



EMERGENCY MEDICINE TRAINEES' ASSOCIATION

EMTA Report for RCEM Council

July 2020

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Introduction and Purpose

This report has been produced for RCEM Council and lays out a summary of EMTA activity for the last 12 months. In July 2019 Dr Amar Mashru took over as Chair of the Emergency Medicine Trainees' Association, commencing an 18 month term, replacing Dr Paul Stewart.

We would like to take this opportunity to once again thank Paul for all of his hard work on behalf of trainees and continue to wish him the best of luck as he embarks on his first few months as an Emergency Medicine Consultant at Hull Royal Infirmary.

New Recruitment

In July 2019 we had just finished a new recruitment round, undertaken in conjunction with RCEM, and at that stage, therefore, had a total of 21 EMTA representatives. We have since had 3 receive their CCT, 2 resign, 2 whose term has ended and have appointed 11 new reps, with a current total as of June 2020 of 25 EMTA Reps.

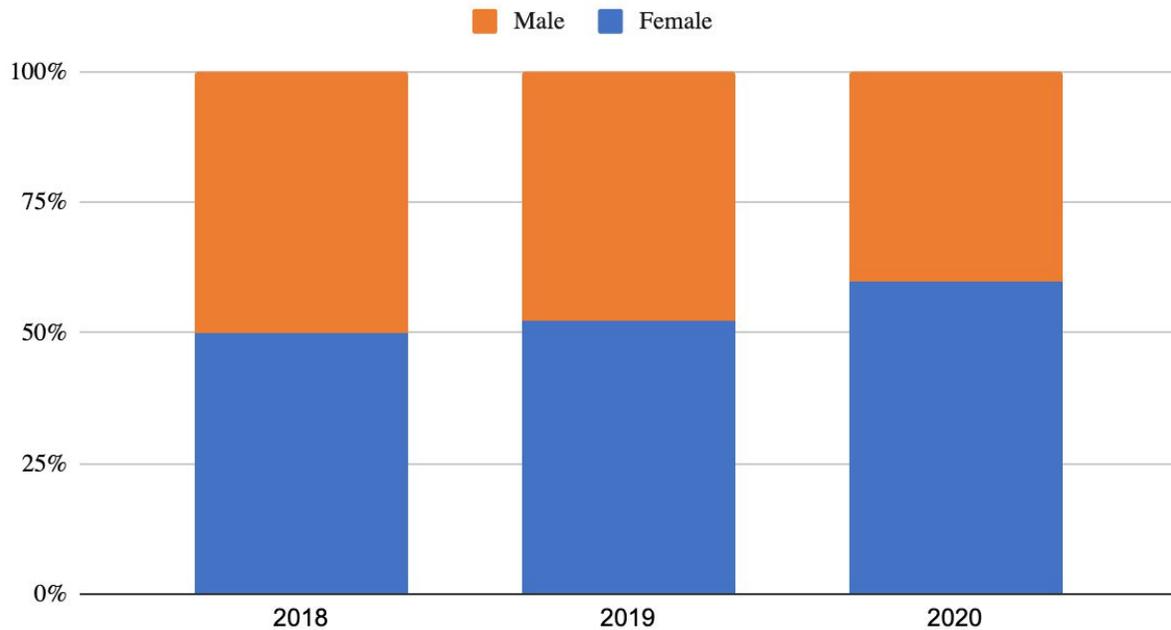
Our Recruitment is undertaken via advert on RCEM email and Twitter with appointments made in accordance with our Terms of Reference.

What follows within this section is an overview of the make-up of that representative body.

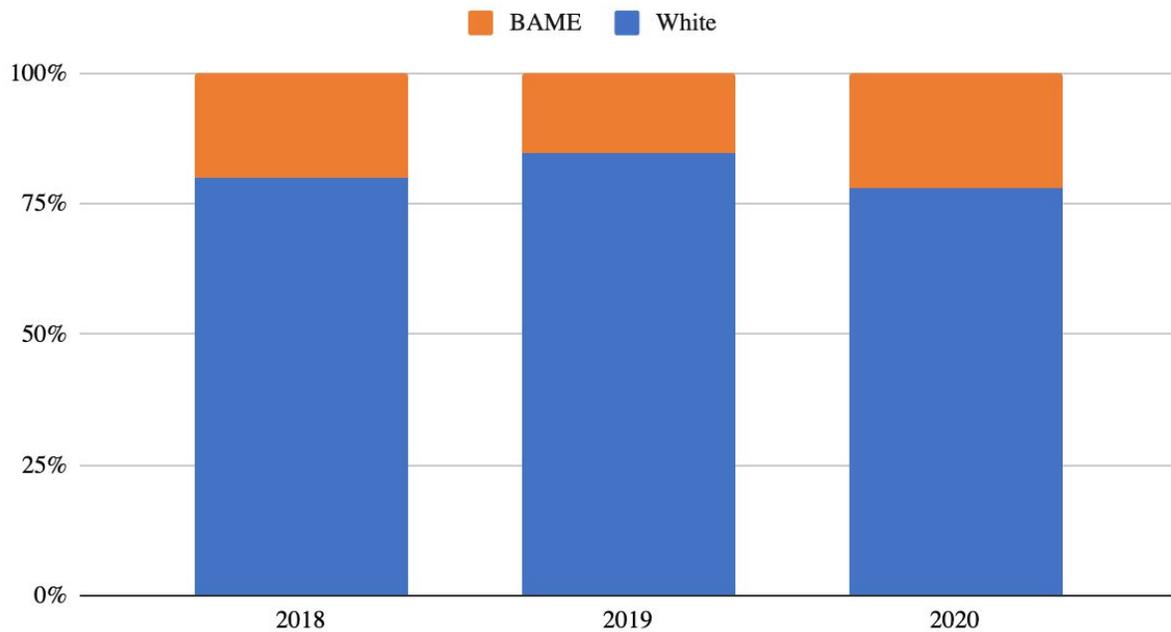


Illustration of geographical spread of EMTA Reps based on region of work; June 2020

Gender

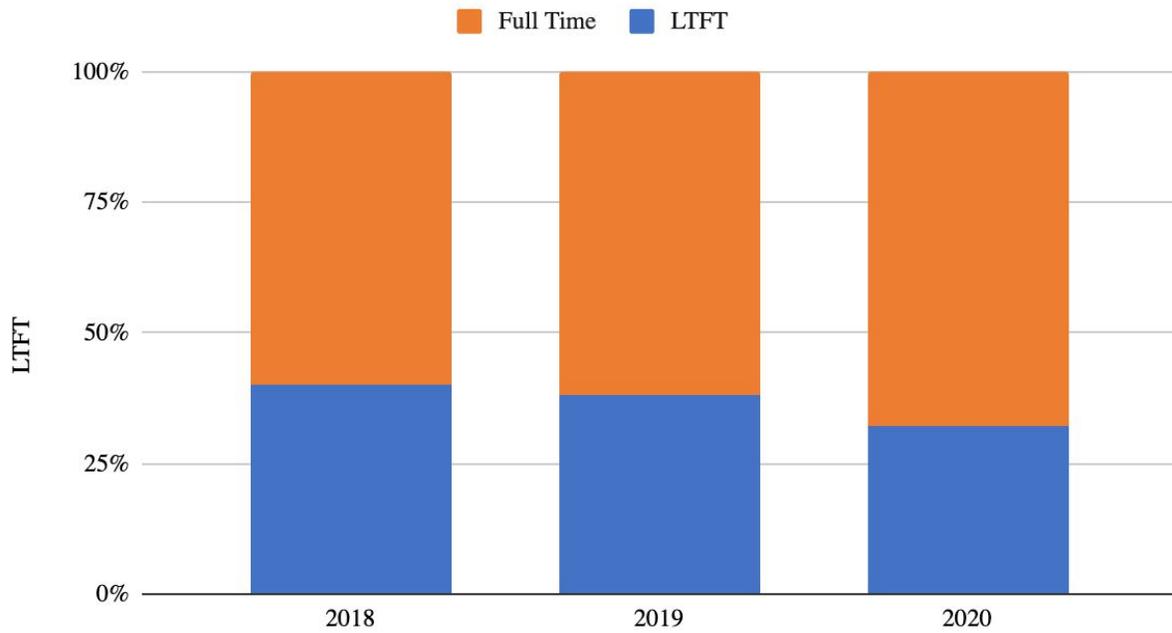


Ethnicity

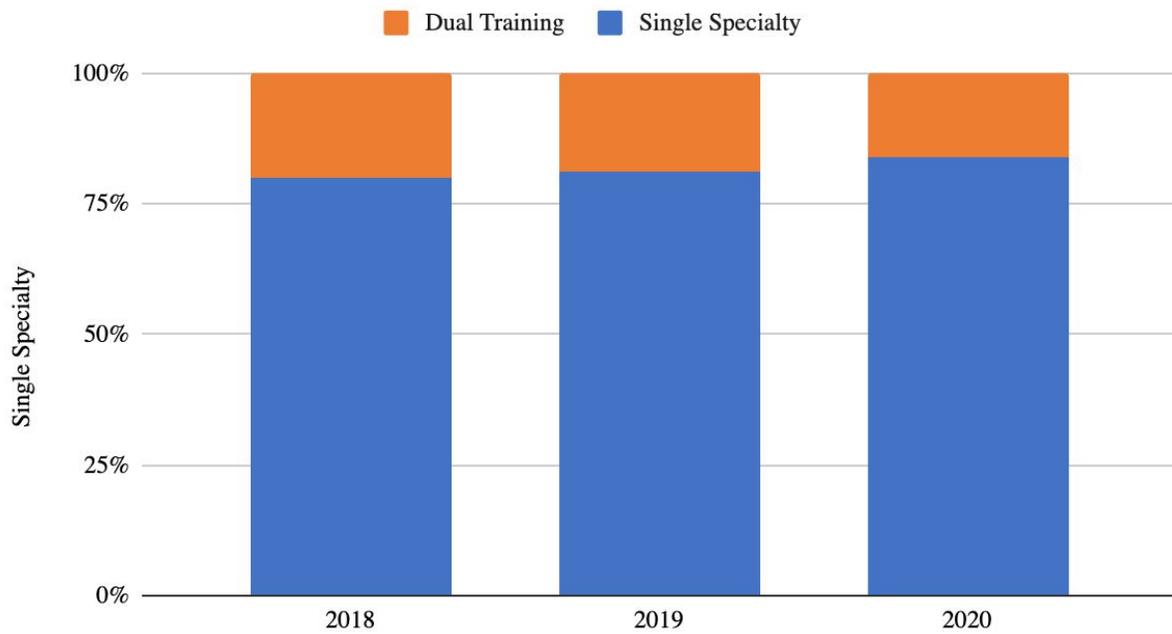


Our proportion of female representatives presently sits at 60%. We have no representatives who identify as Black or of Afro-Caribbean heritage, however our collection and storage of information regarding protected characteristics remains limited.

LTFT



Single Specialty vs. Dual Training



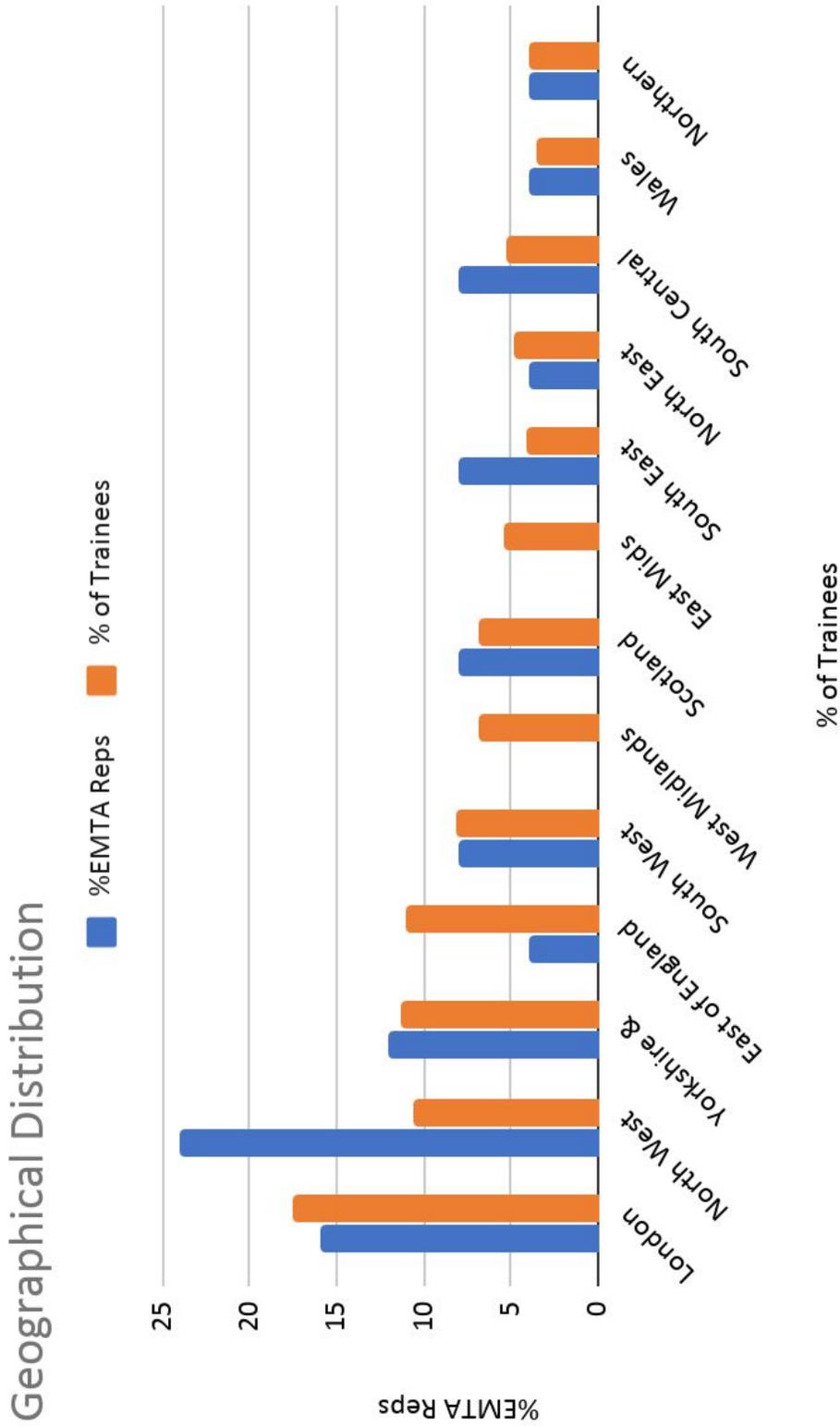
Better Training. Better Care.

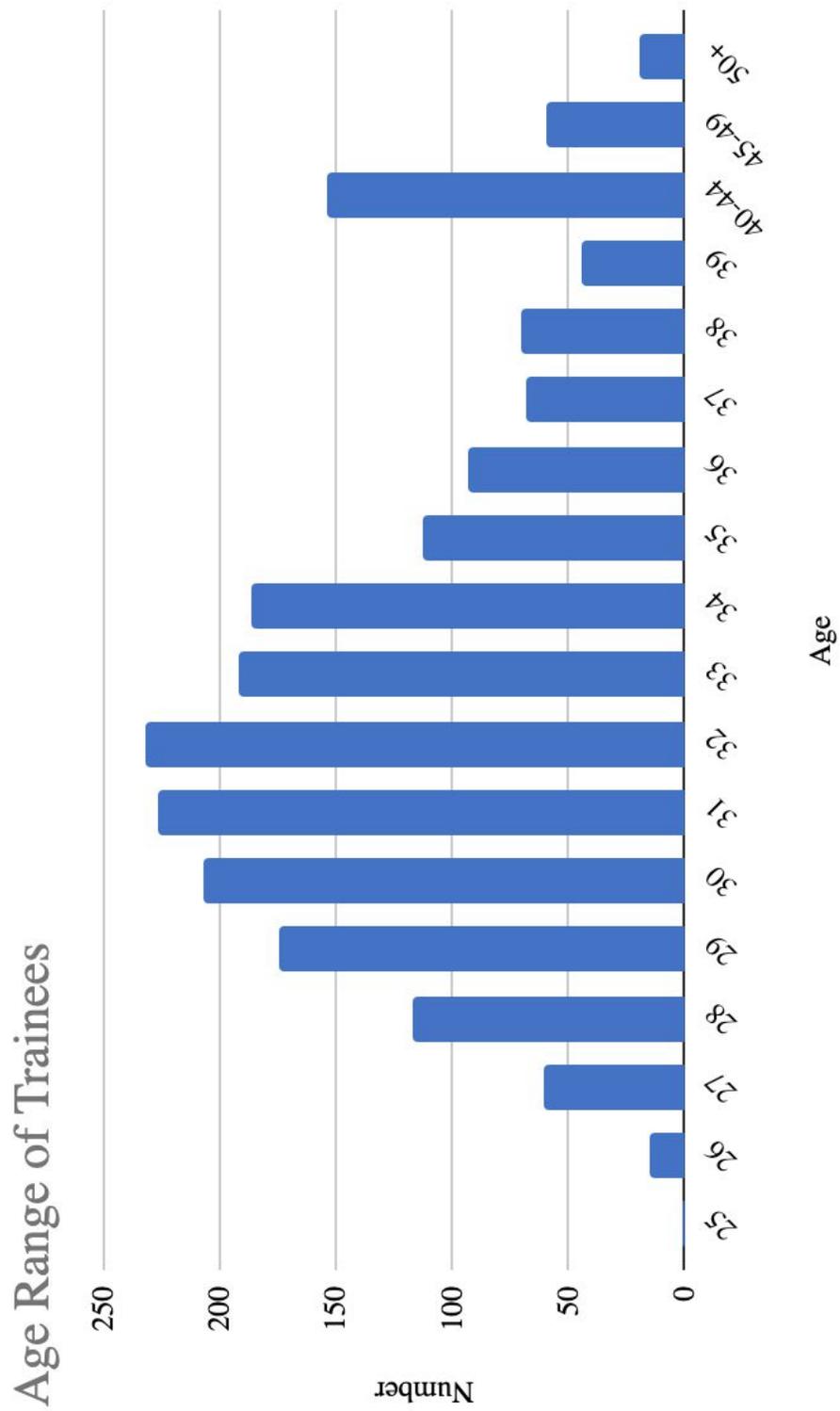
Who do we represent

The following data has been kindly provided by the RCEM Membership team. At present it remains limited, with work in progress to expand this. We have begun to make some comparisons between the trainee population and the representation that we provide.

	No of members	% of membership	No of Trainees	% of Trainees
London	1381	14.56	357	17.55
North West	989	10.43	216	10.62
Overseas	980	10.34	NA	NA
Yorkshire & Humber	804	8.48	230	11.31
East of England	702	7.40	226	11.11
South West	675	7.12	165	8.11
West Midlands	647	6.82	141	6.93
Scotland	644	6.79	140	6.88
East Mids	515	5.43	109	5.36
South East Central	496	5.23	84	4.13
North East	436	4.60	100	4.92
South Central	429	4.52	107	5.26
Wales	318	3.35	72	3.54
Northern Ireland	277	2.92	82	4.03
Republic of Ireland	195	2.06	5	0.25
Channel Islands	20	<1	NA	NA

2034





Better Training. Better Care.

Age range of trainees		
	No	%
25	1	
26	15	<1
27	61	3.00
28	117	5.76
29	175	8.61
30	207	10.18
31	227	11.17
32	232	11.41
33	192	9.44
34	186	9.15
35	113	5.56
36	93	4.57
37	68	3.34
38	70	3.44
39	44	2.16
40-44	154	7.58
45-49	59	2.90
50+	19	<1

Challenges

This section lays out an overview of the challenges as we understood them in the Summer of 2019 with the following section describing the solutions that are now either in place, in evolution or are being proposed to tackle them. These almost exclusively relate to the workings of EMTA over the last year rather than the specifics of challenges with training or trainee matters, which are dealt with within College meetings and form part of much more longitudinal and cross-organisational work. Much of this refers to work that has been building for some time and will continue to evolve and thus this is intended to serve only as a snapshot of key activity in the last 12 months.

Size and Administration

As EMTA became formally recognised as a Committee of RCEM, so too did the work in ensuring trainee representation across all College activity and the need for that work to be coordinated and standardised through common channels. This meant a larger number of trainee reps, working in different clusters of the College and increased administrative roles within EMTA. It was important each role was understood and accounted for. Our working structures and relationships needed to reflect this.

Culture and expectations

With a larger number of representatives, particularly recruited in a short space of time to ensure the breadth of representation required, came the challenges of managing the individual wellbeing of those reps, their output and workloads, communication between them and their shared sense of organisational purpose and workings. It is notable that, particularly where representatives are volunteering into such roles, disillusionment is a real risk. This can be from unmet expectations, e.g. through workload, dissatisfaction with the organisation or output of the Committee, or the challenges of attempting to provide representation, finding it overshadowed by having to navigate politics and personalities over discussion.

Internal Communications

It is imperative that with a large number of reps, working busy trainee rotas of different grades and very variable shift patterns, we are able to communicate in a way that works for the Committee. This is particularly important in ensuring a birdseye appreciation of College activity from the individual meetings that different representatives may attend and how that may affect trainees. We identified this as an immediate concern that had been building for some time. There was a need for regular, formal, meetings amongst Committee members and key RCEM Staff to ensure that overall strategy, working practices and relationships were best serving all interested parties.

External Communications

Anecdotally we were aware of limitations with reaching all trainees in our communications, or even of their awareness of the existence of EMTA. This was certainly compounded at our 2019 EMTA Conference where only 50% of a self-selecting population of EMTA members declared being on Twitter, where the majority of our communications took place. Simultaneously, we are aware that our Survey is completed by around one third of all trainees and thus we estimate that there is reasonable reach when required. To be able to represent members effective two-way communication must be in place.

Inclusion and Diversity

These issues exist both in ensuring we are a representative organisation and in facilitating non-discriminatory policy that may affect trainees. This need was identified early on by our newly appointed EMTA Secretary and brought into sharp focus through the more recent public resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Regional Representation

Every region has a group of local trainee representatives appointed within their School or Deanery. Access to this group is fantastically valuable in maintaining a pulse on the national picture and in allowing 2 way communication with trainees around the country. By July 2019 this list of contacts had been maintained manually by one EMTA Rep with the reps co-located in a single WhatsApp group. This relied on outgoing reps to update us of new reps and with very different systems and set-ups in each region it is very difficult to know where our gaps lie. Despite several attempts via the Training Standards Committee to centralise this register via Heads of School we remained unable to reach a more satisfactory solution.

#EMTA2020 Conference

Due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic a decision needed to be made on the format and timing of the EMTA 2020 Conference, initially planned for November in Blackpool.

EMTA Survey

It was clear that the annual survey is a massive piece of work, variably undertaken in timing, content and disproportionate burden on one or two individuals, whilst being vitally powerful and important. Furthermore, as the year progressed we encountered the challenge of whether to proceed with the planned survey in light of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Our Solutions

EMTA Secretary

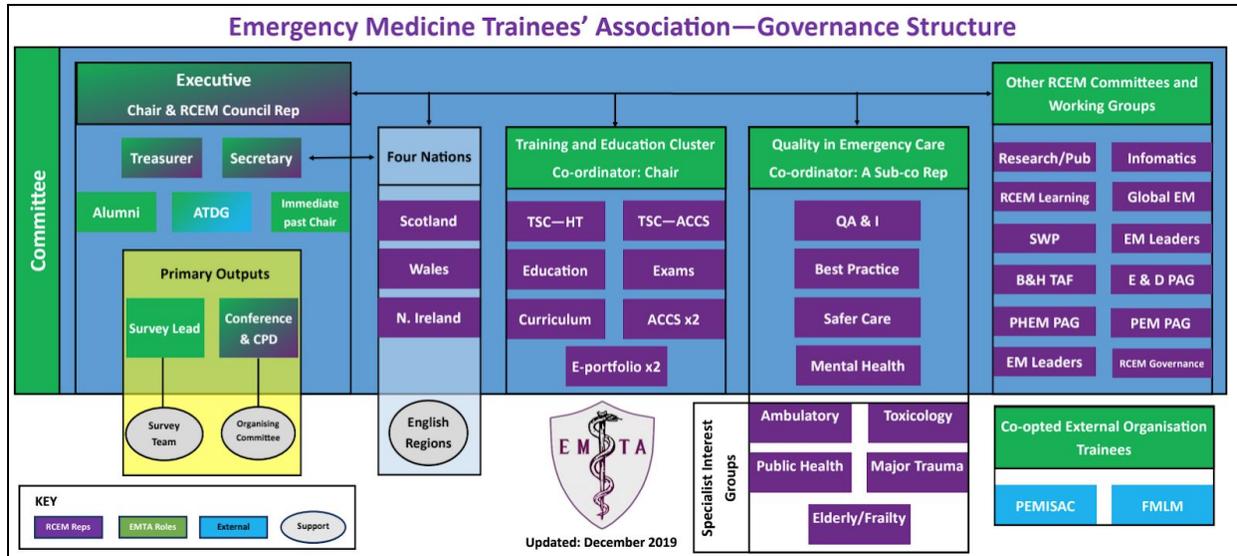
The appointment of an EMTA Secretary in the Summer 2019 reflected an ambition that could now be realised in tightening up and formalising our internal structures. This role has been pivotal in achieving much that follows and in creating a framework that allows future activity to be built upon, cementing institutional memory and professionalising the Committee workings.

Terms of Reference

Although not long re-written, a key piece of work in our internal processes in meeting the challenges laid out above was to review our Terms of Reference. This provided an opportunity to reset our framework, clearly lay out the expectations of representatives and their roles, the requirement for regular meetings, transparency in elections and allocations of posts and our internal and external relations. We specifically sought to bring those referred to as the 'EMTA Executive' within the auspices of the wider Committee; eliminating the hierarchy and democratising the systems which governed the overall direction and leadership of the organisation. The Terms of Reference make clear EMTA's anti-discriminatory position and the need for all representatives to maintain vigilance for any activity or policy which may disadvantage trainees or minority groups.

Governance

Together with our Terms of Reference we debated and formalised our internal structures; visualising them in a way that mapped our requirements to that of the College, our internal administration and the needs of trainees. An illustration of our December 2019 structure can be seen below. The document that accompanied this is our timeline of current and past reps in each post, expected end date and CCT date. It was our intention that these were both freely available, together with our Terms of Reference, for other College staff to reference our activity. These documents together provide a wider dynamic picture of the organisation, anticipating vacancies and making more clear the burden of work on each representative.



How We Work

This is a much more informal, 'living', document where information on attending meetings, a better understanding of the various RCEM and external committees and issues of wellbeing, communications and individual posts can be found. Each rep can update aspects of the document relevant to their role to assist those who follow them; a repository of organisational memory as well as a handbook on 'How to be an EMTA Rep'. This is an important piece of work in setting the tone and culture for new reps; ensuring an inclusive, conversational and democratic environment where their individual inputs and contributions are valued.

Purpose, Values and Vision

Whilst often more associated with the corporate industries, this has been a valuable piece of work in clarifying to ourselves and to our members the reason for our existence and our core values. It has also helped shaped the debate around our aspirations as an organisation and in doing so provided focus and camaraderie within the team. Due for publication in Summer 2020 we hope this document will continue to inspire and motivate the committee, bringing them closer to trainees through their shared sense of purpose.

Storage, Communication and data Sharing

This has been the area of largest challenge, in many ways, for EMTA for some time. Large volumes of information requiring input from multiple users, with version control, archiving and a referencing system to be of most efficient use. This is to be met without the concept of office hours or shared office space. WhatsApp has remained the primary mode of

communication for some time. In July 2019 we moved our storage to Google Drive and will soon be combining both on Slack; a platform working well for groups such as RCEM Learning. We maintain ongoing communications with RCEM IT staff looking in future to be able to work within the College platforms where functionality can be matched as this will then allow easier sharing of work and a place to share more vulnerable data.

Communications with Trainees

- Every new trainee member now receives an email introducing them to EMTA*.
- The first issue of our new quarterly newsletter* was shared via the RCEM mailing list to all trainee members at the start of 2020. The newsletter lays out relevant communications with trainees as well as being an opportunity to share relevant College news such as events or exam dates.
- After discussion with the editors of the EMJ supplement, EMTA now provides regular contributions. This is now a recognised part of the job description of the EMTA reps. We hope this will provide a new channel for communication as well as awareness of EMTA and RCEM activity
- We have introduced a 'Tell EMTA' button on our website. This allows trainees to anonymously (if they wish) post areas of success and concern regarding training, either locally or nationally. In 6 months we have received 10 responses, each of which has helped shape discussion or has needed to be raised directly with the relevant RCEM Chair. We continue to promote this tool, together with public dissemination of the emta@rcem.ac.uk email address for trainees to get in touch with us outside of Twitter.
- EMTA meets RCEM video series. Although editing has been significantly hampered by the social distancing measures during the Coronavirus pandemic this should be a useful piece of working in not just engaging trainees, but all members in College activity and EMTA representation with the combined goal of all such activity improving the level of representation we are able to provide, either through better communication or increased competition for rep posts.

*data provided by RCEM Membership team. "RCEM main newsletter generally averages mid 40-50% open rate"

	Open rate	Click rate
May 20	57.4	11.88
COVID message	68.76	18.43
Jan 20	51.6	6.15
Nov 19	56.8	6.65
Welcome to EMTA Oct 19	66.59	6.73

Regional Reps

Initial progress appeared to be being made via our administrative support within the College. Unfortunately, at present this issue remains unresolved and remains a risk given the value of the contact with our Regional Reps.

EMTA Conference

A single virtual day will be held focusing on training after covid and the changes coming about. This remains in discussion with the CPD and Events team with the likelihood of postponement of the face to face Conference to Spring 2021. This is a really key event for EMTA and for trainees and the conference has gone from strength to strength over the last few years which we must not let slip.

EMTA Survey

The decision was made to go ahead with this year's EMTA Survey as the value of the longitudinal data remains so important. We understood this came with risk and we saw about half the normal completion rates from previous years.. It opened towards the end of February 2020 for 6 weeks. The questions were reviewed by the RCEM TERN fellow reflecting our desire for the data captured to be as robust and meaningful as possible. This data should be published at the same time as this report. We have also begun arrangements for an EMTA Survey team for subsequent years to avoid disproportionate burden on a few individuals and ongoing refinement of the question set to make annual comparisons more straightforward. This remains a work in progress.

Future Plans

Trainee videos

The newly appointed RCEM Head of Training, Elizabeth Goldsmith, and current RCEM Head of Exams, Susannah Grant, have discussed the idea of creating educational material and videos for trainees on topics such as the ePortfolio, ARCPs, new Exam formats and the new Curriculum.

Rest and Rota Charter

Due for publication in July 2020 the Rest and Rota Charter is a national joint project between EMTA and RCEM facilitating standards in wellbeing and rest across our Emergency Departments.

Website

We have appointed a new lead for our Website with feedback currently being taken for areas of focus and improvement to ensure a more user-friendly and purposeful platform.

Anti-discrimination

We are currently in discussions within the Committee on appointment of an Inclusion and Diversity Rep and will be working closely with the College to ensure we remain a representative organisation with the abilities to work on policy that addresses structural inequality within Emergency Medicine.

Data driven

We are making a conscious effort moving forward, with the facilities described above in place, to utilise data in a much more meaningful way; making chronological comparisons, ensuring parity with RCEM and other Colleges' activity, judging our impact and reach and informing our policy and decision making.

Feedback and Thanks

As a Committee of the College we are always open to feedback, ideas and suggestions from any of the other Committees and groups. We wish to remain an open and inclusive forum and would welcome any collaborations, discussions and thoughts from wherever they may come.

We would like to thank the RCEM staff for all of their support and assistance over these last 12 months. We are very grateful to all of those who have been vital in helping to ensure robust and meaningful trainee representation across all College activities.

Many thanks,

Dr Amar Mashru
Chair, Emergency Medicine Trainees' Association