Medical Board of Australia

Report on specialist medical colleges' specialist pathway data

Reporting period: 1 January 2019 – 31 December 2019



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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 <u>Board's website</u>.

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.

1.1 Reporting requirements

Reporting is annual by calendar year:

- the first report covered the initial six-month period 1 July – 1 December 2014
- subsequent reports (covering the years 2015 2018) are available at:
 www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration/Internat ional-Medical-Graduates/Specialist-Pathway/Guides-and-reports
- this report covers the period
 1 January 31 December 2019.

All colleges report against the same metrics. The data requested for 2019 includes:

- number and type of applications received in 2019 (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 2019)
- 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- number of applications withdrawn by the applicant (IMG)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.

1.2 Benchmarks

Since 2016, colleges also report against a number of performance benchmarks. These include:

Metric	Benchmark
Time to first available assessment interview for interim assessment	Interview available within 3 months
From the date a complete application is received to the date of first available interview that is offered.	
Time from interview to interim assessment decision	Interim assessment completed within 14
From the date the IMG attends interview to the date the decision of interim assessment is made by college.	days after interview
Time for specialist recognition interim assessment	Interim assessment completed within
From the date a complete application is received to the date the decision of interim assessment is made by college.	three months and 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.	Area of need assessment completed within two 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.	Decision on final assessment completed within two months

1.3 Compliance measures

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

Metric	Compliance measure
Period of practice required by the college for substantially comparable IMGs	Up to 12 months FTE peer review
Period of practice required by the college for partially comparable IMGs	Up to 24 months FTE supervised practice
Requirement for substantially comparable IMGs to complete an examination	Only partially comparable IMGs may be required to complete an examination
Maximum timeframes for completing college requirements for substantially comparable IMGs	Up to two years to complete up to 12 months FTE peer review
Maximum timeframes for completing college requirements for partially comparable IMGs	Up to four years to complete 24 months FTE supervised practice

1.4 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.

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

2 Highlights of the 2019 report

2.1 Data highlights

- 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) (192 applications) and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) (187 applications).
- The colleges with the lowest number of applications in the twelve-month period were the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators (RACMA) (one application) and Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons (RACDS) and Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (two applications).
- Across all colleges, 94 per cent of IMGs from the UK and Ireland were assessed as substantially comparable.
- Across all colleges, 97 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').

2.2 Performance benchmark highlights

- 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 four colleges who assessed area of need only applications (excluding combined assessments), two colleges completed all their area of need assessments within the benchmark (two months).
- Across all colleges, 98 per cent of IMGs received the outcome of their final assessment (recommended or not recommended for specialist recognition) within two months of completing their requirements.

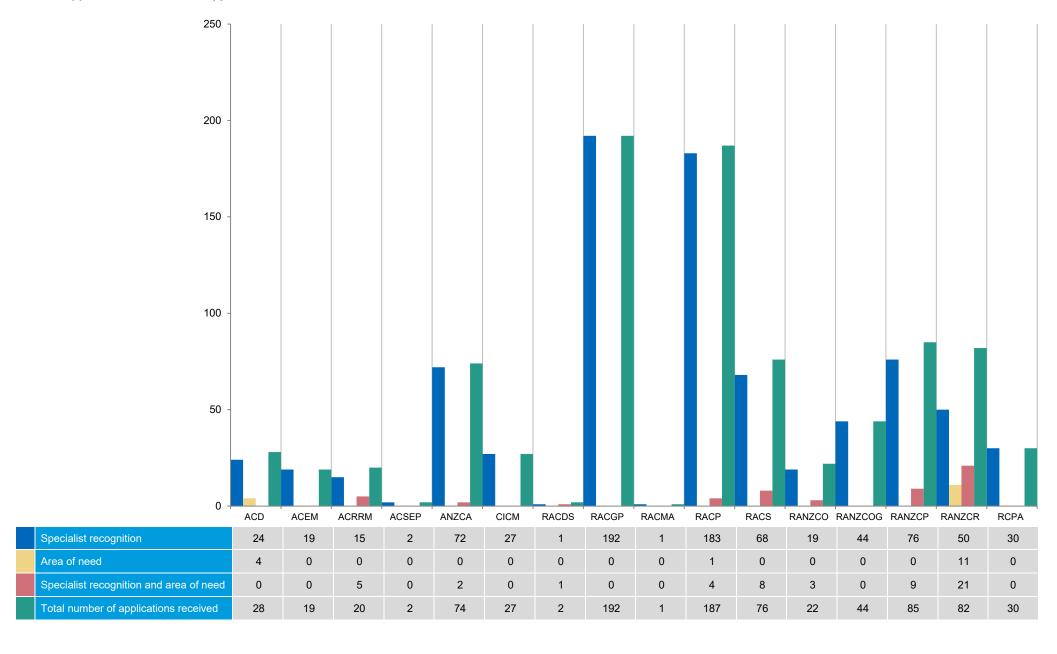
2.3 Compliance highlights

- All colleges met the compliance measures for the period of peer review required for substantially comparable IMGs and for the period of supervised 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.

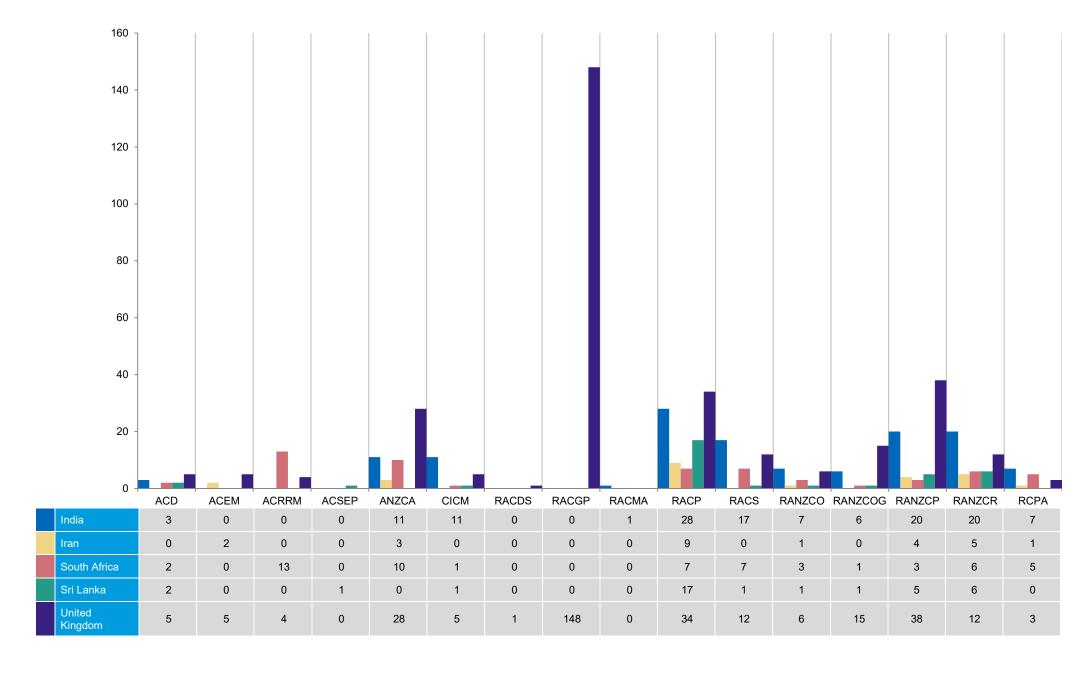
3 List of college abbreviations

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
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

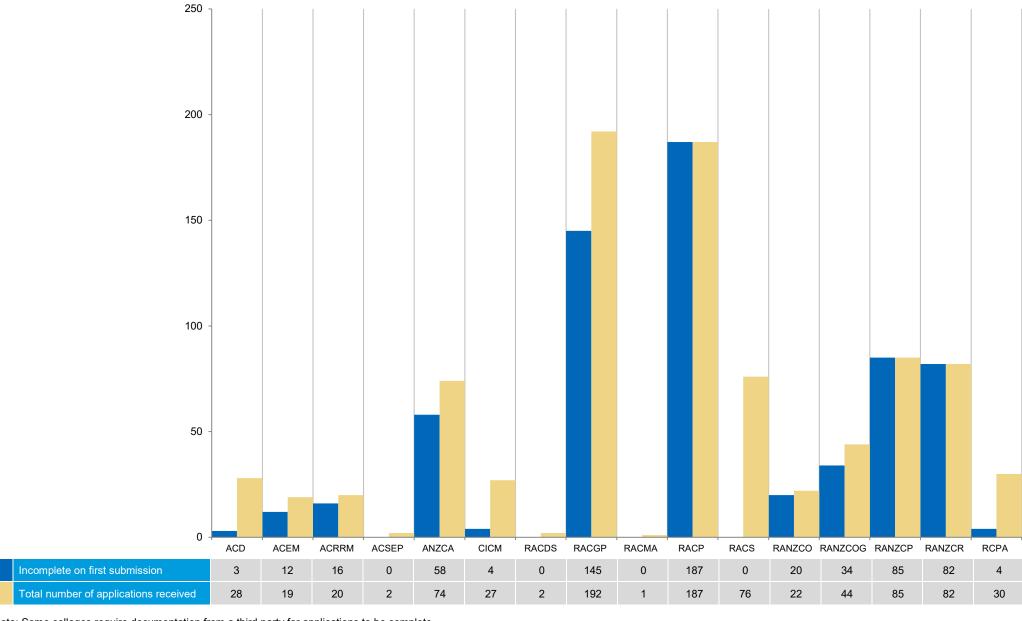
4.1 Applications: Number of applications received



4.2 Applications: Top five countries by number of applications received

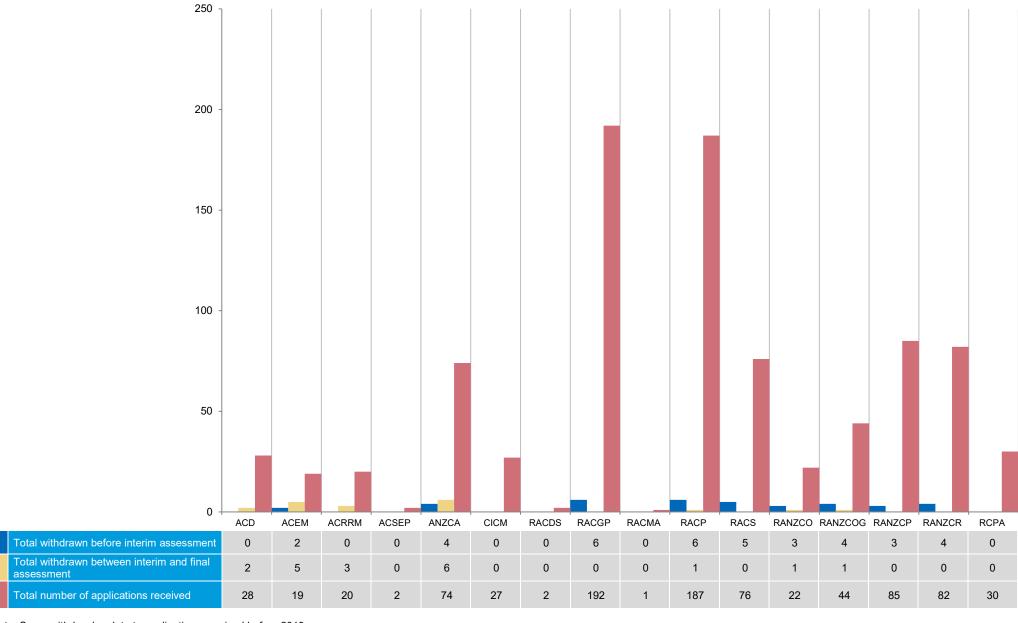


4.3 Applications: Number of applications incomplete on first submission



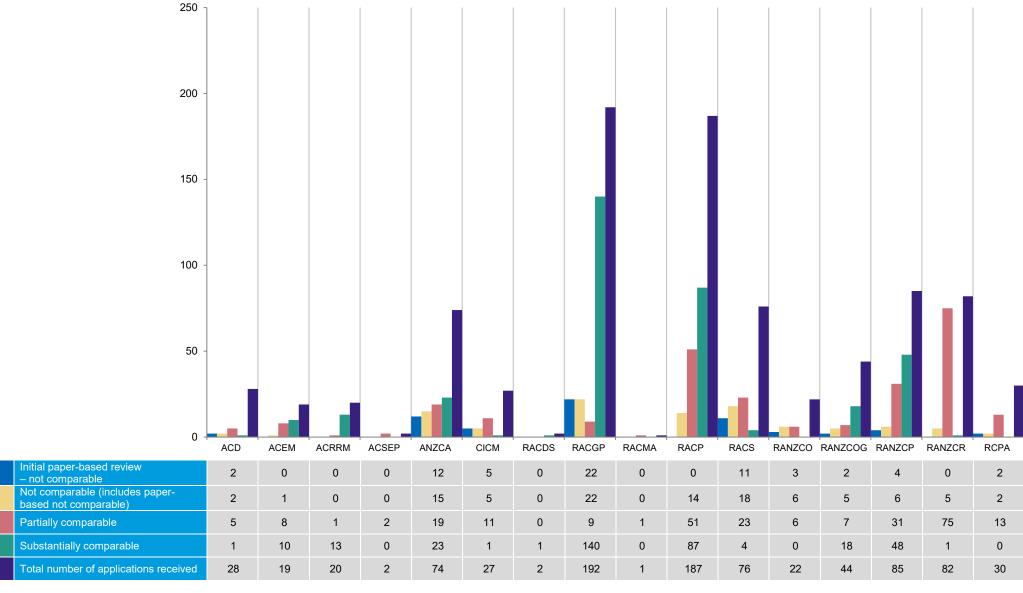
Note: Some colleges require documentation from a third party for applications to be complete.

4.4 Applications: Number of applications withdrawn by the IMG



Note: Some withdrawls relate to applications received before 2019.

5.1 Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of interim assessment



Note: Some colleges 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.

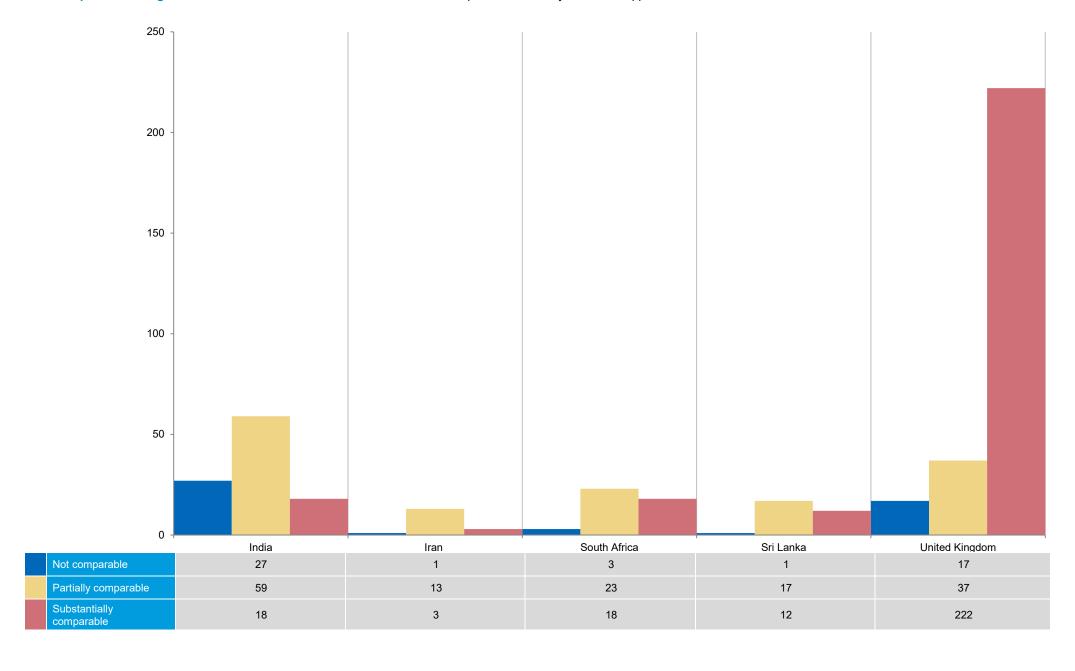
5.1.1 Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of interim assessment: By country of highest specialist qualification – all colleges

Country	Not comparable	Partially comparable	Substantially comparable
Argentina	1	0	0
Austria	1	1	1
Bangladesh	1	0	0
Belgium	1	0	2
Brazil	8	12	1
Canada	3	5	5
China	1	1	0
Colombia	0	1	0
Denmark	0	2	0
Egypt	5	13	1
France	0	0	1
Germany	1	11	1
Greece	0	1	0
Hong Kong	0	0	6
Hungary	1	0	0
India	27	59	18
Iran	1	13	3
Iraq	1	0	1
Ireland	2	9	13

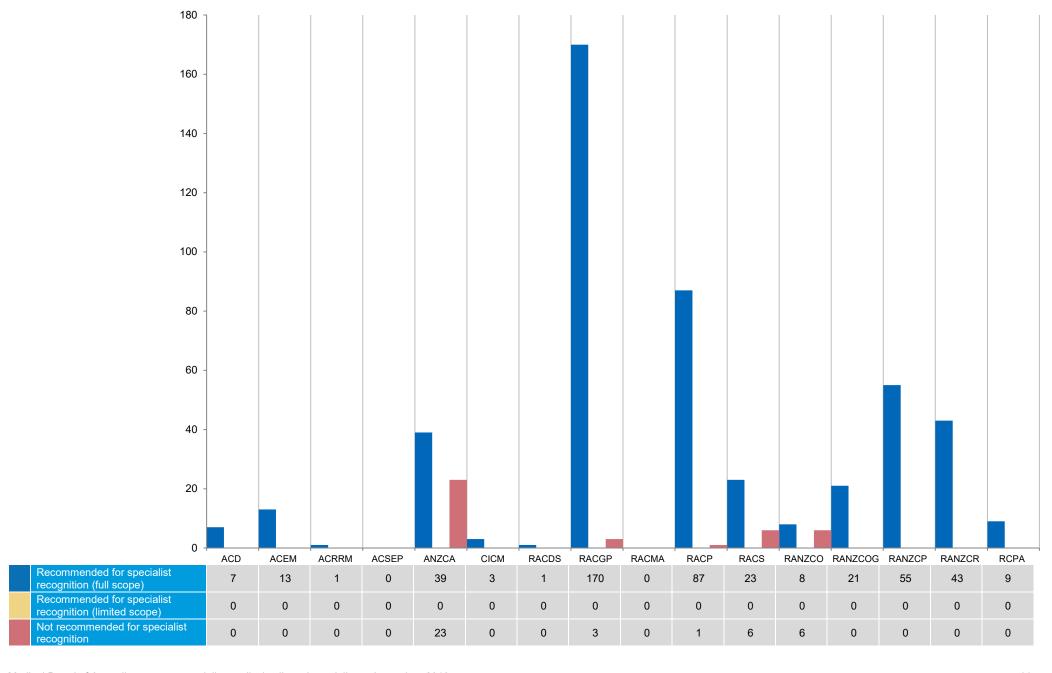
Country	Not comparable	Partially comparable	Substantially comparable
Israel	3	0	0
Italy	0	1	0
Japan	1	0	0
Jordan	2	2	1
Kenya	0	2	0
Lebanon	0	1	0
Malaysia	0	2	2
Mozambique	0	1	0
Nepal	1	2	1
Netherlands	2	3	2
New Zealand	1	1	14
Nigeria	1	5	0
Norway	0	1	0
Pakistan	2	10	0
Philippines	0	1	1
Poland	0	0	1
Portugal	0	1	1
Qatar	1	1	2
Russia	1	1	0

Country	Not comparable	Partially comparable	Substantially comparable
Saudi Arabia	1	1	2
Singapore	2	2	2
South Africa	3	23	18
South Korea	0	1	1
Spain	3	1	0
Sri Lanka	1	17	12
Sweden	0	1	0
Switzerland	2	2	3
Syria	1	3	0
Thailand	0	0	1
Turkey	1	2	0
Uganda	0	1	0
Ukraine	1	0	0
United Arab Emirates	0	2	0
United Kingdom	17	37	222
United States of America	3	7	7
Venezuela	0	0	1

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

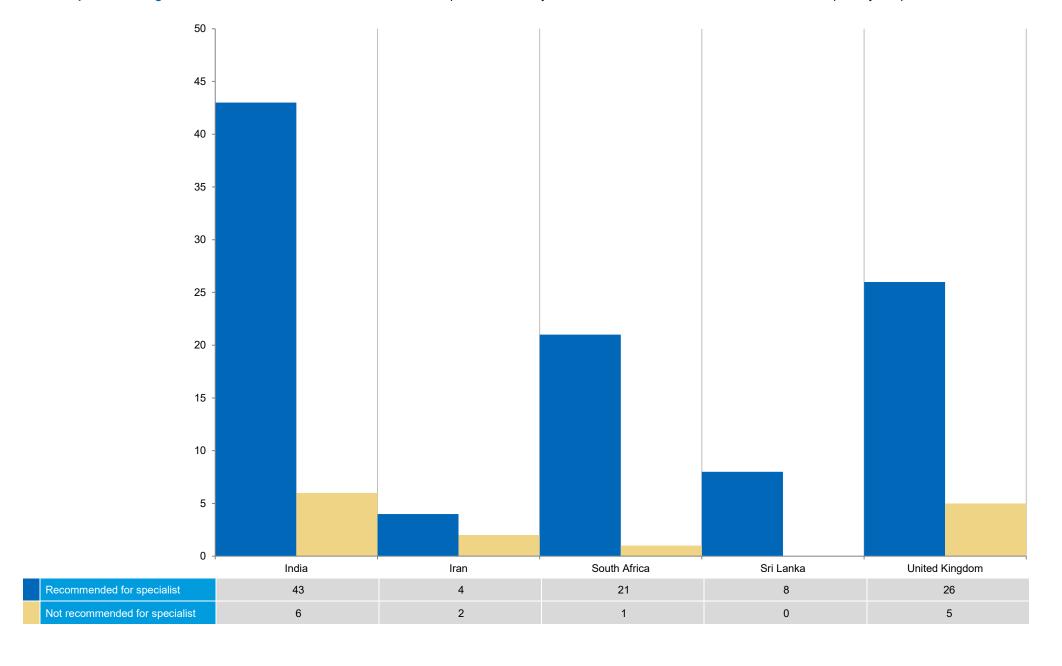


5.2.1. Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of final assessment: By country of highest specialist qualification – all colleges

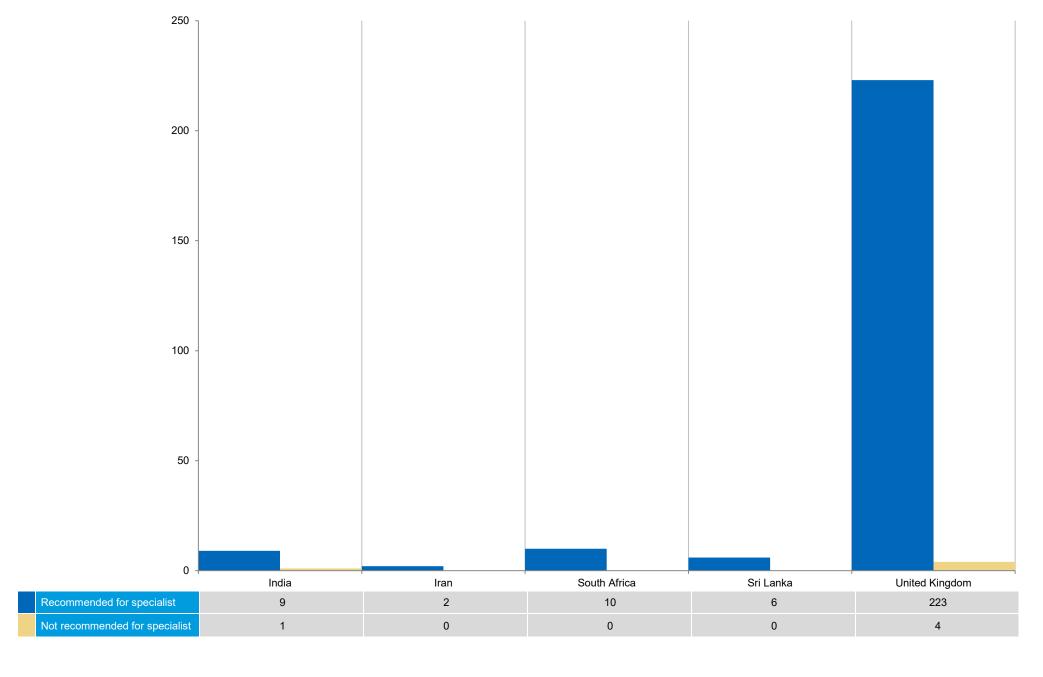
	Partially c	omparable	Substantially	/ comparable
Country	Recommended	Not recommended	Recommended	Not recommended
Argentina	1	0	0	0
Bangladesh	0	0	0	1
Belgium	2	0	3	0
Brazil	8	0	3	0
Canada	1	0	3	0
Chile	2	0	0	0
China	1	0	0	0
Colombia	0	1	0	0
Czech Republic	0	0	1	0
Denmark	1	1	0	0
Egypt	8	2	2	0
Germany	2	1	2	0
Hong Kong	0	0	3	1
Hungary	0	1	0	0
India	43	6	9	1
Iran	4	2	2	0
Iraq	0	1	0	0
Ireland	4	0	17	0
Israel	1	0	0	0

	Partially c	omparable	Substantially comparable		
Country	Recommended	Not recommended	Recommended	Not recommended	
Italy	0	0	2	0	
Jordan	0	0	1	0	
Malaysia	5	1	3	0	
Netherlands	3	0	5	0	
New Zealand	0	0	13	0	
Norway	1	0	0	0	
Pakistan	2	2	0	0	
Philippines	1	1	1	0	
Saudi Arabia	0	0	1	0	
Singapore	1	1	2	0	
Slovakia	1	0	0	0	
South Africa	21	1	10	0	
Spain	4	1	3	0	
Sri Lanka	8	0	6	0	
Switzerland	0	0	3	0	
Syria	1	1	0	0	
Turkey	1	1	0	0	
United Kingdom	26	5	223	4	
United States of America	3	3	6	0	

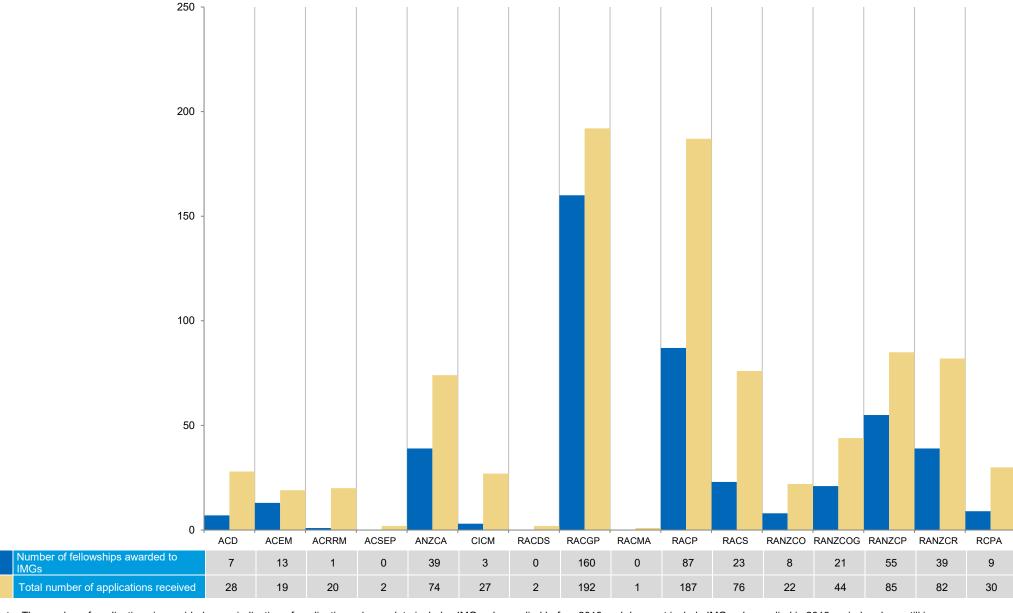
5.2.2 Specialist recognition outcomes: Outcome of final assessment: Top five countries by number of final assessments – interim assessment – partially comparable



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

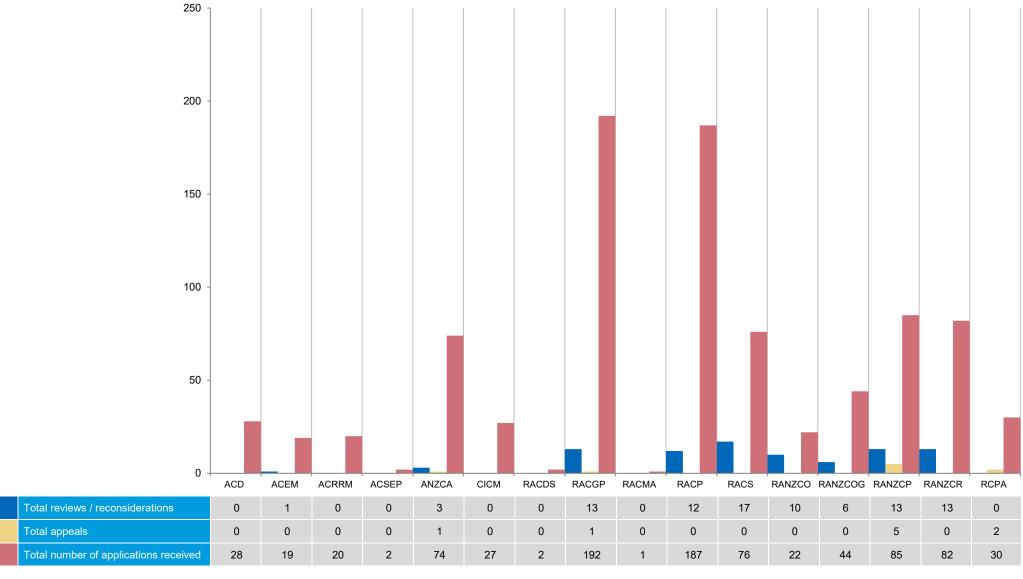


5.3 Specialist recognition outcomes: Number of fellowships awarded to IMGs



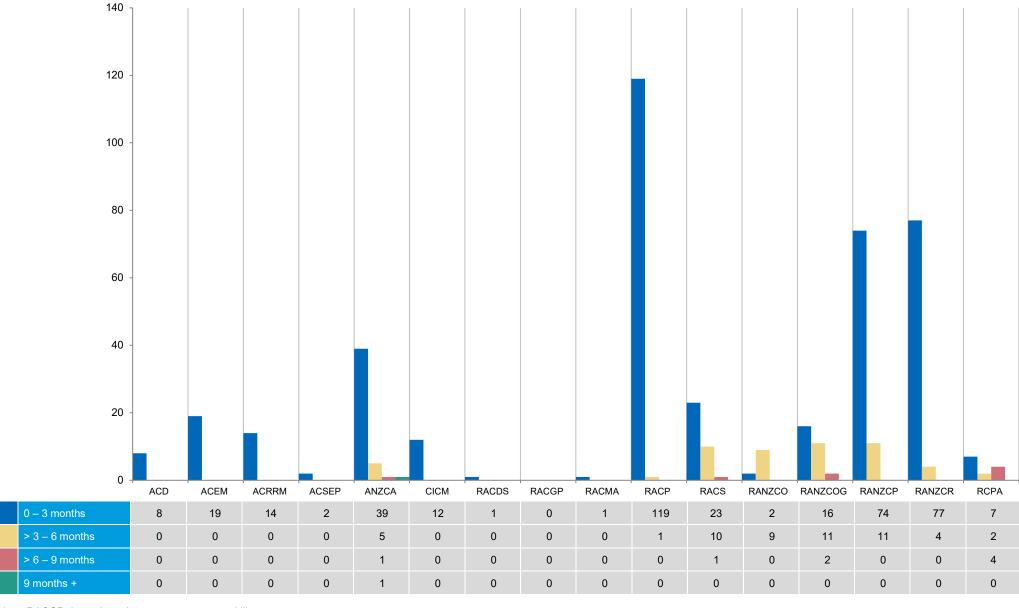
Note: The number of applications is provided as an indication of application volume; data includes IMGs who applied before 2019 and does not include IMGs who applied in 2019 period and are still in progress.

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



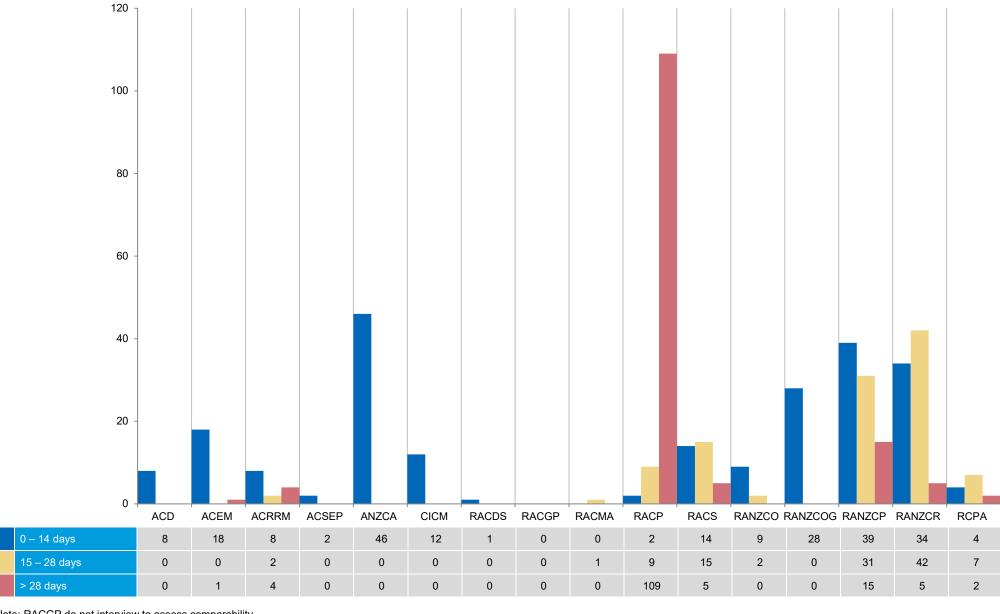
Note: Colleges have different appeals process and classification of 'reviews/reconsideration and appeals' vary. The number of applications is provided as an indication of volume, appeals may relate to IMGs who applied in 2019 or before 2019.

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



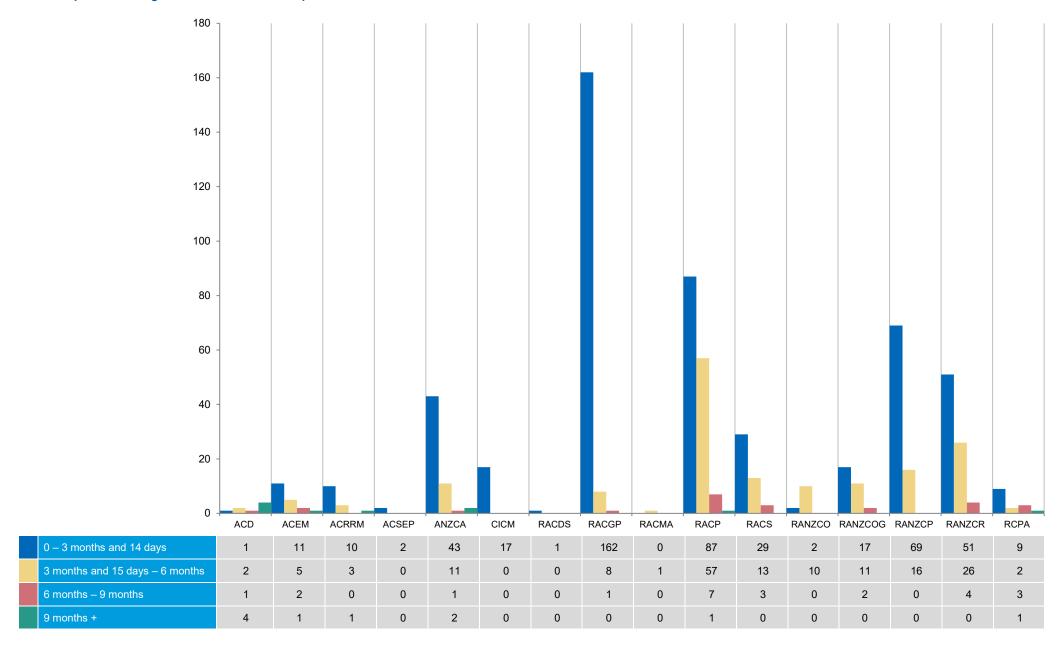
Note: RACGP do not interview to assess comparability.

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

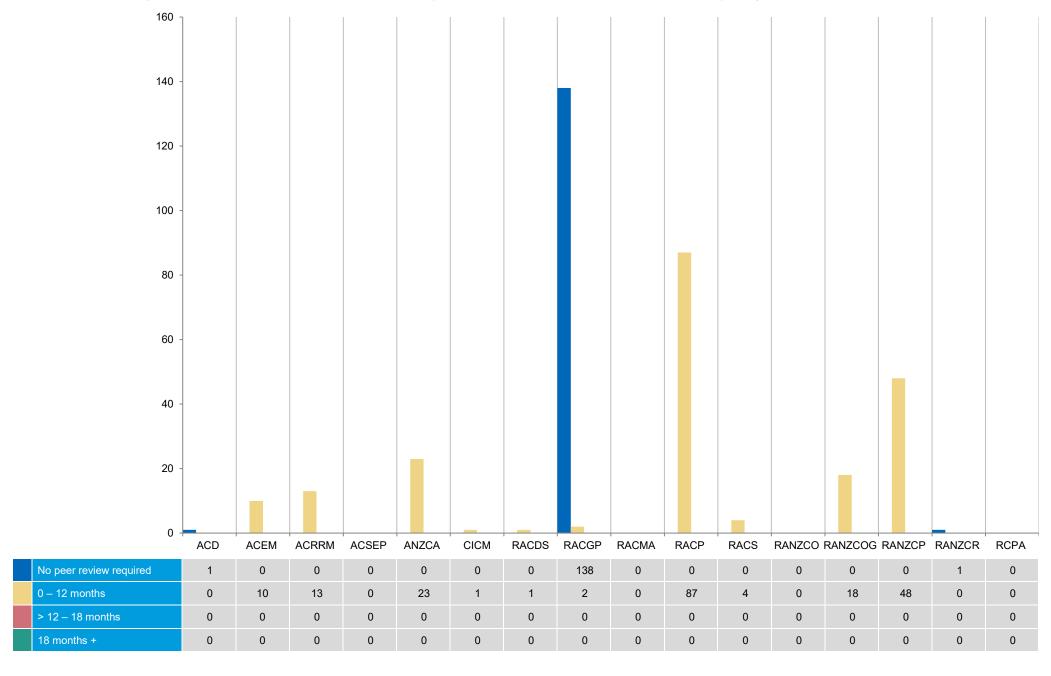


Note: RACGP do not interview to assess comparability.

6.1.3 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Interim assessment: Total time for interim assessment



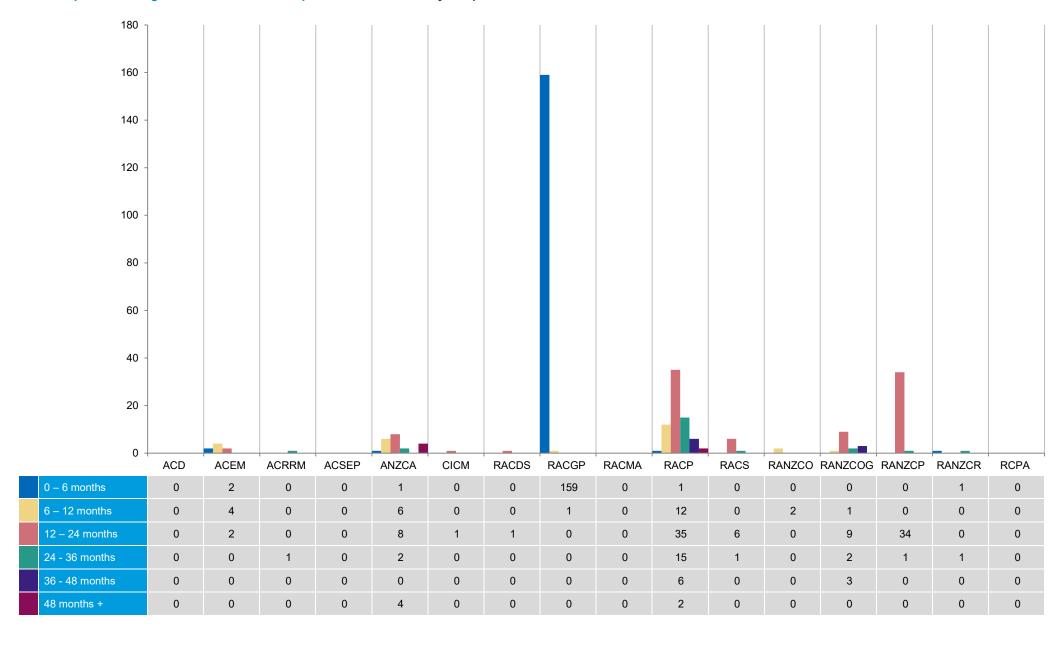
6.2.1 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Substantially comparable IMGs: Period of peer review required by college



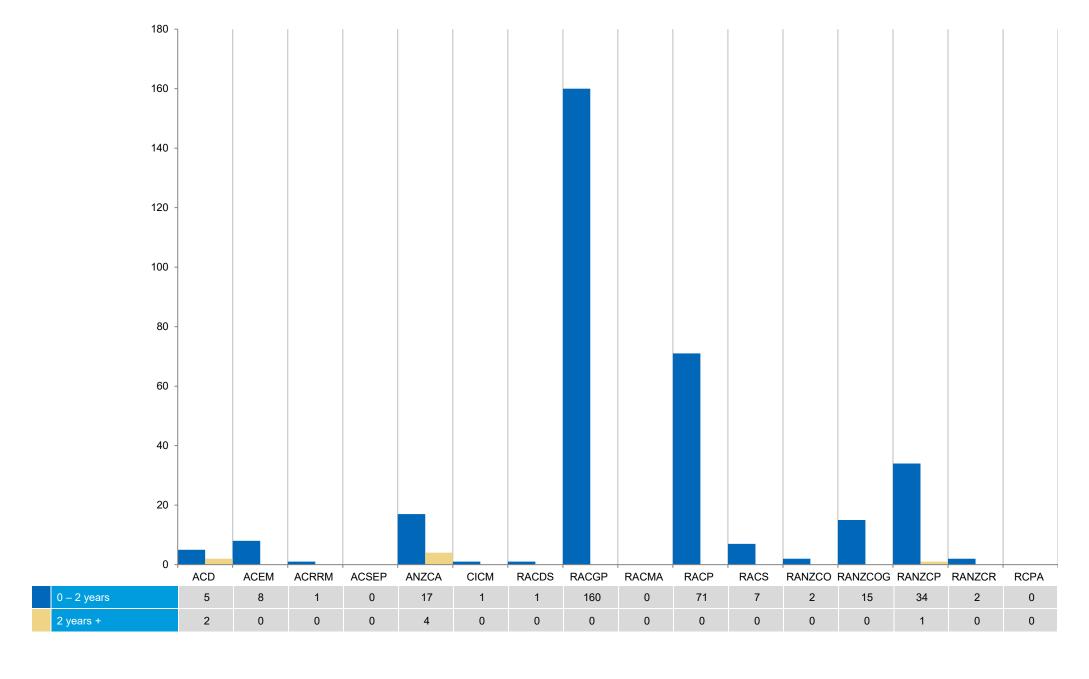
6.2.2	Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Substantially comparable IMGs: Number required to complete exam

All specialist medical colleges reported that no substantially comparable IMGs were required to complete a formal examination.

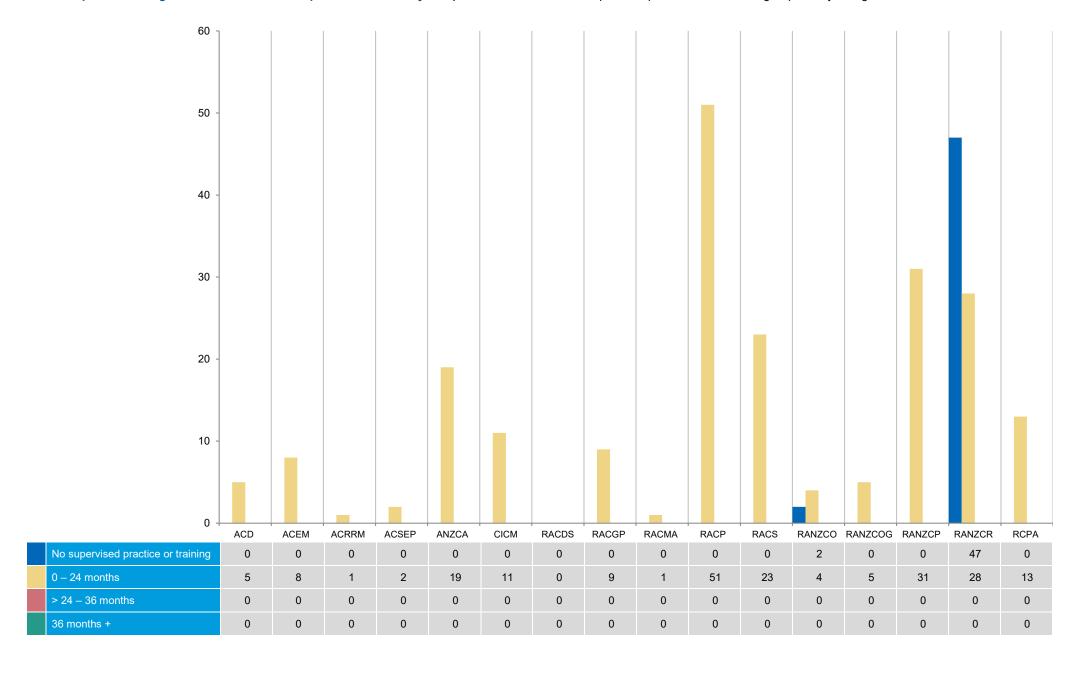
6.2.3 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Substantially comparable IMGs: Time for final assessment



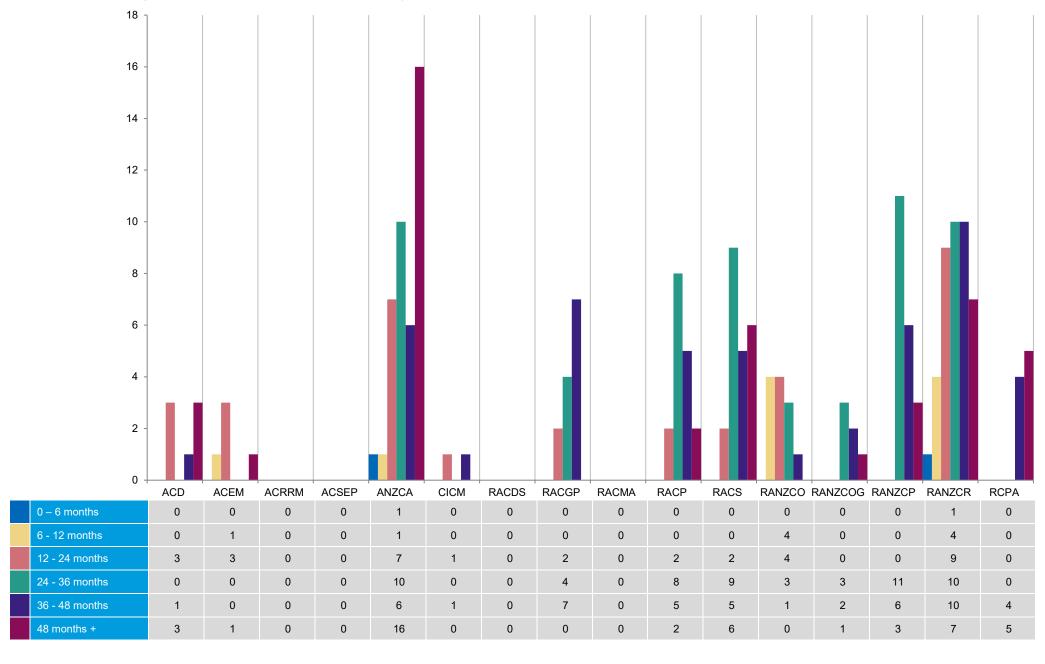
6.2.4 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Substantially comparable IMGs: Maximum timeframes for completing college requirements



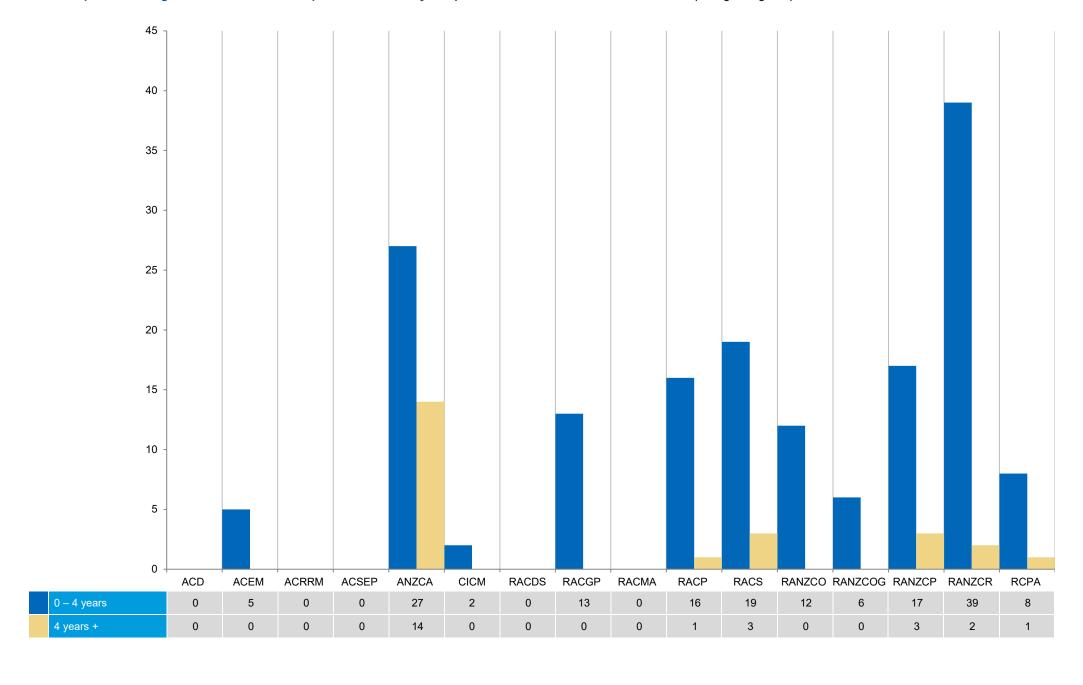
6.3.1 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Partially comparable IMGs: Period of supervised practice and/or training required by college



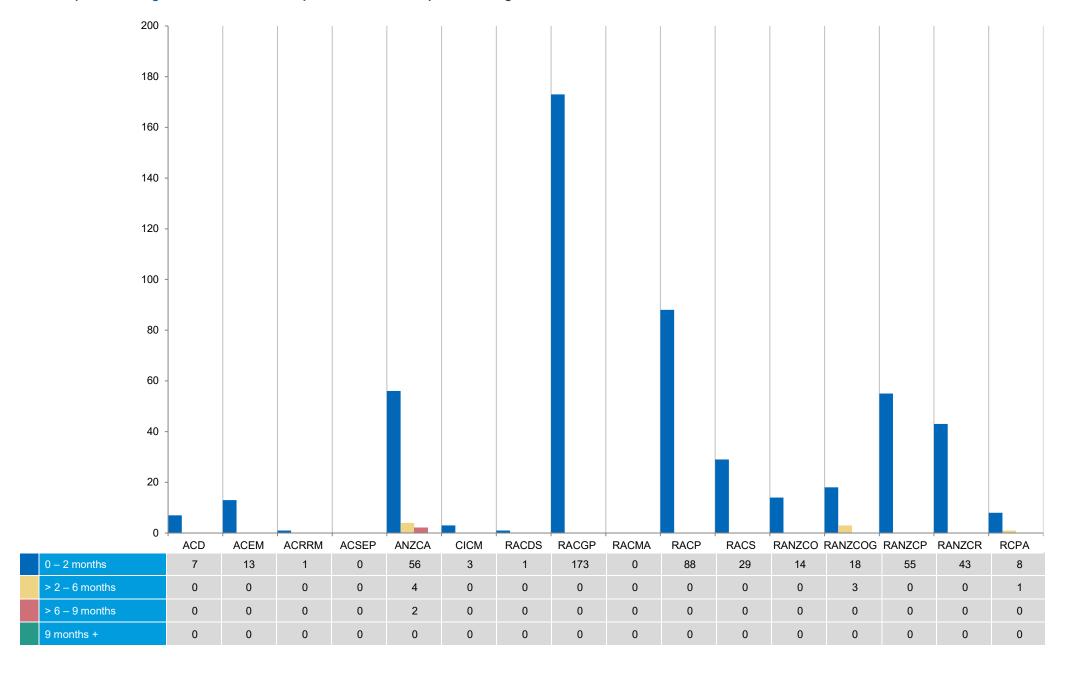
6.3.2 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Partially comparable IMGs: Time for final assessment



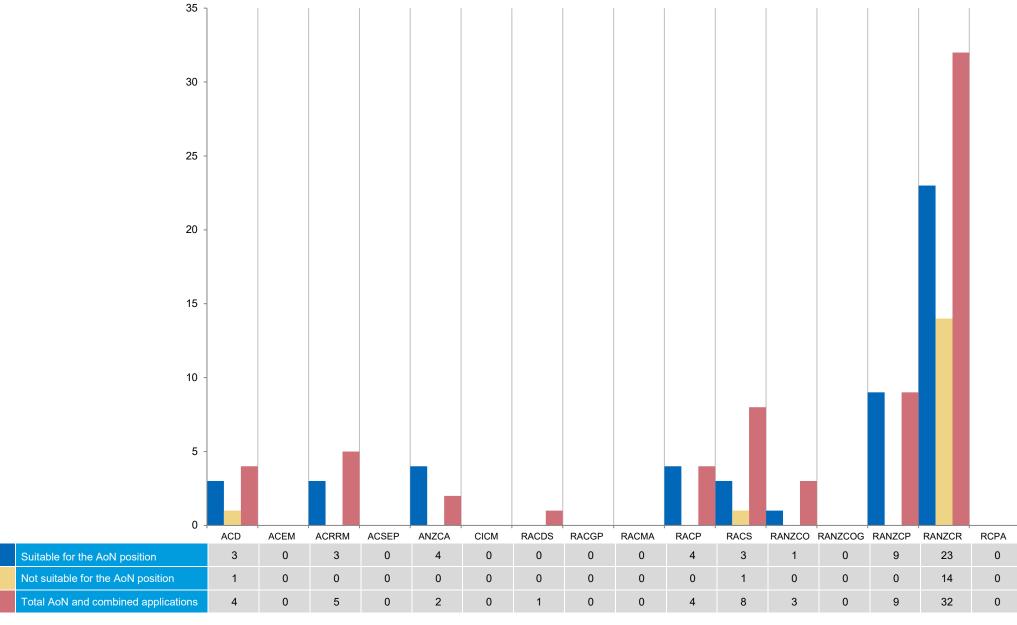
6.3.3 Specialist recognition timeframes and requirements: Partially comparable IMGs: Maximum timeframes for completing college requirements



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

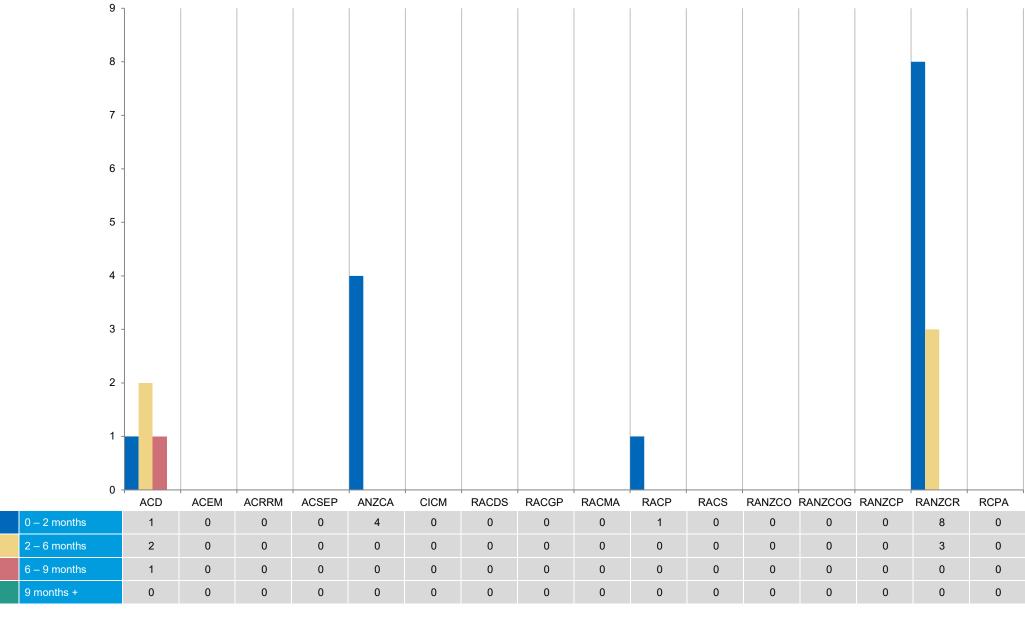


7.1 Area of need outcomes and timeframes: Outcome of assessment



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 2019.

7.2 Area of need outcomes and timeframes: Time for assessment



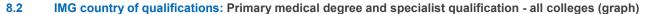
Note: Excludes combined assessments (where IMG applied for specialist recognition and area of need)

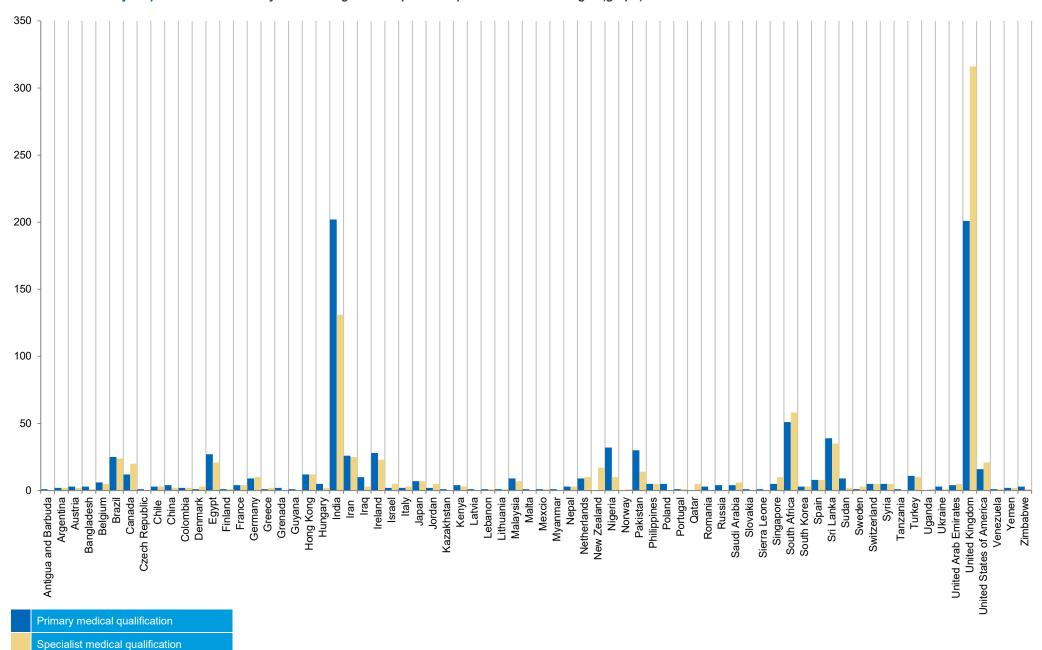
8.1 IMG country of qualifications: Primary medical degree and specialist qualification - all colleges (data)

Country	Primary	Specialist
Antigua and Barbuda	1	0
Argentina	2	2
Austria	3	2
Bangladesh	3	1
Belgium	6	5
Brazil	25	24
Canada	12	20
Czech Republic	1	0
Chile	3	3
China	4	2
Colombia	2	2
Denmark	1	3
Egypt	27	21
Finland	1	1
France	4	4
Germany	9	10
Greece	1	2
Grenada	2	0
Guyana	1	0
Hong Kong	12	12
Hungary	5	2
India	202	131
Iran	26	25
Iraq	10	3

Country	Primary	Specialist
Ireland	28	23
Israel	2	5
Italy	2	3
Japan	7	7
Jordan	2	5
Kazakhstan	1	0
Kenya	4	3
Latvia	1	0
Lebanon	1	1
Lithuania	1	1
Malaysia	9	7
Malta	1	0
Mexico	1	1
Myanmar	1	0
Nepal	3	3
Netherlands	9	10
New Zealand	0	17
Nigeria	32	10
Norway	0	1
Pakistan	30	14
Philippines	5	5
Poland	5	0
Portugal	1	1
Qatar	0	5

Country	Primary	Specialist
Romania	3	0
Russia	4	0
Saudi Arabia	4	6
Slovakia	1	0
Sierra Leone	1	0
Singapore	5	10
South Africa	51	58
South Korea	3	3
Spain	8	8
Sri Lanka	39	35
Sudan	9	2
Sweden	1	3
Switzerland	5	5
Syria	5	5
Tanzania	1	0
Turkey	11	10
Uganda	0	1
Ukraine	3	1
United Arab Emirates	4	5
United Kingdom	201	316
United States of America	16	21
Venezuela	1	1
Yemen	2	2
Zimbabwe	3	1





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



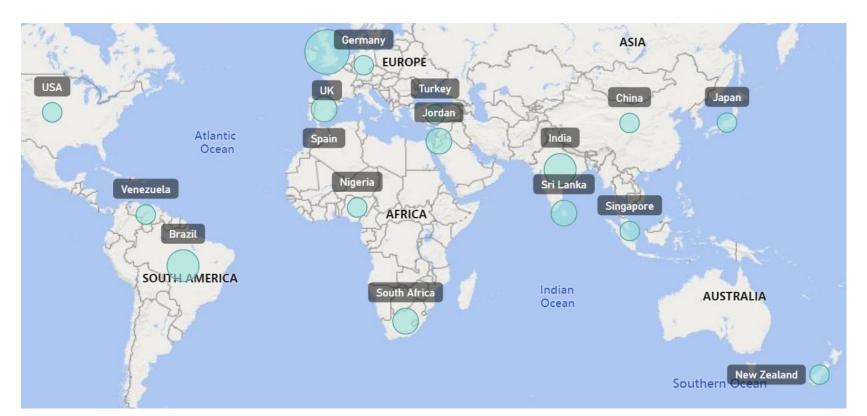


Primary medical degree

Specialist qualification



8.4.1 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Australasian College of Dermatologists



Country	Specialist qualification
Brazil	3
China	1
Germany	1
India	3
Japan	1
Jordan	2
New Zealand	1
Nigeria	1
Singapore	1
South Africa	2
Spain	2
Sri Lanka	2
Turkey	1
UK	5
USA	1
Venezuela	1

8.4.2 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Australasian College for Emergency Medicine



Country	Specialist qualification
Egypt	3
Iran	2
Jordan	1
Malaysia	1
Qatar	1
UK	5
United Arab Emirates	3
USA	3



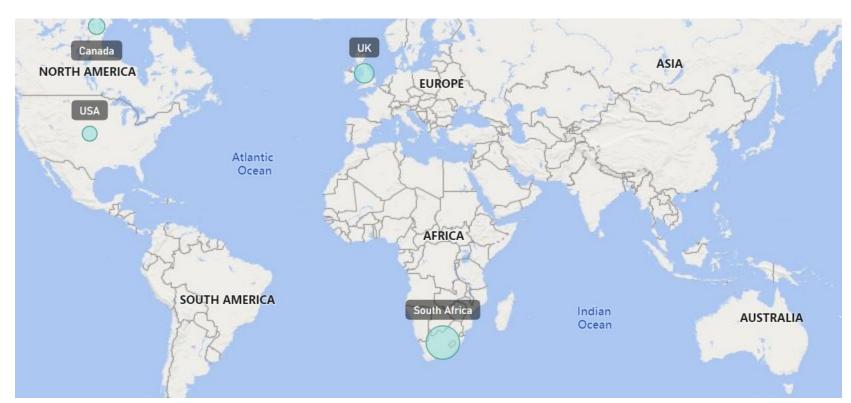
Country	Specialist qualification
Ireland	1
Sri Lanka	1

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



Specialist qualification
2
2
1
2
2
1
11
3
7
1
1
10
1
28
2

8.4.5 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine



Country	Specialist qualification
Canada	2
South Africa	13
UK	4
USA	1

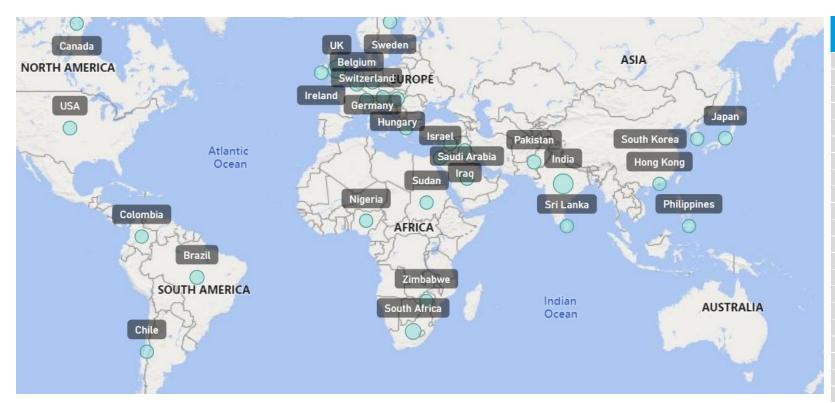
8.4.6 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: College of Intensive Care Medicine



CountrySpecialist qualificationArgentina1Brazil2Egypt2Finland1India11Italy1Qatar1South Africa1Sri Lanka1Turkey1UK5		
Brazil 2 Egypt 2 Finland 1 India 11 Italy 1 Qatar 1 South Africa 1 Sri Lanka 1 Turkey 1	Country	
Egypt 2 Finland 1 India 11 Italy 1 Qatar 1 South Africa 1 Sri Lanka 1 Turkey 1	Argentina	1
Finland 1 India 11 Italy 1 Qatar 1 South Africa 1 Sri Lanka 1 Turkey 1	Brazil	2
India 11 Italy 1 Qatar 1 South Africa 1 Sri Lanka 1 Turkey 1	Egypt	2
Italy 1 Qatar 1 South Africa 1 Sri Lanka 1 Turkey 1	Finland	1
Qatar 1 South Africa 1 Sri Lanka 1 Turkey 1	India	11
South Africa 1 Sri Lanka 1 Turkey 1	Italy	1
Sri Lanka 1 Turkey 1	Qatar	1
Turkey 1	South Africa	1
	Sri Lanka	1
UK 5	Turkey	1
	UK	5



Country	Specialist qualification
UK	1



Country	Specialist qualification
Austria	1
Belgium	2
Brazil	3
Canada	1
Chile	1
Colombia	1
Germany	2
Greece	1
Hong Kong	1
Hungary	2
India	17
Iraq	1
Ireland	2
Israel	2
Japan	2
Nepal	1
Nigeria	1
Pakistan	2
Philippines	1
Saudi Arabia	2
South Africa	7
South Korea	1
Sri Lanka	1
Sudan	1
Sweden	1
Switzerland	3
Syria	1
UK	12
USA	2
Zimbabwe	1

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



Country	Specialist qualification
Canada	8
Ireland	9
Netherlands	6
New Zealand	16
Singapore	4
Sweden	1
UK	148

8.4.10 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators



8.4.11 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Royal Australasian College of Physicians



Country	Specialist qualification
Argentina	1
Austria	1
Belgium	3
Brazil	3
Canada	3
Chile	1
Denmark	2
Egypt	7
France	4
Germany	2
Hong Kong	5
India	28
Iran	9
Iraq	2
Ireland	4
Israel	1
Italy	1
Japan	3
Jordan	1
Lebanon	1
Malaysia	4
Mexico	1
Netherlands	3
Nigeria	1
Pakistan	4
Philippines	2
Portugal	1
Qatar	2
Saudi Arabia	4
Singapore	5
South Africa	7
South Korea	1
Spain	4
Sri Lanka	17
Switzerland	1
Syria	1
Turkey	5
UK	34
United Arab Emirates	1
USA	6
Yemen	1

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



Country	Specialist qualification
Brazil	1
Canada	1
Hong Kong	2
India	20
Iran	4
Italy	1
Malaysia	1
Nepal	1
Nigeria	3
Pakistan	1
South Africa	3
Sri Lanka	5
Syria	1
UK	38
USA	3

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



Country	Specialist qualification
Bangladesh	1
Brazil	2
Canada	1
Germany	1
Greece	1
Hong Kong	2
India	6
Israel	1
Jordan	1
Lithuania	1
Netherlands	1
Pakistan	1
Philippines	1
Qatar	1
South Africa	1
Spain	1
Sri Lanka	1
Syria	1
Turkey	2
UK	15
United Arab Emirates	1
USA	1

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



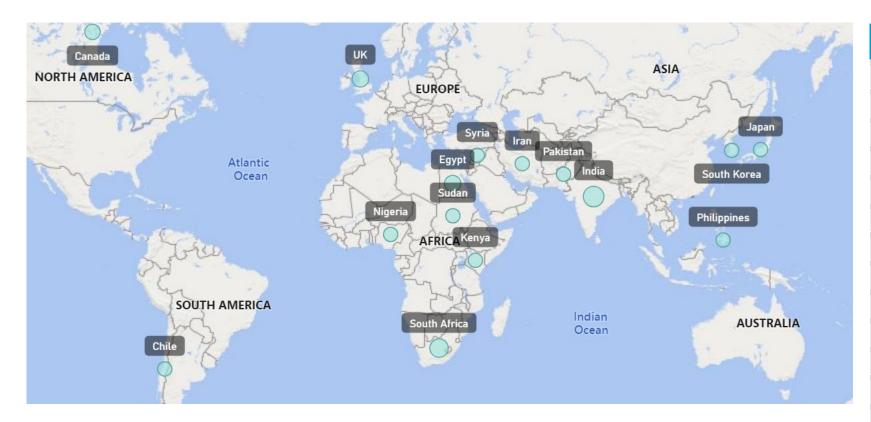
Country	Specialist qualification
Brazil	2
Germany	1
India	7
Iran	1
South Africa	3
Sri Lanka	1
UK	6
Yemen	1

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



Country	Specialist qualification
Brazil	6
China	1
Denmark	1
Egypt	4
Germany	1
Hong Kong	1
India	20
Iran	5
Israel	1
Kenya	2
Malaysia	1
Nigeria	3
Norway	1
Pakistan	4
South Africa	6
Spain	1
Sri Lanka	6
Switzerland	1
Turkey	1
Uganda	1
Ukraine	1
UK	12
USA	2

8.4.16 IMG country of qualifications: Specialist qualification: Royal College of Pathologists Australasia



Country	Specialist qualification
Canada	2
Chile	1
Egypt	3
India	7
Iran	1
Japan	1
Kenya	1
Nigeria	1
Pakistan	1
Philippines	1
South Africa	5
South Korea	1
Sudan	1
Syria	1
UK	3