

An audit of the teaching abilities of consultants at the Children's Hospital

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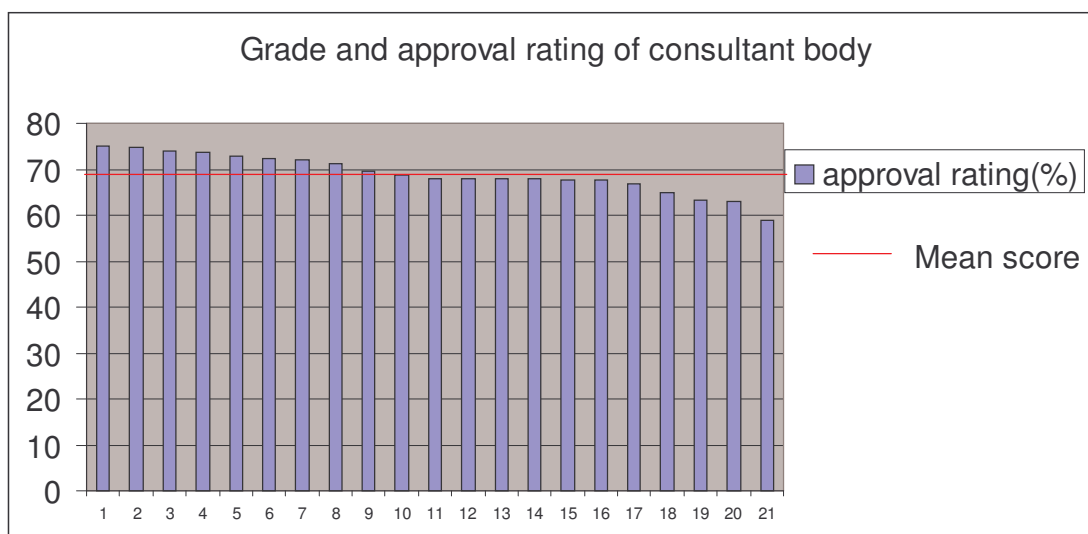
Introduction Teaching of juniors is an important part of the job of modern consultants. There is a strong push for 360 degree appraisal from departments, trust boards and the general medical council. Teaching should be included as part of this appraisal.

Method: A secret audit of teaching abilities of the 21 consultants at the Children's Hospital was performed over a nine month period. Trainees at the end of their attachment to the Children's Hospital were asked to appraise the consultants ability in theoretical knowledge, teaching ability, enthusiasm for trainee teaching and communication skills. They were graded on a simple 1-5 scale. (1-fail, 2 unsatisfactory, 3 satisfactory, 4 good and 5 excellent.). The results were collated and anonymised by the trainee (YC) and then formulated by the consultant (TM). Results were deemed valid if a consultant had been appraised by 10 trainees.

Standards were set that;

- 1) The mean approval rating of all consultants should reach 70%. It should be noted that this is the average mark given to the trainees by the consultants in their appraisal system, and that if a consultant is marked as satisfactory (ie grade 3 by every trainee, then their approval score would be 60%).
- 2) No consultant should receive a grade 1
- 3) No consultant should receive a grade 2 from two trainees

Results: The mean approval rating for the department was 69%. The standard error of the mean was 4%. Eight consultants received a mark above 70%. There were three consultants above the standard error and three below. Five consultants received a grade 2 mark from two different trainees and two received a grade 1 mark. The consultant body was individually informed of its approval rating and ranking in the department



Conclusion This audit has been presented to the anaesthetic department. It provoked a great deal of discussion. We felt that the audit was valid and should be repeated at some time in the future. We did not make the standards we had set ourselves. The profile of teaching juniors has been raised and should improve as a result of this audit

We have set a benchmark for the other departments in the region

The audit will be used as part of our yearly appraisal process. The consultants of the department can now compare their abilities with other members of the department, consultants who were graded below the standard error of the mean understand that their teaching efforts need to be improved.