

Implementation of interim consultant role by stage 3 trainees

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BACKGROUND

- Practicing for the first time as a consultant can be extremely challenging
- Despite at least 7 years of postgraduate training the transition from specialist registrar to consultant, registrars may still experience a period of natural uncertainty.
- Challenges faced by newly appointed consultants :
 1. Clinical
 2. Trust Management
 3. Financial Management
 4. Leadership
 5. Team Working

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INTRODUCTION

- **Aim : Implementing formal mentoring programme in LRI ITU to help Stage 3 Trainees transition into a consultant role**
- Stage 3 Trainees undergo a period during which they “act up” as consultant
- This can be done independently or under the guidance of a consultant who acts as a mentor
- Whenever the rota permits, Stage 3 trainees will take on the role of the on-call consultant
- Anticipate that this experience will effectively prepare registrars for their upcoming roles as consultants.

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METHODS

- Mixed method study (informal interview + questionnaires)
- Conducted in LRI ITU (June 2023- August 2023)
- 2 phases of data collection
- Participation was voluntary
- Online questionnaire links were distributed via email and completed electronically
- Online system providing anonymized response
- 3 different questionnaires were distributed to :
 1. Consultants
 2. Stage 3 Trainees
 3. Staff in the department (junior doctors, nurses, pharmacist, dietician)
- Descriptive statistics were used to analyse quantitative data

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RESULTS

- a) **Stage 3 Trainees Questionnaire :**
- 100% of trainees achieved their learning goals.
 - 100% of trainees understood consultant roles and work culture better.
 - 100% of trainees developed new skills.
 - 100% of trainees received positive support from ITU team members.
 - 100% of trainees received support from mentors/assessors.
 - 100% of trainees recommend program continuation.

Suggestions and Improvements by Trainees:

- More opportunities and post-role debriefing sessions are desired.
- More non-resident on-call experiences if feasible.
- Continued program due to its educational value.

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b) **Consultant Questionnaire :**

- 57.14% familiar with role objectives.
- 60% believe the program improved patient care.
- 100% confident the program prepared registrars for consultant roles.
- 28.7% believe registrars consistently demonstrated necessary skills.

Key Strengths of the Program (Consultant Perspective):

- “Encouragement of reflection and independent decision-making”
- “Provides a protected environment for trainee development”

Main Areas That Need Improvement (Consultant Perspective):

- Structured debriefs after each shift for reflection.
- Desire for more frequent participation opportunities if funding allows.
- 85.71% satisfaction with program implementation.

c) **ITU Members Questionnaire:**

- 87% aware of registrars “acting up” as consultants.
- 74% confident in the program’s value.
- 74.19% feel supported by registrars in the “acting up” role.
- 48.39% believe the program positively impacted patient care in the ITU.

Benefits of the Program (ITU Members):

- “Enhances teamwork and acts as a liaison between teams”
- “Enables clear clinical decision-making in the absence of consultants”

Specific Recommendations or Suggestions (ITU Members):

- “Extend the program to all senior ICM and CESR ICM trainees”
- “Consider involving SAS Doctors in a similar capacity”

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CONCLUSION

- This implementation is a beneficial programme to final year SpRs
- New consultants are highly skilled and experienced professionals ; therefore support must be made available
- A formal and structured programme should be implemented and offered across the trust

