

National survey of management training provided to anaesthetic trainees

Introduction

Anaesthetists are well placed within the hospital environment to perform management roles and have often done so. However as stated by Lord Darzi in his report, High Quality care for all, there is now an increasing call for clinicians to play an even larger role in healthcare management. Basic management skills must be acquired as a trainee. There is a concern that management training provided across the UK is not always taken seriously and is highly variable.

Methods

Email survey to all 311 Royal College of Anaesthetists College Tutors. Survey open between February and May 2009. 89 responses (a 29% response rate)

Results

48 % of responding departments offered management training

Of those: 53% did not provide a set module for the training
 70% did not have any set objectives for the module

Modules provided were of varying length: less than 1 month to 1 year

The average number of dedicated (non-clinical days) allowed during the entirety of training was 10 days (range: 3 days – 4 weeks)

What the training consisted of:

Components available	% hospitals
Shadowing managers	70
Attending committee meetings	91
Attending courses	72
Rota organisation	65
Observing interviews	47
E-learning modules	30
Management projects	23
Updating policies / guidelines	60

12% of departments required the training to be taken as study leave

76% of college tutors required thought that it was important to have more formalised management training

Conclusions

Despite being limited by a poor response rate, the data from the 89 responding anaesthetic departments shows that management training available to anaesthetic trainees across the UK is highly variable. There seems to be postcode lottery of management training.

Both the Royal College of Anaesthetists (Appendix H CCT IV) and AIM have suggested suitable objectives for management training without trying to be too prescriptive. This approach is to be applauded but it appears that many departments, feeling the pinch of reduced training time and an ever-growing curriculum, are not providing trainees with adequate management training. This will mean that many of tomorrow's consultants are underprepared for a major part of their role.