

# **Does country of medical training predict risk of performance assessment?**

## **Implications of a cohort study**

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## Background: investigating poor performance



General  
Medical  
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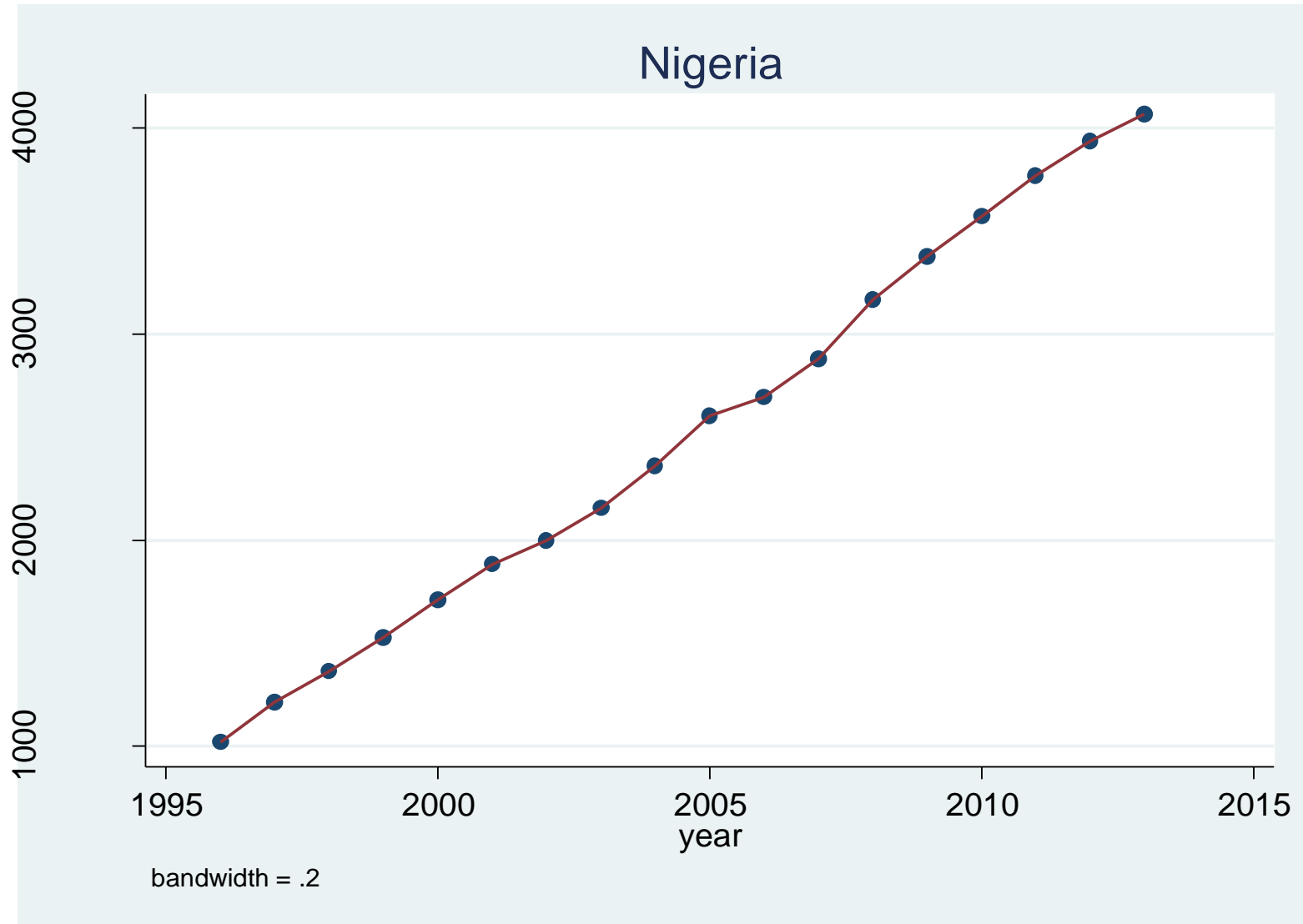
**Allegations include:** probity, working with others, maintaining good medical practice, relationships, clinical care

# The performance assessment

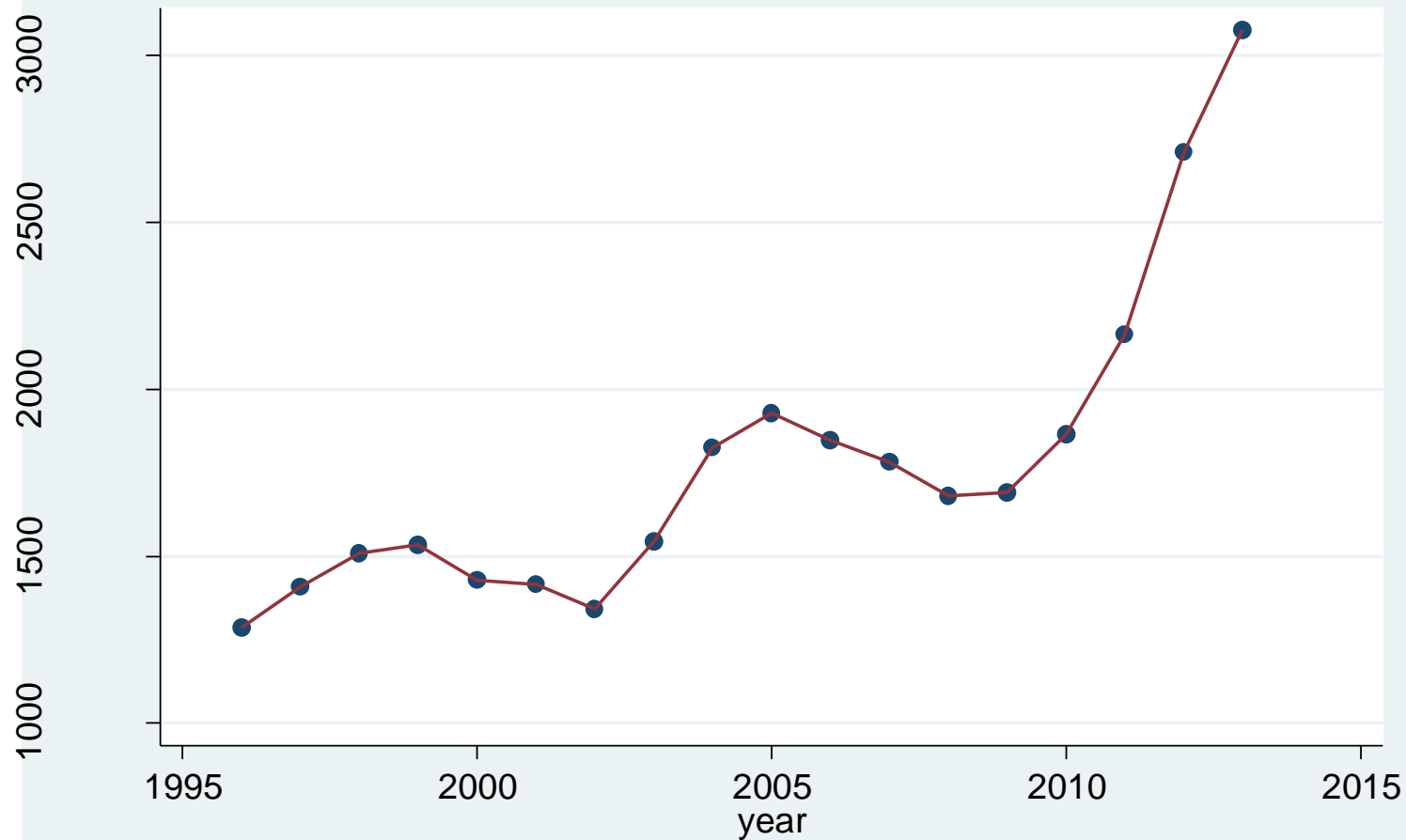
- *Peer review*
  - Interview doctor
  - Interview colleagues
  - Review records
- *Test of competence*
  - Knowledge + clinical skills
  - Tailored to doctor's actual practice

## Changes to UK medical register

- Proportion from non-European countries was always higher than European.
- In recent years, proportionally more joined register from European countries than outside of Europe.
- May change further following referendum decision to leave the European Union.

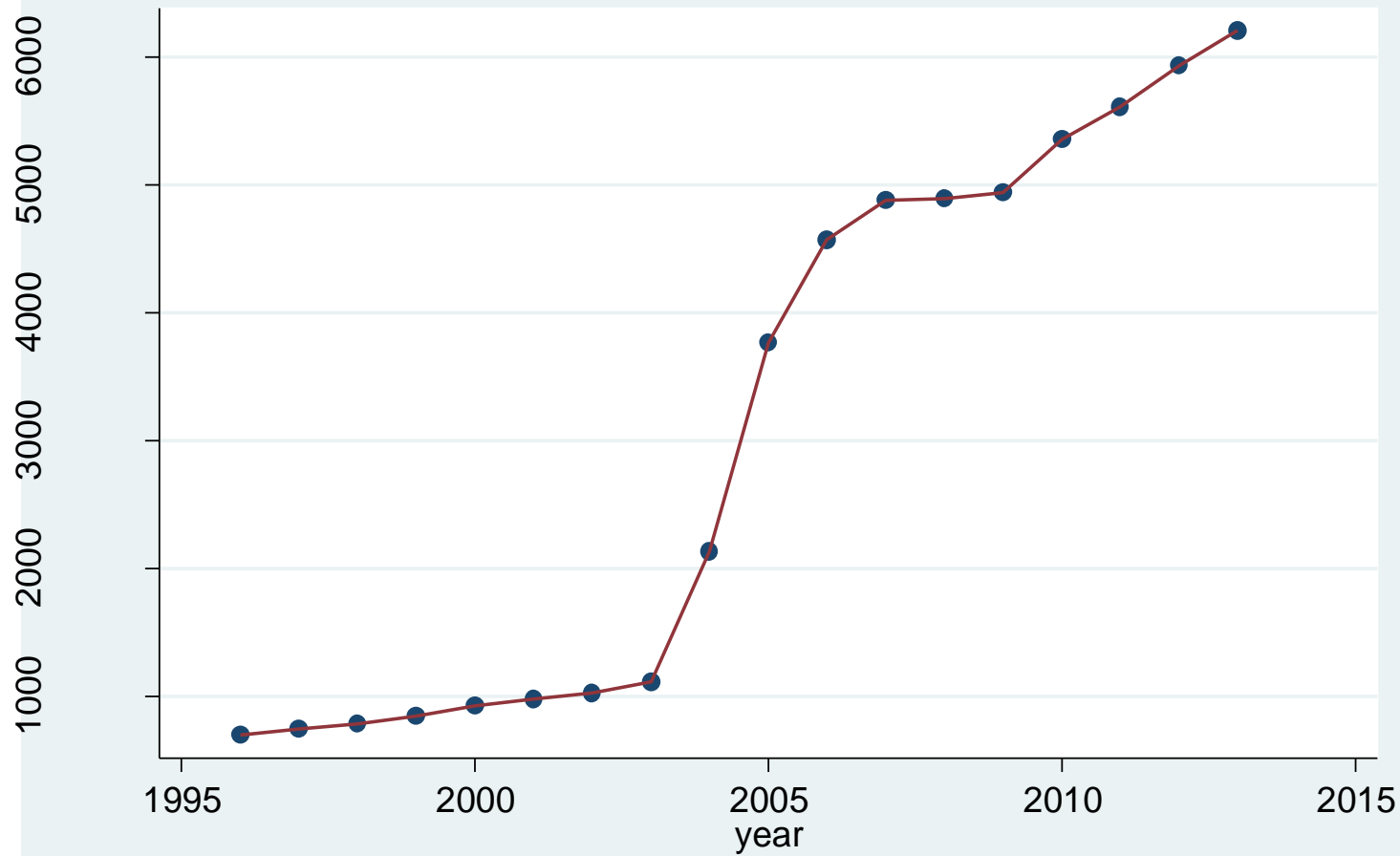


# Greece



bandwidth = .2

### EU 2004 accession states



bandwidth = .2

# Overseas trained doctors in the UK

- More likely to fail postgraduate medical examinations in UK (Esmail 2013).
- Receive higher impact decisions at each stage of fitness to practice process (Humphrey et al 2011).
- Receive proportionately more sanctions or warnings than UK graduates (GMC, 2017).





# Does country of training predict risk of performance assessment?

- Compared doctors who had a **GMC performance assessment** between **1996 and 2013** with **medical register** in same period.
- **Outcome measures** were numbers experiencing performance assessments by country or region of medical qualification.
- Calculated the **rate** of performance assessments per thousand doctors, **per enquiry year**.

# Which countries of qualification are over/under represented in performance assessments?

Country	Number of registered doctors in 2013 N=259,642	Absolute change on register since 1996	Percentage change on register since 1996	Total performance assessment cases N=1111
Bangladesh	874 (0.3%)	+253	41%↑	23 (21%)
Egypt	3215 (1%)	+1438	81%↑	45 (5%)
Germany	3258 (1%)	+808	33%↑	45 (5%)
Greece	3077 (1%)	+1791	139%↑	12 (1%)
India	25114 (10%)	+12361	97%↑	242 (22%)
Iraq	2326 (0.8%)	+1417	156%↑	30 (3%)
Ireland	4020 (2%)	-2689	40%↓	28 (3%)
Italy	2917 (1%)	+1973	209%↑	14 (1%)
Nigeria	4067 (2%)	+3049	300%↑	47 (4%)
Pakistan	9400 (4%)	+6686	246%↑	61 (5%)
South Africa	5444 (2%)	-880	14%↓	17 (2%)
Sri Lanka	2376 (0.9%)	+82	4%↑	21 (2%)
United Kingdom	164691 (63%)	+39205	31%↑	332 (30%)
*EU 2004 states	6206 (2%)	+5513	796%↑	33 (3%)
EEA remainder	7715 (3%)	+4638	151%↑	67 (6%)
Rest of the world	14942 (6%)	+1532	11%↑	70 (6%)

## Did rates differ by country?

- **70%** of doctors under performance assessment qualified outside UK.
- Rate of performance assessment **varied significantly** by where a doctor qualified.
- Controlling for enquiry year, doctors who **trained outside** the UK were more likely to have a performance assessment.\*

\* Exception was South Africa

# Incidence rate ratio (IRR) by country/region

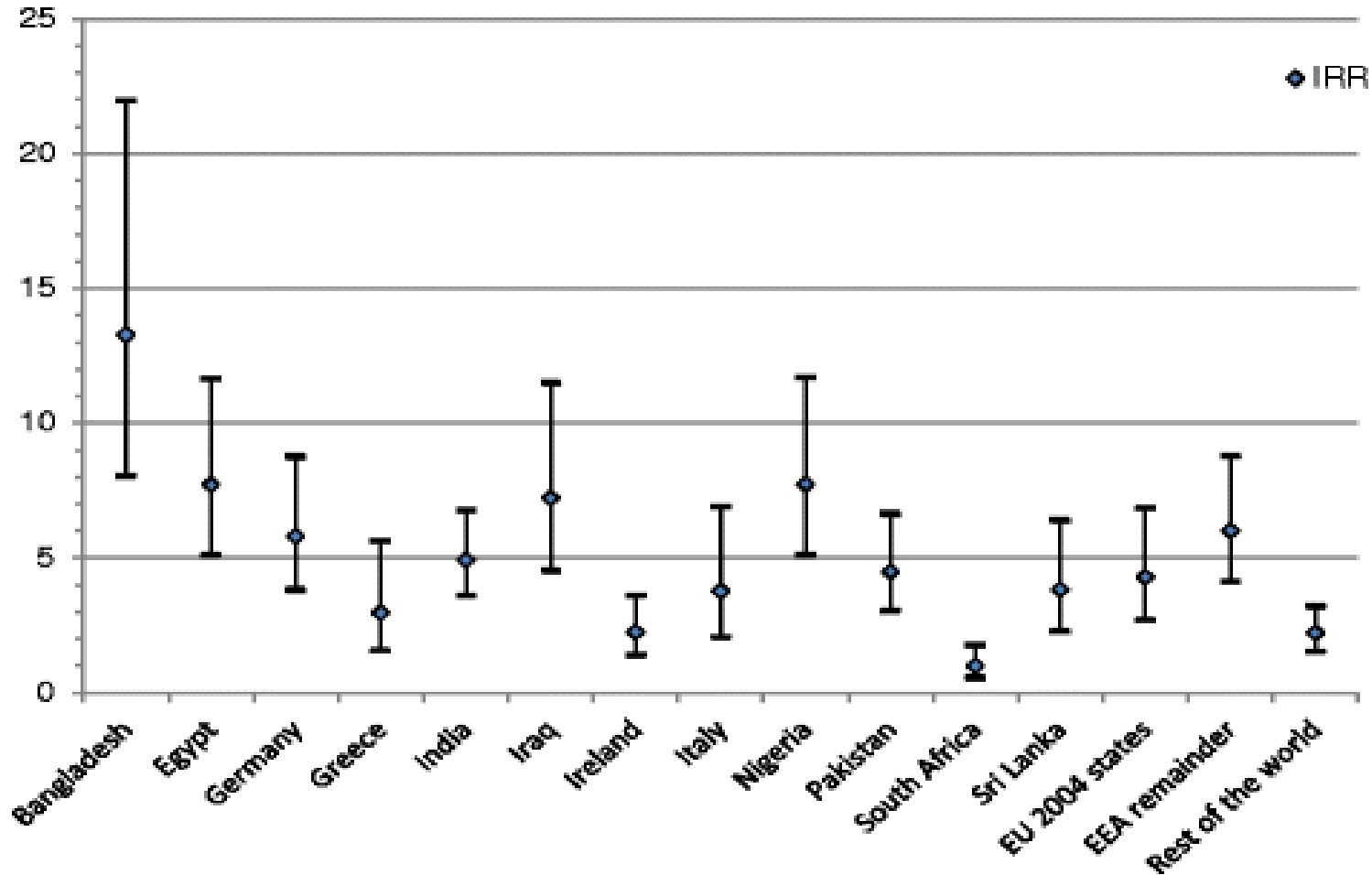


Fig. 7 A ratio of 1 means no difference from the baseline of UK-trained doctors.

← → ↻ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/doctors-who-trained-abroad-far-more-likely-to>

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## Indian doctors suffer bias within UK medical system: Report

By PTI | Published: 16th April 2017 12:11 PM |  
Last Updated: 16th April 2017 12:11 PM | A+ A A- |

LONDON: Doctors trained in countries like India are

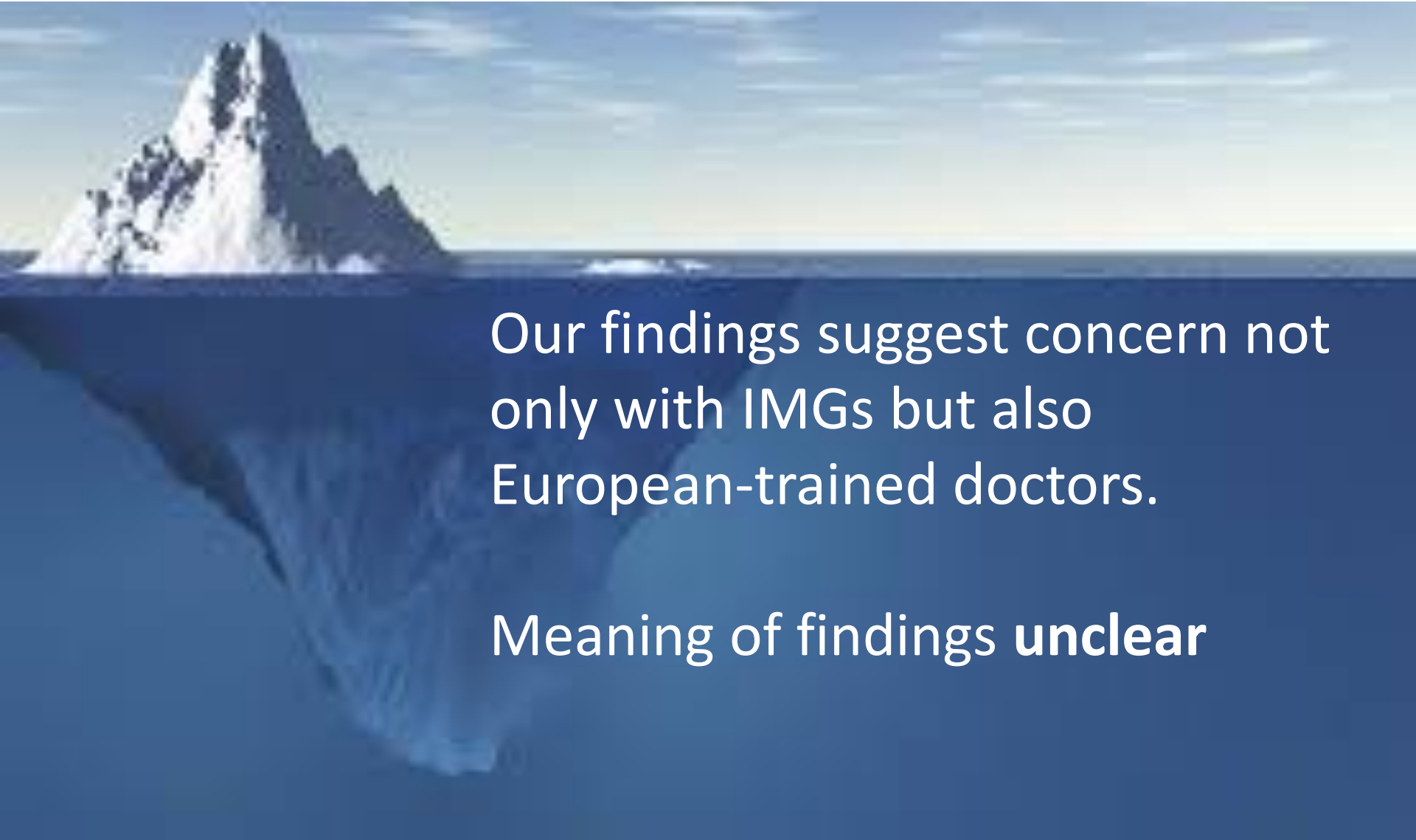
Left Foot Forward

## Daily Mail blatantly misrepresents study on competence of foreign doctors

Series supported by

One headline, three glaring inaccuracies

## On the surface...

A photograph of a large iceberg floating in the ocean. The iceberg is white and jagged, with a prominent peak. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is a pale blue with some light clouds. The iceberg is positioned on the left side of the frame, with its reflection visible in the water below.

Our findings suggest concern not only with IMGs but also European-trained doctors.

Meaning of findings **unclear**

# Poor performance is complex

Problems leading to investigation may **not reflect** poor competence alone

- Complaints patterns
- English language skills
- Cultural knowledge
- Prejudice



## Today's medical regulatory environment

**PLAB** examines clinical knowledge and skills of IMG doctors before granting UK license to practise.



Currently **no mandatory assessment** process to check the competence of EEA graduates before their UK medical licence is granted.



# Implications for ensuring fitness to practise

- Checking competence before to practise granted.
- Further research to verify whether country effects persist when controlling for other factors.
- Support for overseas trained doctors.

# Thank you for listening

Mehdizadeh, L., Potts, H. W. W., Sturrock, A., & Dacre, J. (2017). Prevalence of GMC performance assessments in the United Kingdom: A retrospective cohort analysis by country of medical qualification. *BMC Medical Education*, 17, 67. doi:10.1186/s12909-017-0903-6

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