



Royal College
of Surgeons

ADVANCING SURGICAL CARE

Less than Full-Time and Flexible Working SuppoRTT Webinar 2020

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RCS Flexible working advisor



Who am I?



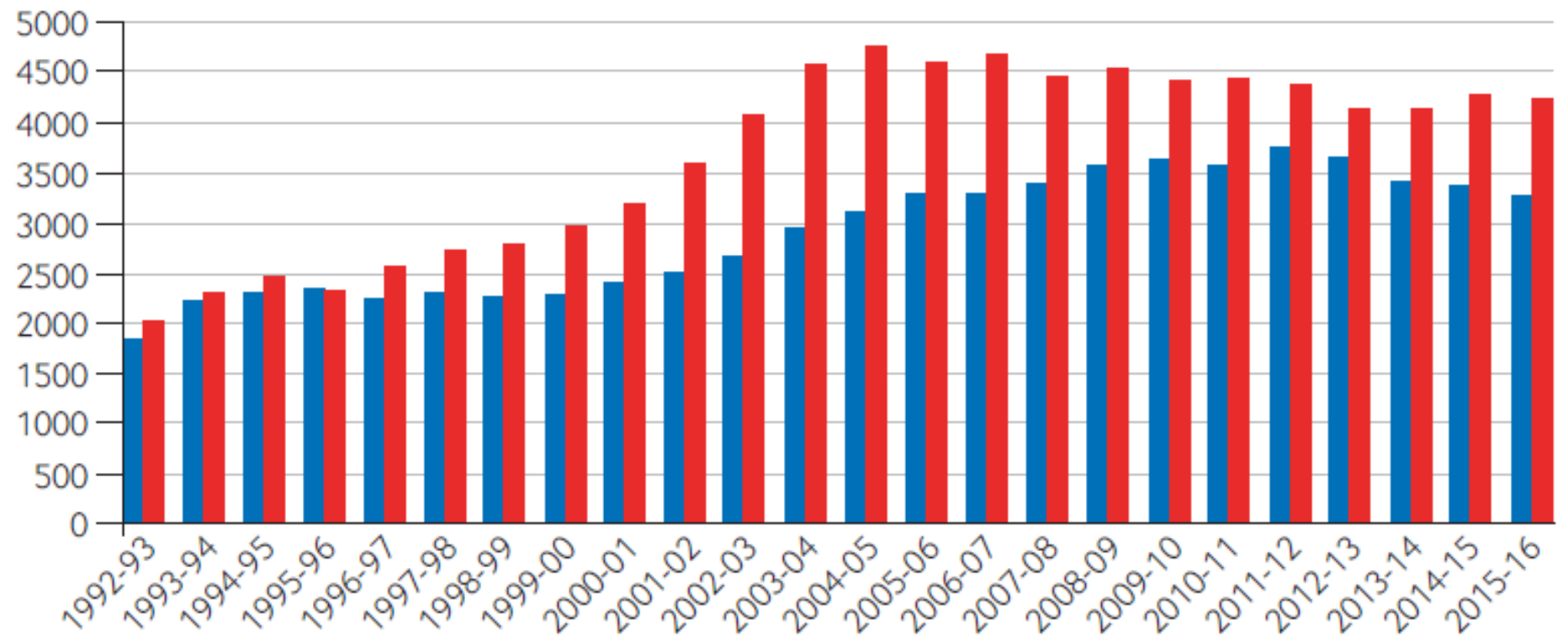
- **Royal College of Surgeons of England Flexible working advisor**
- **Consultant Vascular Surgeon - full time, Norfolk and Norwich University NHS Trust**
- **Chief of Service for Surgery, NNUH**
- **Previous full time & LTFT trainee in South East Thames Deanery**
- **Wife and mother of three**



- **The demographics of medicine and medical students has changed significantly over the last 30+ years**
- **Part-time trainees were rare before 1990**
- **1993 ‘The Lost Tribe’ and other papers**
- **Supernumerary, fully funded ‘flexible’ training**
- **2000 NHS ‘Improving Working Lives’ project**
- **LTFT trainee numbers increased**
- **Supernumerary funding was withdrawn**
- **Covid?**

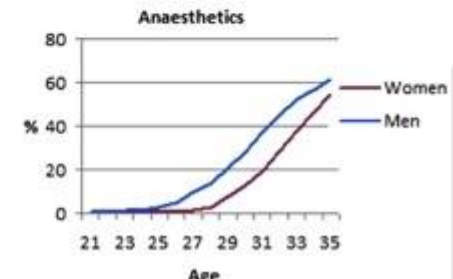
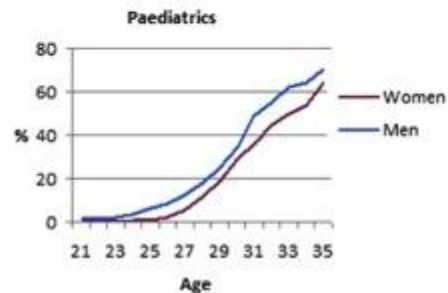
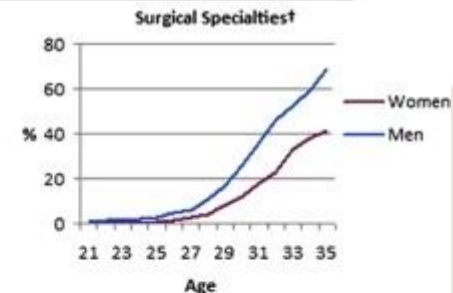
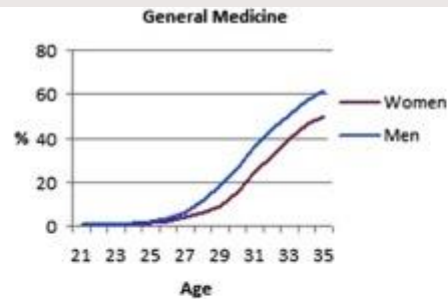
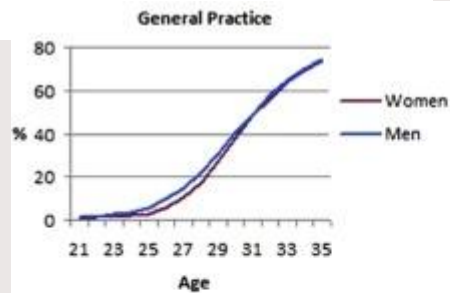
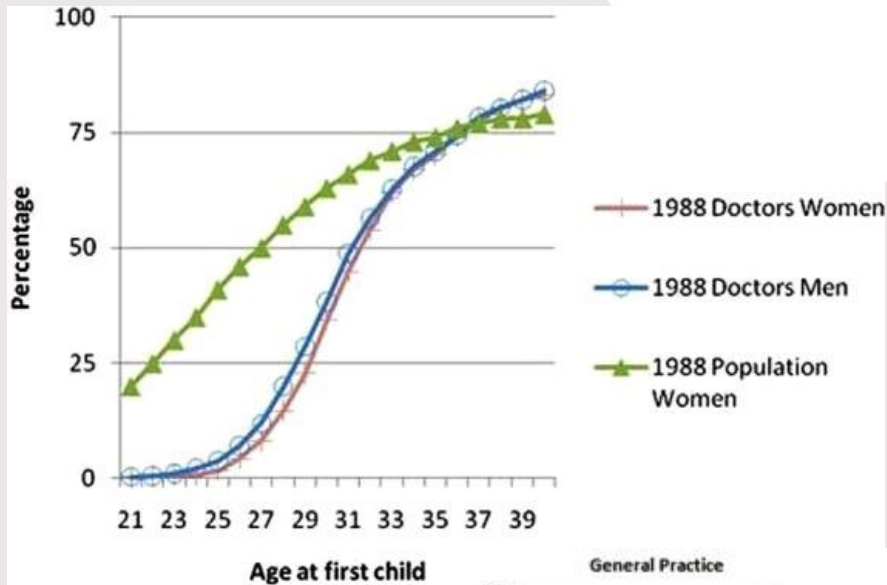
HOW WOMEN HAVE OUTNUMBERED MEN AT MEDICAL SCHOOL ENTRY FOR 25 YEARS

Men
Women



The facts of life for doctors

Doctors age at domestic partnership and parenthood: cohort studies
Goldacre et al, JRSM 2012



- **Flexible working is a generic term covering**
 - Variable working hours
 - Different patterns of working e.g. variable shift times
 - Alternative places of work
- **Flexible working includes**
 - less than full-time working
 - Working from home
 - Retire and return
- **Less than full-time can refer to anything <100% normal working hours for non-trainees**
- **Less than full-time training refers to working 50% or more of full-time 40 hours (except in exceptional circumstances)**

- **LTFT training is subject to *some* rules and regulations**
- **2010 The Equality Act – united all previous acts covering protected characteristics**
- **Other rules are largely by recommendation and convention**
- **2005 NHS employers document 'Doctors in flexible training'**
 - 'Day-time working, on-call and out-of-hours duties should be undertaken on a basis pro rata to that worked by full-time trainees in the same grade and specialty, unless the circumstances which justify flexible training make this impossible, provided that legal and educational requirements are met'.
- **2017 GMC position statement on flexible training**
- **2018 The Gold Guide**
 - LTFT work and training is accessed in the usual way and may or may not be declared on application
 - All HEE regions 'should' support Category 1 LTFT requests

Who can apply?



- **Category 1 trainees:**
 - Disability or ill health
 - Responsibility for caring (men and women) for children
 - Responsibility for caring for ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependant
- **Category 2 trainees:**
 - Unique opportunities e.g. national sporting event or committee
 - Religious commitment
 - Non-medical development e.g. non-medical degree
- **‘Other’ trainees**
- **All trainees?**
- **All non-trainees**

How to apply



- **Do your research**
- **<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/career-opportunities-doctors/less-full-time-training-doctors>**
- **HEEoE LTFT hub has all the details**
- **Apply early – it takes much longer than you think**
- **If you are changing grade, decide whether to put it on your application form and apply in the usual way**
- **Ask for what *you* want**
- **Incorporate a flexible half-day – your colleagues do not have fixed commitments all day**

Does flexible working 'work'?



- **Flexible Working in the NHS: The Case for Action 2019**
- **Since 2011, 56,000 people have left the NHS citing work-life balance as the primary reason**
- **In other sectors:**
 - **75% of employers say flexibility improves retention**
 - **97% of managers said the quantity of work produced by flexible workers stayed the same or improved**
 - **92% of under 35s want to work flexibly**

1991
3%



2019
12.9%



RCS

Number of consultant female surgeons

Flexibility is not just for trainees



- **2019 RCS YouGov survey**
- **68% of consultant surgeons are considering early retirement because of the pensions tax situation**
- **64% of consultant surgeons have been advised to work fewer hours in the NHS following recent changes in pension taxation rules to avoid ‘crippling and unpredictable’ tax bills**
- **69% of consultant surgeons have reduced the amount of time they have spent working in the NHS as a direct result of changes to pension taxation rules**



is out there



- All laws and guides are on the internet – HEEoE LTFT hub
- <https://heeo.ee.nhs.uk/faculty-educators/less-full-time-training>
- HEEoE LTFT Programme Director: Francesca Crawley
- HEEoE has speciality consultant and trainee mentors
- ltft.eoe@hee.nhs.uk
- English Royal Colleges' appointed advisors
- felicity.meyer@nnuh.nhs.uk



- **LTFT is now a common and popular option – even in surgery**
- **This may increase post-Covid**
- **Flexible working improves work-life balance and productivity**
- **Do your research and apply early for what *you* want**
- **Help and advice is readily available**
- **Maybe we should all work more flexibly?**





Questions?