

Ironic Advert?

Is it ironic or just telling that on the very same BMJ.com webpage as James Buchan's short article on Challenges for WHO code on international recruitment [1] we see an advert recruiting overseas doctors to the UK? The advert asks: "Want to work in the UK? Click here for jobs that may be suitable for application by non-UK or non-EEA doctors." Some of the target audience of this advert will be the very doctors so very much needed in countries of the South.

When we talk about global migration of doctors we must bear in mind that this phenomenon is neither new nor always 'bad'. First, some elements of the current doctor migration are no different from Scottish doctors going to study and work in Leiden, Padua or Heidelberg centuries ago. Secondly, going somewhere else can be beneficial for the development of individual doctors and for medicine in general. Thus doctors from developing countries coming to the UK or the USA to learn new techniques and skills which are not available at home is beneficial, the problem here occurs when large proportions of these doctors do not return home.

The active recruitment of doctors by developed countries should be seen separate from the above and we should treat it probably as much an economic as a moral issue.

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Reference: 1. Buchan, J. Challenges for WHO code on international recruitment *BMJ* 2010;340 c1486

Competing interests: Economic migrant from the Netherlands living and working in the UK

Source:

Teijlingen van, E. (2010) Ironic Recruitment Advert? *BMJ Rapid Response* web address: www.bmj.com/cgi/eletters/340/mar29_2/c1486