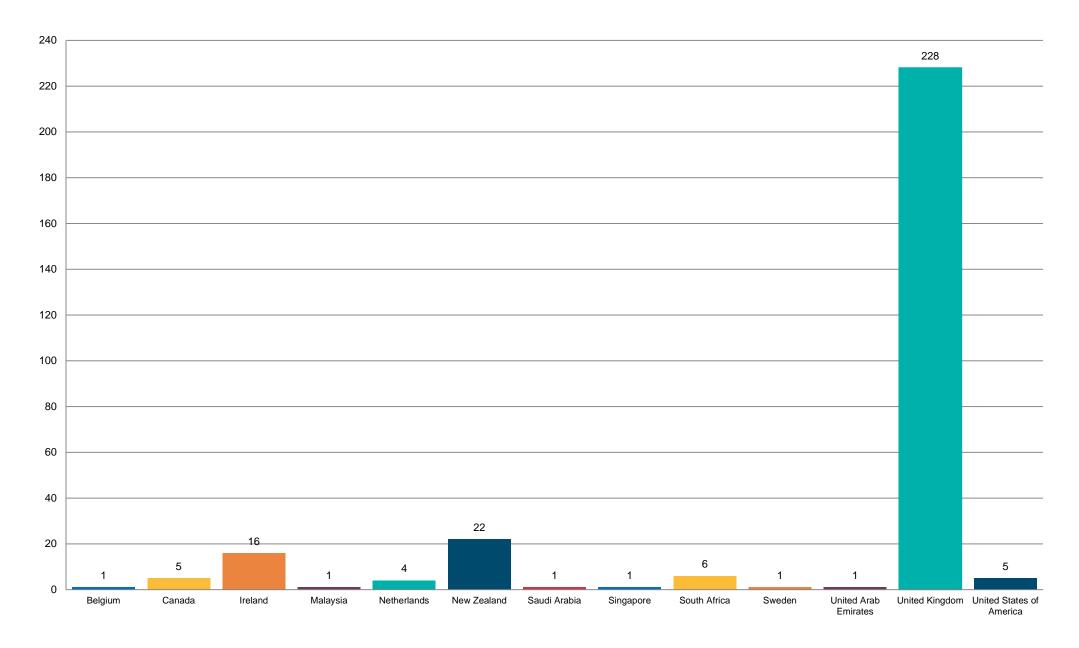


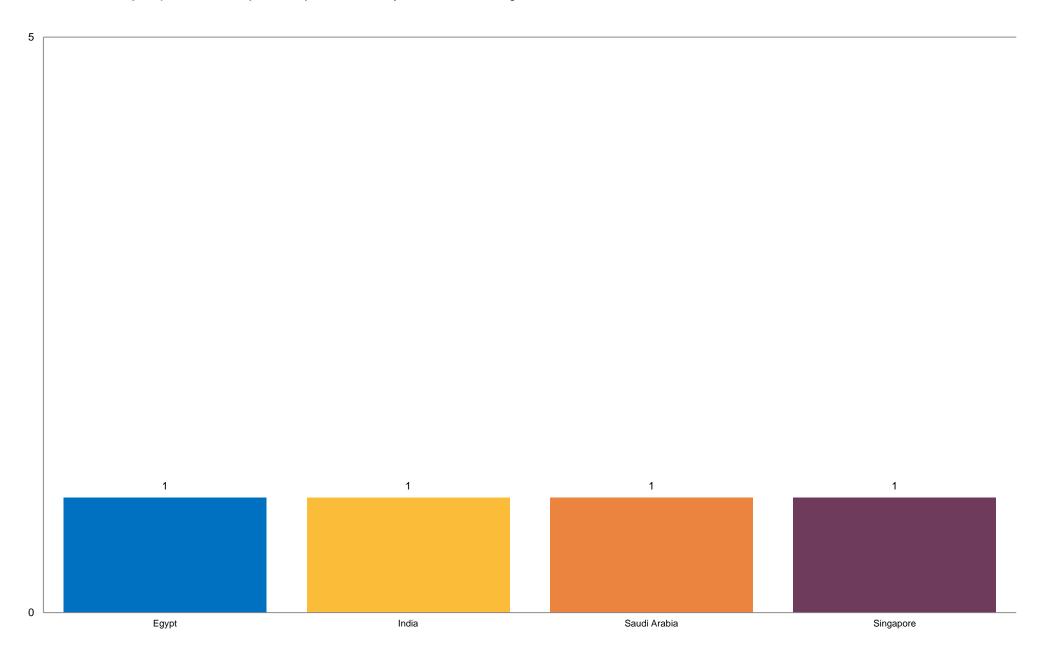


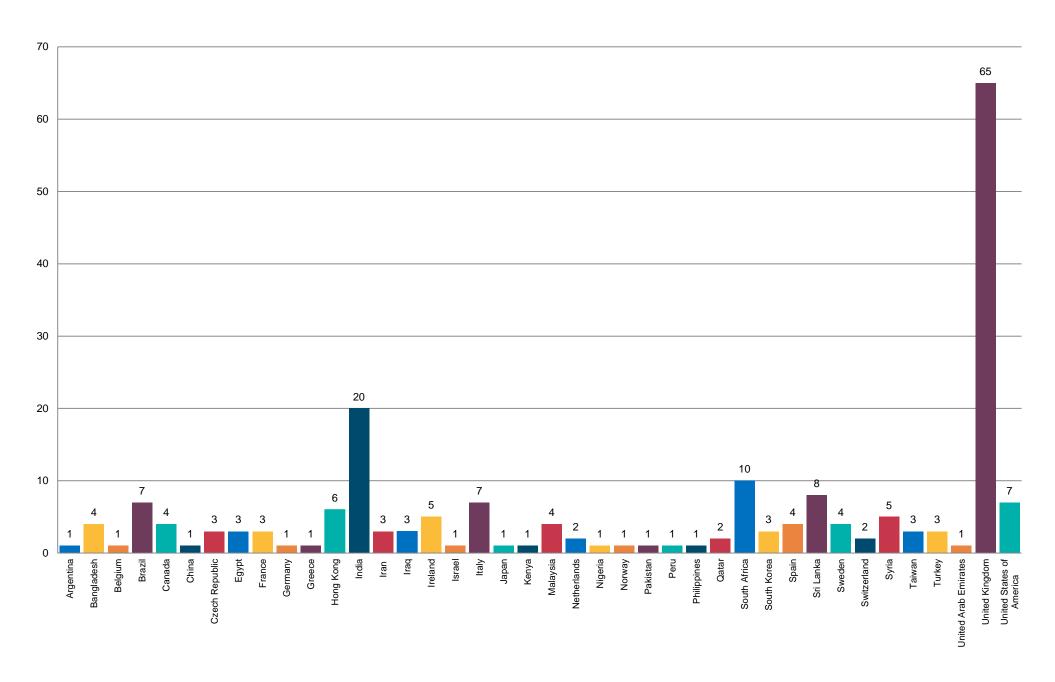




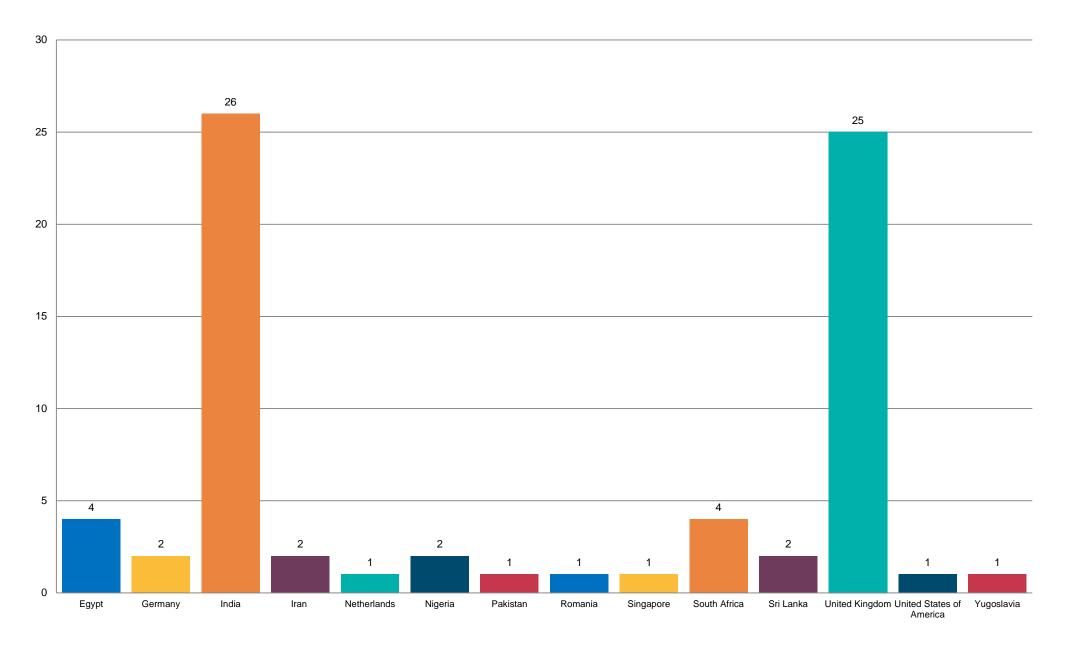
8.3.9 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners



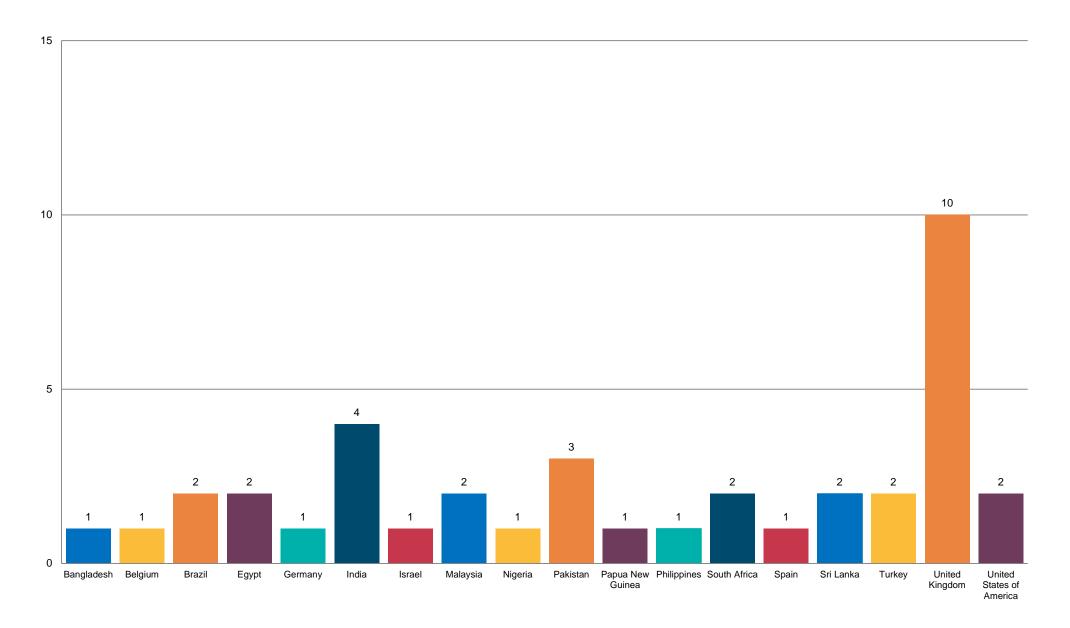




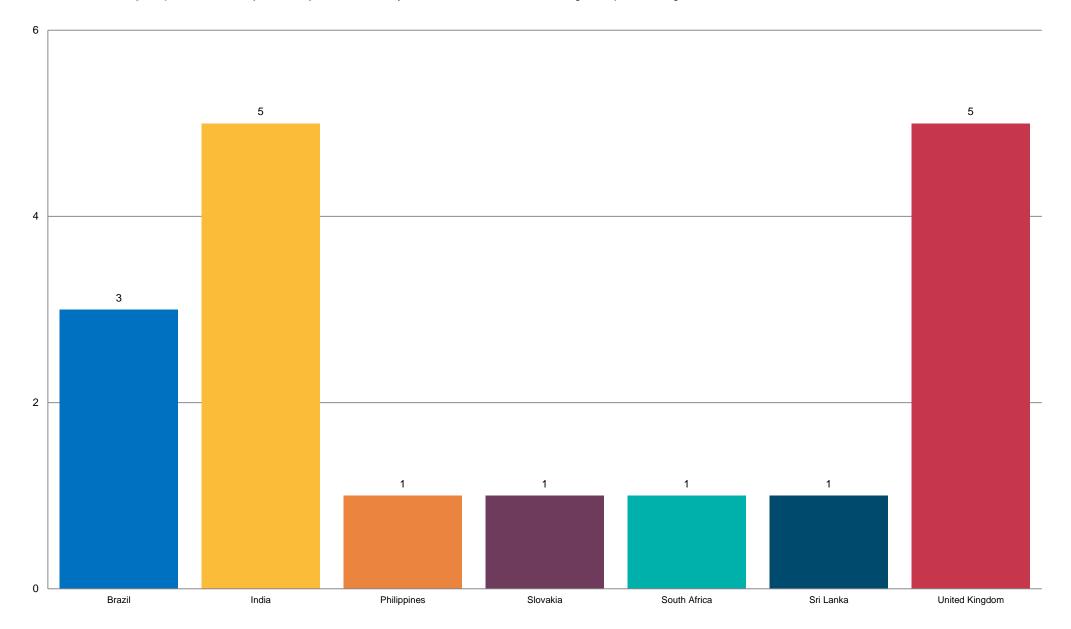
8.3.12 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists



8.3.13 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Royal Australian New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists



8.3.14 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Royal Australian New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists



8.3.15 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists

