



Training & Development Services, Pinewood House,
Stepping Hill Hospital, Poplar Grove, Stockport. SK2 - 7JE.
Tel: (0161) 419 5802 Fax: (0161) 419 4694

**Improving the Management & Development of
Junior Doctors' Training; Developing a Calendar of
Key Clinical Skills & Responsibilities Training
alongside a Mentor Scheme.**

Catherine Smith

FINAL REPORT- SUMMARY DOCUMENT

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BACKGROUND

• This project was conducted between October 2001 and January 2002, specifically focused upon the Pre-Registration House Officer (PRHO) in their first post

- It followed the earlier "Improving Junior Doctors' Induction Initiative"
- It was initiated in response to an expressed need for the topics of information delivered via programmes of on-going training, to be delivered close to the stages when a PRHO in their first post would be expected to use them in their everyday work
- The recognition that PRHOs who are new to a Trust are in need of appropriate levels of support, was also a contributing factor

AIMS

- To identify the training needs of PRHOs
- To produce a 'Calendar of Training' to guide Trusts in the appropriate timing of training sessions for PRHOs in their first post
- To clarify PRHOs' need for support during their first 6 months
- To develop and trial a system of support to address this, which can then be used by Trusts elsewhere
- Ultimately, to improve patient care and reduce clinical risk, through improved training practices and greater access to support and advice for PRHOs

PROCEDURE

Research has been carried out to fulfil the project's aims, including via:

- Consultation with doctors in training, via survey questionnaires
- Consultation with health professionals who are responsible for PRHOs' training and who work alongside them, through semi-structured group discussions and individual interviews
- The collection of patients stories
- The trial and evaluation of a 'Buddy System' of support
- Consideration of relevant official documentation appertaining to the training of doctors
- A review of relevant published literature

CONCLUSIONS

- It is necessary that on-going training programmes are evaluated and reviewed regularly, with any needs specific to trainees at the individual Trust, being considered.
- Training programmes should be flexible and adaptable, so as to suit these varying needs.
- Programmes of on-going training should compliment the Consolidation and Induction practices in place at each Trust.
- Training should both be of practical relevance to the PRHOs' work and be delivered in a practical manner, wherever possible.
- The topics and timing considered appropriate to the training of PRHOs, differs between PRHOs themselves and their colleagues / Tutors.
- Consideration should be given to providing a programme of training via a variety of training methods.
- A multidisciplinary approach to training should be take whenever feasible and appropriate, with doctors' training being both delivered and received alongside non-medical health professionals.
- Those providing medical education in Trusts, should consider their own need for training to deliver it.
- Training and support' needs can differ immensely between trainees of the same grade.
- The physical and mental wellbeing of a doctor in training should be afforded adequate attention, and not disregarded in favour of concentrating purely on the educational demands of a post.
- It is not only difficult to identify available and willing sources of support for doctors in training, but also difficult to make it acceptable for trainees to admit to needing support as well as to receive it.
- Existing support for trainees that is not formally acknowledged, should be better utilised wherever possible.
- A change to the culture of 'blame' within medicine needs to be seen, so as to allow all doctors to use their own mistakes and those of others, as opportunities for learning.

The 'Calendar of Training'

• The findings of the project demonstrate the breadth of training' needs of new PRHOs. The 'Calendar of Training' itself provides guidance on suggested topics to be included in the first 6 months of a training programme, on a month-by-month basis. Examples taken from the 'Calendar' are given below:

- MONTH 1: Completing death certificates and cremation forms
Protocols for requesting and obtaining investigations
- MONTH 2: Careers' advice
Interview techniques
- MONTH 3: Appropriate referrals to other departments
Breaking bad news
- MONTH 4: Basic clinical audit skills
Rational prescribing according to medical- and cost-effectiveness
- MONTH 5: 'People skills'
Common surgical procedures, post-operative care and mortality rates
- MONTH 6: Knowledge of therapeutic services & equipment available in the Trust
'Taking the initiative'

• To enable comparison of the differences between PRHOs' priorities for their training, and those priorities expressed by their colleagues, two separate calendars are also shown, defining the responses of each party.

The 'Buddy System'

• This system is aimed at providing new PRHOs with a support network of professionals in various hospital departments. These professionals act as 'buddies', providing impartial information and advice on all aspects of the PRHOs' work.

• As a result of the establishment, trial and development of this system, a 'Toolkit' has been compiled. This represents the 'best practice' found in running the scheme, and advises others on how to establish a similar system in their own Trust.

• The 'Toolkit' provides suggestions on departments to include in a scheme, advice on recruiting volunteers to be 'buddies', and guidance on compiling information packs for participants. It also provides suggested criteria for 'matching' 'buddies' to PRHOs, and examples of evaluation sheets which could be used to assess the system's effectiveness and obtain suggestions for its improvement in the individual Trust.