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### Sir, Recent subspecialty trends in ophthalmology consultant appointments

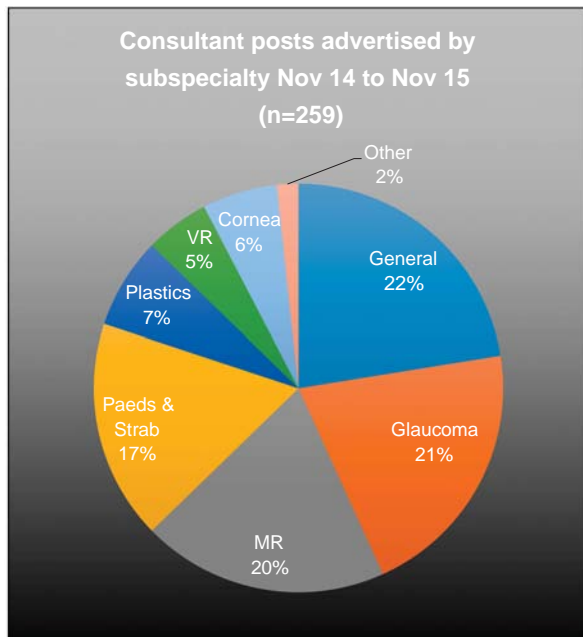
Consultant posts in the UK have traditionally been awarded with a recognized subspecialty interest. Annually, the Royal College of Ophthalmologists publishes retrospective data regarding the fate of CCT holders and analyses trends in Consultant appointments. These data are relevant to workforce planning and allow current registrars to identify trends in subspecialty interests.

#### Purpose

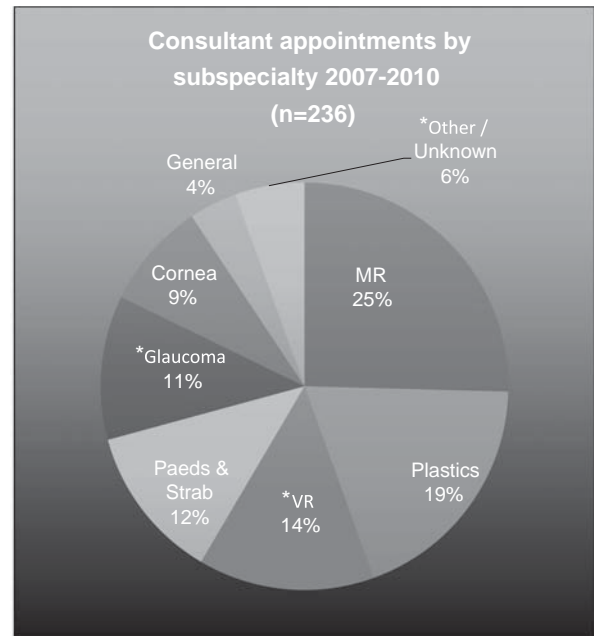
This study analyses the job type of new Consultant Ophthalmologist posts advertised over the past year and compares them with recent trends.

#### Method

New Consultant posts advertised through the NHS jobs portal over a 12-month period (November 2014–



**Figure 1** Consultant posts advertised by subspecialty.



**Figure 2** Consultant appointments by subspecialty.

November 2015)<sup>1</sup> were analysed according to job type (substantive or locum) and subspecialty interest, and were compared with College outcome data for new CCT holders between 2007 and 2010.<sup>2</sup>

#### Results

Over the 12-month analysis period, 259 Consultant Ophthalmologist posts were advertised (Figure 1). The majority of posts (60%) were substantive appointments. 22% of posts did not specify a subspecialty interest and were advertised as general appointments. The most common subspecialty interests were glaucoma (21%), medical retina (20%), and paediatrics and strabismus (17%).

#### Conclusion

This study identifies a growing trend for NHS Trusts to offer more generalized Consultant Ophthalmologist posts, often associated with an option to tailor a subspecialty interest reflecting local demand or personal preference. The past 12 months have shown a resurgence of job opportunities in glaucoma and paediatrics & strabismus which respectively accounted for only 11 and 12% of Consultant posts awarded between 2007 and 2010 (Figure 2). Data from advertised posts are more reflective of demand than reality and we appreciate that some posts may not have been filled or been advertised more than once. In the coming years, we will be able to confirm this apparent shift in subspecialty trends as subsequent College CCT outcome data is produced.

#### Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**References**

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- 2 Bowes O, Pradeep A, Lim LT, Grant S, Dean WH, O'Gallagher M *et al*. The fate of ophthalmology trainees in the UK – CCT holders 2007–2010. *Eye (Lond)* 2015; **29**(3): 445–446.

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