

Impact of transitions in doctors' careers discussed

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Michael Peters, from the British Medical Association, and colleagues consider the impact of transitions in the life of a doctor—a topic that will be discussed at an international conference on physician health in 2014.

The doctor's first transition, from medical student to a junior and inexperienced doctor is associated with various [challenges](#), including the anxiety associated with responsibility of caring for patients. Many doctors deal with personal transitions at the same time, including marriage or parenthood, which can pose unique challenges for women.

The transition from trainee to senior qualified doctor is also associated with challenges such as leadership and management responsibilities, which can include fighting for scarce resources. This transition often coincides with that of raising teenage children and aging parents. The last years of a medical career are also complicated by challenges, such as aging and possible deterioration in dexterity, vision, memory, and stamina. These issues may be compounded by concern relating to impending retirement. With the current changes in patients' expectations, doctors are also facing a transition in society's perception of the doctor and threats to their professional identity.

"Transitions are major stressors in most people's lives; those in [doctors'](#) lives are no less difficult and may have a greater impact than is generally recognized," the authors write.

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