

RACP Trainee Pulse Survey: Impacts of COVID-19

Report of Key Findings

April 2020

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Introduction

The results of the RACP trainee pulse survey about the impacts of COVID-19 provide a snapshot of the key issues of current concern to our trainees.

We thank the many trainees who responded to the survey and provided valuable insights and suggestions about how we can best support our trainees during this time.

The anonymous feedback from trainees who responded to the survey provides valuable data. This data has already been used by the College bodies involved in responding to the many issues around training progression, assessment and support caused by the COVID-19 crisis.

We are focused on supporting our trainees at this challenging time.

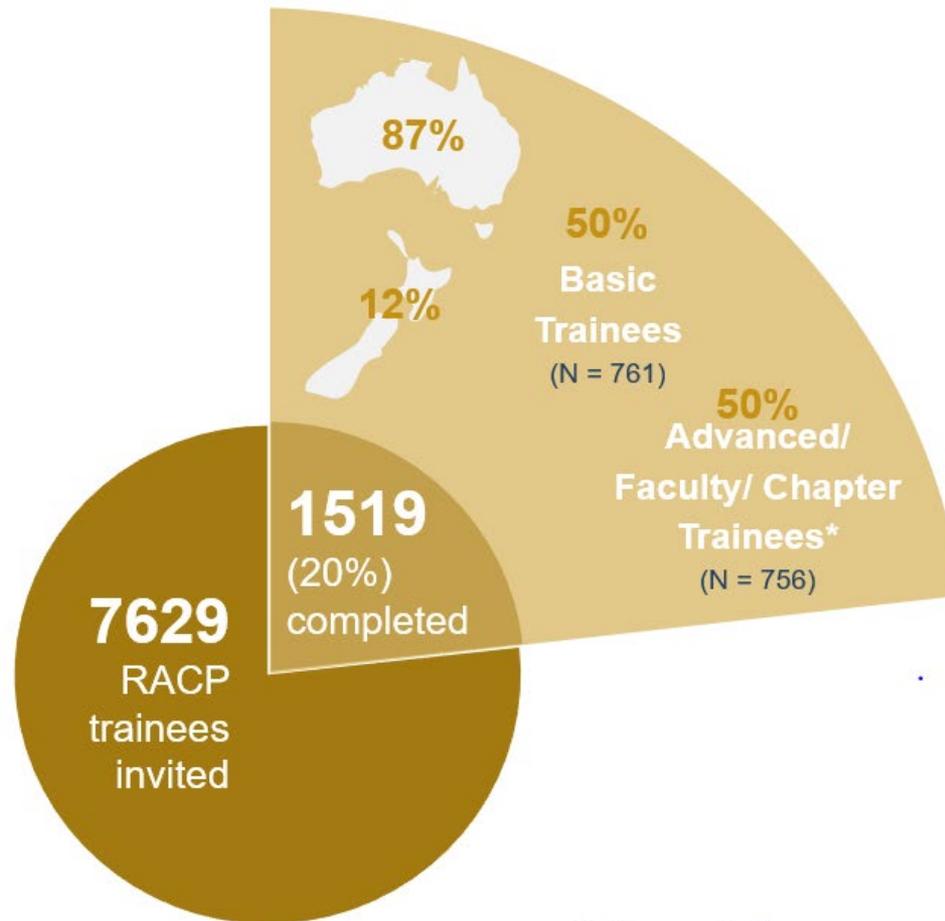
This report gives an overview of the results of the survey.

About the survey

The survey was conducted at the suggestion of our College Trainees' Committee with their input to the survey questions.

The online survey, administered through SurveyMonkey, comprised 9 questions and was open for five days at the end of March 2020. Trainees were directly emailed a link to the survey and invited to respond.

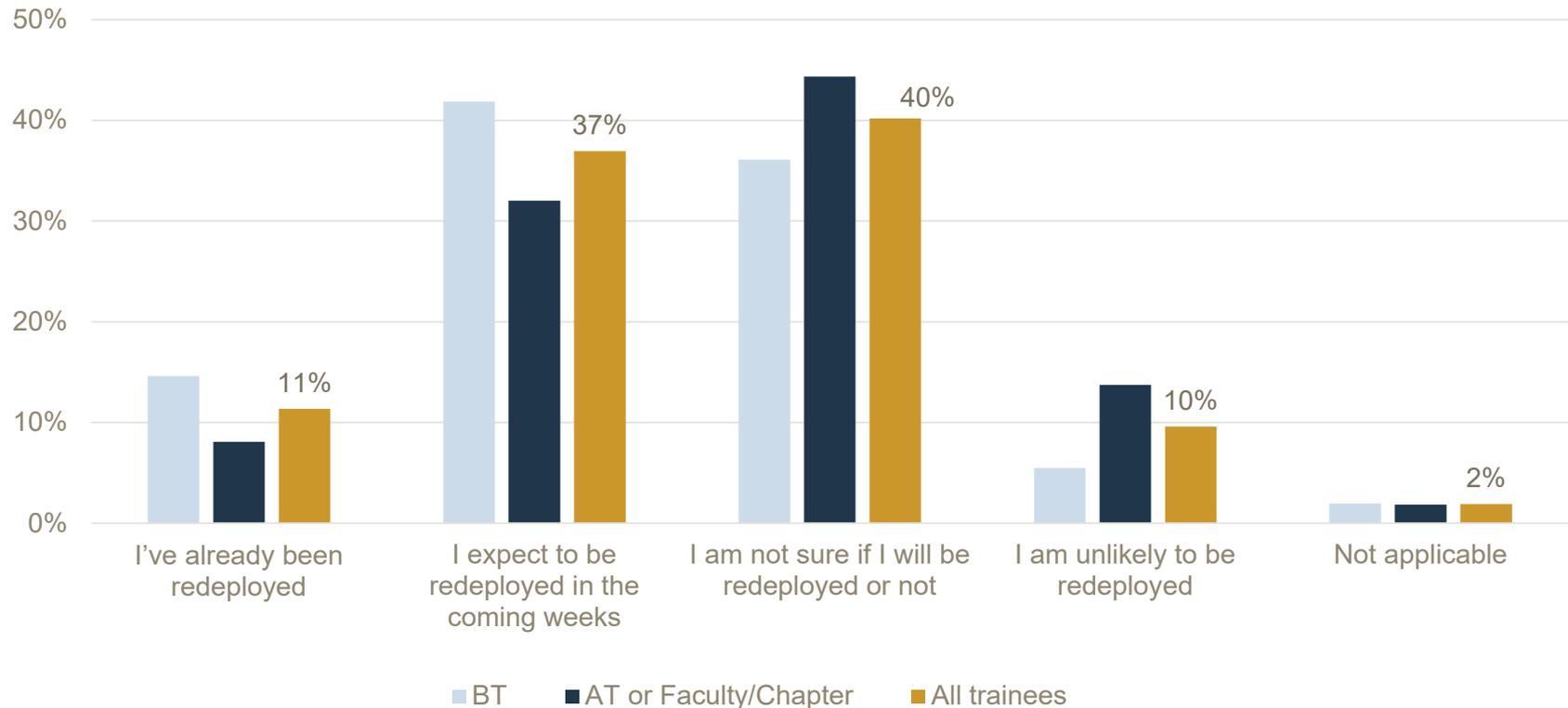
Trainee respondent demographics



*All specialties were represented in responses

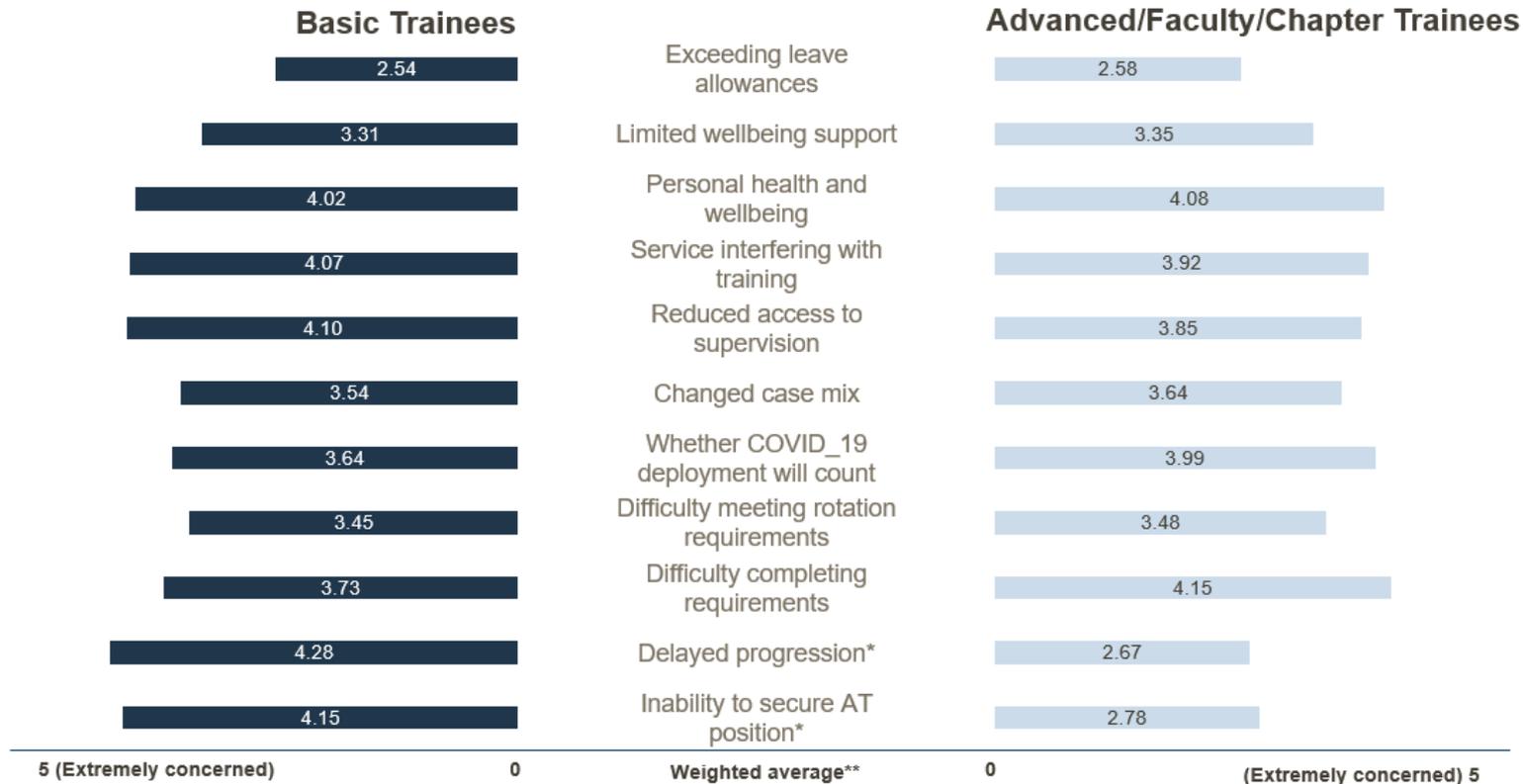
Trainee re-deployment

How likely is it that you will be redeployed to assist with service delivery in response to COVID-19? (N=1420)



Trainee concerns

How concerned are you about the following potential training related impacts of COVID-19? Please rate these on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being *Not at all concerned* and 5 being *Extremely concerned*. (N=1423)



Question responses have been shortened for ease of reporting.

* due to postponed examinations

** weighted average calculated by excluding 'N/A' responses and averaging across remaining responses

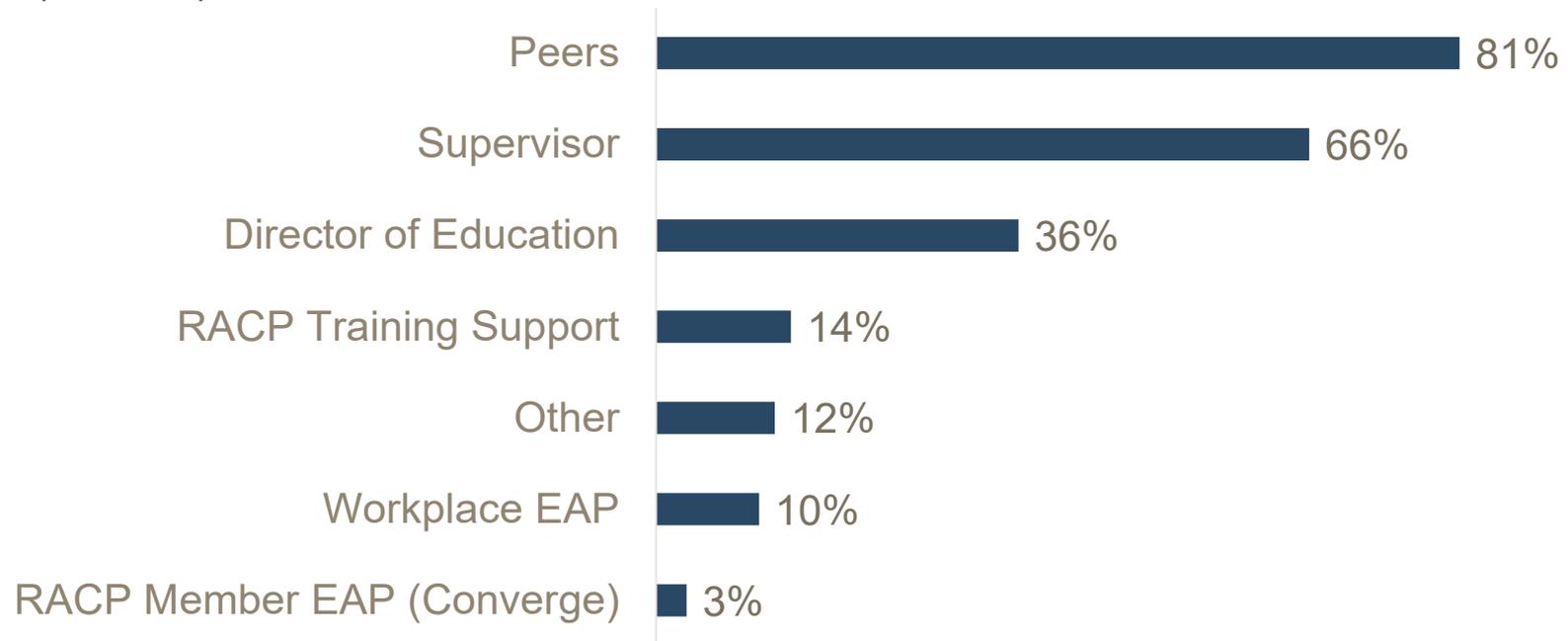
Trainee concerns (free text response)

How can your College best support you as a trainee during this time? (N=1079)

- **Clarify impacts on training progression:** clarify ASAP whether COVID work counts towards rotation requirements; trainee sentiment is divided as to whether they want additional years of training to ensure adequate core learning experiences or no extension to training as the impact of delays are too great; consider final year trainees as a distinct group; address progression impacts due to reduced access to many requirements (e.g. education activities; outpatient clinics; mandatory courses; research opportunities); address concerns about 2021 recruitment and selection, including bottleneck for AT positions.
- **Offer timely examinations:** increase the number of allowable exam attempts; provide multiple exams in 2021; ensure that early notice is provided about rescheduled exams.
- **Enhance education support:** provide online learning resources to address lack of workplace teaching; provide essential COVID education.
- **Be flexible with training requirements and processes:** waive/reduce/adjust some requirements (e.g. WBA, research projects, case studies); ensure easy processes to change supervisors/retrospectively accredit terms.
- **Support trainee safety and wellbeing:** minimise trainee stressors through early decision-making and communication; advocacy for PPE; advocacy for flexible work arrangements; guidelines and advocacy for trainee voice in redeployment decisions; guidelines to support pregnant/at risk trainees; leniency for training fees; additional allowances for leave from training; extension of time limit to complete training.
- **Prioritise open communication:** ensure College COVID communications are clear, prompt and reflect evolving situations; make decisions to give certainty and provide plenty of notice of changes.

Where trainees seek support

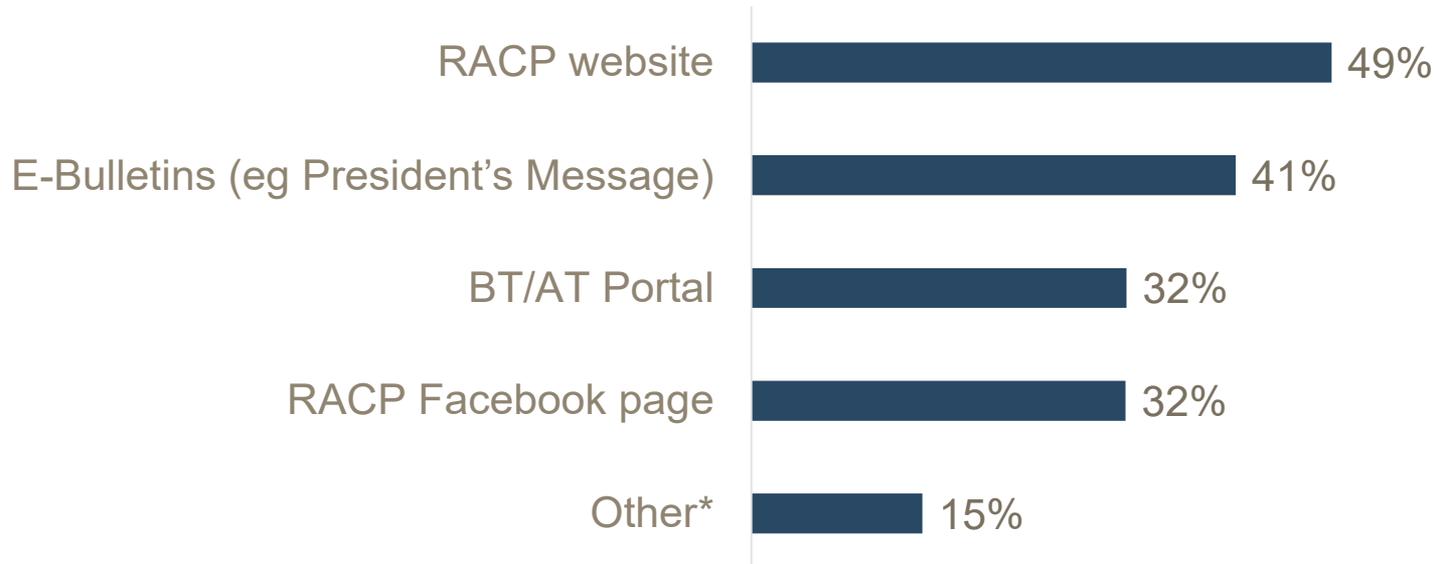
Where would you seek support if you were anxious or concerned about the impacts of COVID-19 on your training and wellbeing (select as many options as apply)
(N=1402)



Other category included family/friends (n=61), healthcare professionals (n=31), no support (n=13) and mentor(n=9)

Communication with trainees

In addition to direct email, what method(s) would be most helpful for the College to use when communicating with trainees throughout this period?
(N=1213)



**The most frequent responses in the 'other' category included: email (n=84) (phone call/text messages (n=45) and DPE meetings (n=14)*