Introduction

Postgraduate deaneries play a vital role in supporting research into the way doctors and dentists are trained and developed in order to improve their practice, their working lives and the quality of care they provide to patients. In the North West, both deaneries are actively engaged with empirical research into priority areas in postgraduate medical and dental education and workforce development. All of this activity is carried out with a view to informing local practice and quality processes, as well as contributing to the national and international evidence base on medical and dental education. The rolling programme of research is closely tied to the deaneries’ strategic objectives, and the postgraduate deans, associate deans and directors work closely with specialist research staff on all the R&D initiatives.

The research covers the whole spectrum of deanery activity, encompassing all aspects of Foundation and Specialty training, as well as the training that is commissioned and provided for trainers, educational supervisors and educational leaders in order to meet the GMC standards for training. The collaborative research team also provides expert advice to medical educators and trainees who are engaged in deanery-related education research as part of the strategic objective to develop the educator workforce.

The primary work streams currently being managed or supported by the teams are set out in the following pages. Section A sets out the work of the Evidence-based Practice Research Centre at Edge Hill University that is supported and/or funded by Mersey Deanery. Information provided here relates only to deanery work and does not include information on the various other academic and management activities with which the senior lecturers are engaged. Section B sets out the research and development activity of the North Western Deanery’s R&D team, including the work conducted under its aegis by related project managers. This section also includes information on other teaching, supervision, advisory, data management and research governance activities which are part of individual team member’s roles.

Further details of the deaneries’ research programme may be obtained from:

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Section A

Research activity of
Evidence-based Practice Research Centre, Edge Hill University
(supported / funded by Mersey Deanery)
A1. **Investigation into the training needs and career intentions of SAS doctors in one deanery** (JM Brown, J Kirton, R Clarke, NJ Shaw)

This study explores the career intentions and training needs of Staff Grade and Associate Specialist (SAS doctors) to inform those managing and facilitating their Continued Professional Development. Phase 1, a questionnaire survey to all SAS doctors in Mersey, was completed in June 2010. A journal article is currently under peer review with the *Postgraduate Medical Journal*. Phase 2, semi-structured interviews with 20 SAS doctors will be completed and written up and submitted for publication by April 2011.

Start date: May 2009       End date: April 2011

A2. **Investigation into the use of Multi Source Feedback (MSF) as a work based assessment tool in one deanery** (JM Brown, K Lowe, J Fillingham, M Bamforth, R Jones, NJ Shaw)

This mixed methods study explores the usefulness of Multi Source Feedback (MSF) as a performance assessment tool in postgraduate medical education. The quantitative phase will compare the grouped scores of hand chosen MSF assessors against the grouped scores of Clinical Supervisor MSF assessors. This study requires forty Specialist trainees to consent to take part in order for statistical tests to be undertaken. Recruitment is still under way. The qualitative phase involves open-ended and semi-structured interviews with MSF assessors (from different health professions) and trainees.

Start date: January 2010    End date: April 2011 (this may have to be extended due to recruitment issues)

A3. **Evaluation of the work based assessment tools in dental foundation training** (B Grieveson, J Kirton, C Balmer, N Palmer)

This questionnaire survey aims to evaluate work based assessment tools in dental foundation training.

Start date: September 2009

End date: Phase 1 complete and journal article currently under peer review.

Phase 2: awaiting confirmation to expand the study nationally to all deaneries.
A4. **Working as a newly appointed consultant: an investigation into the transition from Specialist Registrar to Hospital Consultant from the perspective of Consultants between three and four years into first appointment** (JM Brown, D Graham, NJ Shaw)

This is a follow up mixed methods study from one conducted three years ago.


It explores the perspectives of Hospital Consultants on completing the transition from Specialist Training. This develops further work conducted in Mersey on career transitions and choices. Brown was commissioned in 2010 by the British Medical Journal to write an editorial on the durability of medical career choices:

- **Brown JM** (2010) The durability of early career choices. *BMJ* 2010; 341: c3500 [http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/bmj.c3500?ijkey=ThgaQIRljATTuho&keytype=ref](http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/bmj.c3500?ijkey=ThgaQIRljATTuho&keytype=ref)

Questionnaire to be distributed in December 2010 to 45 Consultants in Mersey that fit the inclusion criteria. Semi-structured interviews to be undertaken in early 2011.

Start date: October 2010   End date: March 2011

A5. **Analysis of application scores achieved by entrants to the local Foundation Programme: does gender play a part?** (I Ryland, D Bowen-Jones)

Data analysis is now complete. Draft paper completed ahead of journal submission.

Start date: May 2010   End date: Ongoing

A6. **Work-based assessments in the Foundation Programme: who does the assessing?** (I Ryland, C Dainty)

Draft paper being developed.

Start date: July 2010   End date: Ongoing
A7.  **Systematic review; the multimedia approach for teaching in postgraduate medical education** (I Ryland, NJ Shaw, M Maden)

Start date: August 2010   End date: Ongoing

A8.  **Do Multiple applications for training posts require additional feedback and career advice?** (From Deanery Equality & Diversity Report) (I Ryland, G Lamont)

Start date: September 2010   End date: Ongoing

A9.  **Gathering the perceptions of Paediatric SpRS on the use of Case-Based Discussions** (F Mehta, JM Brown, NJ Shaw)

The aim of this study is to explore trainee’s perceptions of the educational value of feedback given in case based discussions. All 32 ST1 and ST2s in Paediatrics in the Mersey Deanery were invited to take part in this study that involved an online survey and semi-structured interviews. This study was presented as an oral paper at the Association for Medical Education in Europe Annual Conference in Glasgow in September 2010.

- Mehta FS, Brown JM, Shaw NJ (2010) Trainees’ perceptions of the educational value of feedback given in case based discussion assessments, AMEE Annual Conference, Association for Medical Education in Europe, Glasgow, AMEE

A paper is currently under journal peer review.

Start date: September 2009   End date: April 2011

A10.  **Guideline Study – The influence of learning styles on the use and perceived value of clinical guidelines** (I Ryland, NJ Shaw)

Two papers are under construction to be submitted to peer reviewed journals.

Timescale: ongoing.
A11. How well are graduates prepared for practice when measured against the latest GMC recommendations? (JM Brown, S Watmough, MG Cherry, Fewtrell, DR Graham, H O’Sullivan, NJ Shaw)

This paper investigates the perspectives of Mersey Deanery Foundation Programme doctors and their Educational Supervisors on the preparedness of Liverpool graduates for professional practice and how the curriculum facilitated the development of these skills. This collaborative study with the Centre for Developing Professionalism at University of Liverpool was presented as an oral paper at the Association for Medical Education in Europe Annual Conference in Glasgow in September 2010.


A journal article was published in Hospital Medicine in 2010.


Start date: November 2008   End date: May 2010

A12. Run through trainees engagement with reflective practice in the e-portfolio (H McNeill, JM Brown, NJ Shaw)

This study explores how specialist doctors engage in reflective practice and in particular how they utilize their learning portfolio to document evidence of this. Thirty participants consented to take part in the study. A modified Delphi technique was used to develop a grading system to score levels of reflection. Transcripts of the reflective entries were then analysed using a qualitative approach which involved coding and categorising the data. A paper was presented at the Association for Medical Education in Europe Annual Conference in Prague in September 2009. A journal article was published in 2010 in the Advances in Health Science Education Journal.


A second paper is currently in development and will be submitted in early 2011.

Start date: October 2008   End date: May 2010 (although as explained write up of 2nd paper continues)
A13. Systematic Review: What Features of Educational Interventions Lead to Compliance with Best Practice for Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Professionals within Acute Care? (MG Cherry, JM Brown, T Neal, NJ Shaw)

This is the second Best Evidence in Medical Education BEME systematic review undertaken by Cherry, Brown, Neal and Shaw. The first BEME review was published in Medical Teacher in 2010 (BEME Guide No 15).

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/med/beme/reviews/published/cherry/


The objective of this second review is to determine individual features of educational interventions that impact on compliance in hand hygiene by healthcare professionals. To evaluate this, we looked at changes in infection control behaviour of healthcare professionals, and considered changes in the clinical welfare of patients involved and in service delivery (where appropriate), provided they could be related directly to the delivery method of the educational intervention. We considered all types of educational intervention involving healthcare professionals responsible for hand hygiene. This second review will be submitted to BEME/Medical Teacher in December 2010 after addressing initial reviewers’ comments.

Start date: January 2009  End date: December 2010

A14. An investigation to identify career advice and support provision across NHS Trusts in one deanery (A Thomson, JM Brown)

This scoping exercise gathered data from all Trusts in Mersey related to the career advice and support provided for school leavers through to GP/Consultants. This study was presented by A Thomson as a poster at the Association for Medical Education in Europe Annual Conference in Glasgow in September 2010.

Start date: July 2009  End date: April 2010
Learning from experience: a critical incident study of the reasons given by specialist trainees in general practice and hospital medicine for changing selected aspects of clinical practice (JM Brown, M Patel, J Howard, MG Cherry, NJ Shaw)

The aims of this study were to investigate the educational influences that effect change in Specialist Trainees’ clinical practice and identify any differences in approach to learning between Primary and Secondary doctors. All 105 General Practice registrars and 100 first year Specialist Registrars in Mersey Deanery were given the opportunity to take part in the study. There were three data collection phases: 3 focus groups, a questionnaire and 13 semi-structured interviews. This paper is currently under review with Education for Primary Care after addressing initial comments made by reviewers after first submission.

This study was started and completed before April 2009.

Advisory Work

JB is a reviewer for the British Medical Journal, Medical Education, Academic Medicine, Medical Teacher, British Journal of Hospital Medicine, and the Postgraduate Medical Journal.

IR is a reviewer for Medical Education Journal and the British Medical Journal
Research activity of
North Western Deanery R&D Team
B1. **A revalidation primer** (S Agius, R Baron)

This UKCEA-funded study had three components: (i) a desk-based review of existing revalidation systems in other countries; (ii) a review of the UK literature to identify enablers for revalidation; and (iii) a qualitative exploration of the perceptions of a sample of medical educators in General Practice drawn from across the UK with regard to the introduction of revalidation in General Practice. The study was presented at the UKCEA conference and the final report released in August 2010:


The first of two papers based on the study has been drafted and is scheduled to be submitted to *Education for Primary Care* in mid-December 2010.

Start date: September 2008          End date: August 2010

B2. **Evaluation of an extended training pilot in General Practice (GPST45)** (S Agius, A Stylianou, B Lewis, B Kirk)

An evaluation of a two-year pilot programme of extended training in General Practice, using qualitative methods to explore expectations and experiences of trainees, educational supervisors, lead educators and other stakeholders, and quantitative methods to devise, amongst other data collection instruments, a measure of confidence and preparedness for independent practice. Preliminary work was presented at the Academy of Medical Educators annual conference in 2010. The evaluation has been extended to encompass a 2nd Cumbria-based cohort.

In the qualitative component, led by SA, baseline interview data has been collected for all trainees in both cohorts, and end of Yr 4 data from trainees and educational supervisors in the 1st cohort. Interviews with a control group of newly-qualified GPs and lead educators have also been conducted. Collected data currently are being analysed in readiness for a planned qualitative publication on ST4, which should be ready for submission by March 2011. Interviews with PCT managers and national figures was delayed due to the political instability. AS will conduct these interviews early in 2011. With regard to the quantitative component, led by AS, the 3rd questionnaire has been piloted and will be finalised and sent to all trainees in 01/11. The supervisors’ questionnaire data and a focus group with supervisors will inform this step further. The first two questionnaires were also sent to the Cumbria group. The final instrument will be refined with GPs with at least 5 years of experience as independent practitioners (March 2011). The questionnaire will be finalised and repeated measurements of all questionnaires will take place in 2011. For the initial quantitative publication, AS is currently working on a manuscript for a theoretical paradigm of confidence development in general practice. The exploration is experimental and whether or not ‘raw’ data will be utilised to ‘test’ the theoretical paradigm remains a working question.

Start date: August 2009          End date: September 2012
B3. **Evaluation of Dental Foundation Pilot** (S Agius, N Taylor)

An online qualitative questionnaire has been developed and sent as an embedded link within an email invitation to all Foundation trainees (DF1, DF2 and 2 year integrated) in the North Western Deanery. The survey is intended to capture expectations and experiences of training. A report on these results should be available in March 2011. A modified version of the questionnaire will be used annually to capture trainee’s experiences and perspectives. Interviews with policy-makers, managers and administrators connected with the establishment of the Foundation programme are ongoing. Interviews with a small sample of trainers will be conducted over the next 6-8 weeks. The data drawn from these interviews, combined with information taken from the records of trainer meetings, will be used to develop an online questionnaire which will be administered in July 2011 to capture trainers’ experience of the 1st year of the Foundation programme. A modified version of the questionnaire will be administered in subsequent years. A full report on the first operational year of the Foundation programme is planned for late summer 2011. In the meantime, key findings which may inform the ongoing decision-making processes of the deanery will be documented and fed back to the Foundation steering committee over the coming months.

Start date: August 2010   End date: August 2012

B4. **Attitudes towards Generic Skills training in Foundation** (C Breen, S Agius, P Baker)

The purpose of this qualitative study is to find out opinions of Foundation Year 1 (FY1) doctors on the methods of delivery of their generic skills teaching. This study is intended to provide evidence as to which methods medical students and junior doctors prefer; whether some methods provide a richer learning experience than others, and relationship between supportive learning environment and better recognition of professional development. The sample was drawn from doctors in Foundation training, and the hospital consultants responsible for organising their training, in the North West Deanery. Focus groups have been held with FY1 trainees from a random sample of 3 NHS Acute Trusts and interviews have been conducted with a random sample of 6 Foundation Programme Directors. Data are currently being analysed and a paper will be prepared in early 2011.

Start date: May 2010   End date: May 2011

B5. **Equality and diversity in postgraduate medical training: a systematic literature review** (S Agius)

A review of literature on equality and diversity (E&D) issues relating to postgraduate medical training is planned for 2011. The parameters of the review are currently being defined. The study is intended to inform the work of North Western Deanery’s E&D Committee as well as contribute to the inter/national evidence base.

Start date: December 2010   End date: December 2011

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B6. **CPD of hospital-based medical educators** (S Agius, K Duffy, A Jones, A Garden, J Hayden)

A study based on in-depth qualitative interviews with 18 hospital-based medical educators, exploring how they might be better supported and developed in their educational role, has been completed. The results were used to inform the 2009 commissioning brief for the Postgraduate Certificate in Workplace-Based Postgraduate Medical Education delivered in partnership with Edge Hill University. The first of two papers based on the study was submitted to *Medical Education* in early December 2010. The second paper will be completed by Christmas.

Start date: May 2008  End date: May 2010

B7. **Deanery-wide survey of the occurrence of educational appraisal for hospital-based medical educators** (S Agius, A Jones, K Duffy, D Ahearn, S Bishop)

An online survey was developed and administered to all consultants in the North Western Deanery to investigate the occurrence of educational appraisal within that group. Over 600 completed questionnaires (a 20% response rate, similar to that achieved by the national PMETB educator survey) were received and the data have been presented at a number of deanery meetings. A report was produced in July 2010, and a related paper is being drafted with the assistance of two Medical Education Fellows to develop their writing skills.

Start date: September 2009  End date: May 2010

B8. **Investigating the role of the Director of Medical Education (DME)** (K Duffy, S Agius, A Jones, J Miles)

This study, which is in the early planning stage, will initially involve qualitative interviews with current and recent DMEs in order to understand the key features, responsibilities, attributes and relationships to better inform support for the role and future recruitment, succession planning and onward career progression. It will build upon work carried out by the deanery towards achieving the GMC trainer standards. A secondary stage will involve interviews with Chief Executives and other key Trust personnel. The pivotal role played by DMEs, coupled with the apparent recruitment problems and lack of effective succession planning suggests that investigating the attributes, relationships and key issues facing these post holders will be beneficial. The project has been approved in principle by the Executive Committee and the protocol is currently being refined.

Start date: January 2011  End date: (1st phase) January 2012
The original “Doctors’ Career and Retirement Choices” study was a five-year piece of research conducted between 2003 and 2008. As part of this, a sample of 1993-1996 medical graduates was recruited from The University of Manchester. Interviews took place, followed by a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire asked participants if they would be happy to be followed-up in the future. 164 (70.1%) of the original 234 respondents agreed and were subsequently surveyed in 2010, following a 5-year interval. This follow-up study aims to provide comparative data with the original, investigating retention of a North West cohort of doctors in training, both in the region and the profession. The results are currently being analysed and a Final Report is due to be released in early 2011. The results of the original trainee study were published in the BMJ in 2009. It is hoped that a further article on the follow-up study will be accepted by the journal.

- Tregoning C, Hayden J, Miles J. How to make career choices. BMJ Careers 2009; doi:10.1136/bmj.b72

Start date: March 2010       End date: March 2011

This project is being conducted by Dr Fiona Donnelly, a Medical Leadership Trainee and trainee psychiatrist, under the supervision of CT. The need for this work was identified as a result of the above “Doctors’ Career & Retirement Choices” study. The study found that trainees often experience difficulties in balancing their professional and parenting roles and that this topic warranted further investigation. Hence work has now begun to establish this project, with background literature searches being performed, an application for ethical approval being completed for submission and participant’ questions drafted. A group of approximately 25 trainees, both male and female, will be recruited and interviewed in 2011. Objectives include to clarify the main issues around parenting amongst trainee doctors in the North West region, investigate how they can be addressed and thus how the experience of trainees can be improved, and to evaluate how The North Western Deanery can implement the recommendations of the Department of Health document (2009): Women doctors: making a difference.

It is hoped that the study will run to an approximate 12 month time frame and near completion towards the end of 2011. A project poster was recently presented at the deanery’s conference in September, and upon completion of the project a final report will be produced and journal articles written for publication.

Start date: November 2010       End date: November 2011
B11. **Developing a training session on Motivational Interviewing for Foundation trainees** (W Thornton, C Tregoning, J Hayden)

This study is being conducted by Wayne Thornton, a Medical Education Fellow and trainee paediatrician, under the supervision of CT. Work this has only very recently started. A Project Plan is being drafted and background investigative work carried out. The aim of this project is to develop a training session to equip Foundation Trainees in the Motivational Interviewing of patients. It is intended that a “Train the Trainers” workshop will be produced and delivered to Foundation Tutors, who will then pass on the training themselves to trainees. Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a counselling technique used to promote behaviour change. It aims to decrease a patient’s unwillingness and increase their readiness to change to more health-promoting behaviours. This is done through demonstrating empathy with the patient and empowering them with the confidence to take responsibility for their own change. Again, a project poster was presented at the recent deanery conference in September, and upon completion of the project a final report will be produced and journal articles written for publication.

Start date: December 2010   End date: December 2011

B12. **Measuring life events as an influence upon trainee doctors’ career choices** (C Tregoning, J Hayden)

This research has arisen as an outcome of the ‘Doctors’ Career and Retirement Choices’ study. The study focused upon many work-related influences on career choices. However, it became clear that career decisions are frequently affected by factors more attributable to a doctor’s personal rather than working life and hence further work into this is needed. Objectives include: to investigate the life events which most frequently affect a trainee’s career decisions, develop and validate a life events measure specific to doctors, and evaluate how The North Western Deanery and wider NHS can implement the new measure to the best advantage of medical trainees. This project is also at an early stage, with background literature searches being begun. A life events measure is in the process of being drafted and work looking at the validation process of the tool has started.

As with the previous two projects, a poster was taken to the recent deanery conference in September. Likewise, a final report will be produced and journal articles are intended to be written for publication. Additionally, the resulting tool will be available for use. Work on this project is likely to take place until the end of 2011 and possibly into 2012.

Start date: May 2010   End date: May 2012
B13. **Doctors’ career and retirement choices: 2nd cohort** (C Tregoning, J Hayden)

It is anticipated that in 2011 the original study will be replicated using a more recent cohort. The original study used not only a group of University of Manchester medical graduates but also recruited a sample of 300 participants who were North West hospital Consultants over the age of 55 and so eligible for early retirement. Thus, the research considered the career choices of doctors at both the early and late stages of the medical career spectrum. The objective of repeating the study would be to identify whether factors influencing career choices remain the same several years on, given the ever-changing NHS climate. Also, how retention in the North West region and medical profession compare now with 2005. The results of the work would produce longitudinal data for dissemination, publication and presentation.

Start date: January 2011  End date: January 2012

B14. **Non medical educators project** (A Stylianou, R Wallworth)

This study attempts to identify the important factors associated with the professional capacity, competence and confidence development of non-medical educators. The outcomes are expected to inform the development of the course that is currently in operation at the North Western Deanery. Preliminary parameter estimates have been derived based on “feedback assessment forms” from the recent course (March 2009). The magnitude of effect of the identified factors on educational outcomes will depend on the comparison with the 2010 data (expected).

More specifically, we aim to address issues related to the extent to which the course meets learning needs and goals of non-medical educators. Furthermore, we aim to identify how influential certain factors may be in terms of strengthening credibility and acceptance of non-medical educators in established educational schemes and communities.

A focus group to inform qualitative analysis and multilevel modeling will take place in 2011.

Start date: March 2010  End date: April 2011
B15. **Higher Professional Education (HPE) course assessment** (A Stylianou)

Continuing professional education has increasingly become recognised as an essential part of a GP’s working life. The Higher Professional Education course offers the opportunity to general practitioners to identify areas of potential deficiency in clinical knowledge and service provision, and, also, to indicate possible ways to rectify them. The quality of the course is currently being evaluated following a comparative analysis between a group of GPs who participated in the course, and a group of GPs with the same experience who did not participate. The primary objective of the evaluation is to test whether or not certain expectations of the participants were eventually fulfilled. The generated outcomes will be utilised to derive some policy recommendations in terms of the course’s impact on performance.

In addition to that, the evaluation aims to demonstrate the measurable benefits of the course itself in terms of competency and measured learning outcomes. This is expected to guide its further development. Two structured questionnaires were introduced in order to carry out the evaluation. The data analysis for the first questionnaire has already been done. Some interesting outcomes were derived.

Start date: March 2010  
End date: March 2011

B16. **Professional education and development (PED) course** (A Stylianou, R Baron)

The PED is a more structured, academically-driven course that aims to offer a broad set of knowledge and skills on a number of topics supported by supervisory guidance and mentoring. The main aim is to assist participants in identifying training and learning needs (gaps), and equip them with the necessary skills to satisfy these needs, based on their personal learning plan and future career goals. The course covers a much broader spectrum of topics in comparison to the HPE course, and it includes a significant piece of written work. It also offers opportunities to the participants to share their experiences in a constructive way.

This study’s focus is the derivation of pre- and post- course outcomes in order to further inform its development. This is part of the overall course-assessment that is currently under way with the main objective to investigate its content, quality and delivery. Furthermore, the assessment aims to generate measurable outcomes associated with the course, and the extent to which the participants’ expectations were fulfilled. A pilot assessment questionnaire has already provided good quality data. Preliminary discussion about the course has revealed its potential for further improvement. Comparisons with the HPE course were very informative. The final questionnaire will be sent out to the last cohort in January 2011.

Start date: September 2010  
End date: June 2011
B17. **nMRCGP evaluation** (A Stylianou, B Kirk, R Wallworth)

The MRCGP project aims to present an “early detection tool” of trainees at significant risk of MRCGP failure. The development of the tool has followed a gradual development based on historical data associated with underperformance, a screening assessment form, and the GP director’s feedback. Quantitative analysis has demonstrated high specificity and adequate sensitivity of this diagnostic tool. The study follows a sequential approach with a longitudinal analysis that is expected to take place in February 2011. The current outcomes are currently being written for publication. The political climate is good for this kind of projects, and for this reason the evaluation was given priority. A new data collection phase was initiated in October 2010 in order to inform the longitudinal analysis of this project.

Start date: October 2010    End date (1st phase): December 2010/January 2011
(2nd phase): March 2011

B18. **Virtual learning research** (A Stylianou)

The important of VLC has been vital for the GPST4-5 learning aspects. However, the evaluation segment was not benefitted much from the VLC. This is primarily related to the level of difficulty associated with the newly-introduced contextual assessments that required one-to-one administration. The possibility for further moodle utilisation may become more relevant in 2011 when repeated measurement will be applied.

The primary care medical educator has been advised to think about the possibility of validating the online learning system for the GPST4-5 pilot programme (extended specialty training) after completion. The potential of deriving a validated online measure is a demanding task, but could have a significant value.

Start/end dates: TBC (work in development)

B19. **Foundation programme assessment** (P Baker, A Stylianou)

This project is led by Professor Paul Baker. The main idea was the introduction of a quality assessment questionnaire of the foundation programme. The modification of an existing survey has already been discussed in details with a descriptive recommendation and action plan. There are a number of sensitive issues associated with this project such as the preference elicitation techniques, conflict of interests, the genuine perspectives of the trainees, potential ethical issues (confidentiality), the trainee-trainer relationship, etc. The finalisation of the new quality assessment questionnaire is expected to provide evidence associated with the potential problems of the foundation training, and inform policy recommendations.

Start/end date: TBC
B20. **MRCP Performance project** (A Stylianou, B Coward)

In 2007, the MRCP (UK) central office research team worked with the US National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) in order to standardise the MRCP scoring system, and ensure that comparisons across various cohorts of exam-takers is possible. Although there is evidence supporting the importance of the quality of education in medical schools and pre-admission qualification, we do not know the exact impact of those factors on the final exam-outcome. A literature review has identified additional factors that may be influencing exam-performance such as the quality of teaching and training, the quality of supervision, and even the number of examiners. The study’s main objective is the identification and prioritisation of factors influencing MRCP performance. Furthermore, the study aims to define the exact causal relationship (and the magnitude of effects) of all identified factors with the exam-outcome.

Start/end date: TBC

B21. **Medical Education Fellowship (MEF) and medical education research methods** (A Stylianou)

The study’s main objective is the quantitative evaluation of the fellows’ training and performance in research methods in order to derive conclusions associated with the learning capacity of the fellowship. Outcomes are associated with the fellows’ statistical skills and one-to-one supervision on specific research tasks. The study is quantitative in nature and special attention is being given to the fellows’ expectations from their projects in combination with their potential for professional development in pursuing medical education research.

Start date: November 2010     End date: June 2011.

B22. **Developing a model ARCP educational supervisors’ report** (G Phazey, S Agius, K Duffy, B Kirk, J Adams)

In 2009, an ARCP study was devised but commencement has been delayed due to work pressures. The study will explore the functionality of the educational supervisor’s report. The Deanery did some preliminary work on this, and nationally some work has developed around this area. There will be scope to carry out this work in the coming year, to establish a model educational supervisor’s report. This will involve key stakeholders looking into existing report templates online and commenting on their features. This would then be reviewed and information would be fed into a second round of review and commenting. The aim would be to produce a template that specialty schools could utilise within the North Western Deanery. A paper based on the study should be ready for publication in October 2011.

Start date: August 2009     End date: August 2011

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B23. **Evaluation of the Medical Education Fellowship scheme** (G Phazey, S Agius, A Stylianou, A Jones)

The Medical Education Fellowships were a new venture for the deanery in 2009. 8 Medical Education Fellows were recruited to the 2 year programme in 2009. A second cohort has also been recruited in 2010. As part of the quality monitoring and improvement for the fellowships, a structured evaluation was carried out. Baseline data were collected from the initial cohort when they started the fellowships in 2009. In 2010, at the end of their first year, the initial cohort was interviewed to assess the impact of the scheme on their educator development. Qualitative interviews were carried out with each MEF and data were analysed for recurring themes and discourses.

The evaluation was key to decisions as to whether the MEF scheme should continue in 2011, and whether a new cohort could be recruited. The executive committee also requested that this be publicised more widely across the SHA as a demonstration of good practice at a minimal cost to the SHA. A publication based on the interview data, contextualised within the deanery’s work on developing medical educators, is currently being drafted and is expected to be ready for submission to Medical Education in February 2011. Evaluation will remain continuous to ensure that the fellowships remain effective in developing educational leaders of the future.

Start date: September 2009   End date: September 2011

B24. **The Continuing Professional Development of SAS Doctors** (G Phazey, S Agius, M Shelly, J Hayden)

Initially work was carried out to assess SAS doctors’ perceptions of their development needs and their ideas about professional development. Both qualitative and quantitative work was carried out across 2009 and is now being compiled into a number of papers which will be ready for submission before January 2011. A paper on the employment relationships of SAS doctors and their employers and the wider NHS, focusing on the SAS doctors’ psychological contract with their employer, has been completed and will be submitted for publication in December 2010. A descriptive quantitative piece is also being compiled examining the results of a questionnaire issued to SAS doctors in 2009. This focuses on the development needs of SAS doctors and the support they receive at present in relation to their professional development. This will be ready for submission by the end of January 2011.

Some qualitative work will be carried out with the SAS Trust Leads and other stakeholders in the SAS project, as part of a wider programme evaluation for the SAS project. A follow up quantitative study looking at the impact of SAS initiatives on the wider SASG will also be initiated in 2011.

Start date: September 2008   End date: September 2011
B.25  **Performance research group** (to involve both deanery R&D teams)

Plans to develop a series of systematic reviews based on the overarching theme of performance are advancing. Selection criteria and objectives have been discussed at a recent meeting and a formal protocol is being developed for discussion at the December R&D meeting. The first phase of work will focus on defining performance.

Start date: September 2010  End date (first phase): November 2011

B26.  **Evaluation of the pilot Medical Leadership Programme** (A Brockbank, S Agius, J Hayden)

The North Western Deanery’s Medical Leadership Programme (MLP) for doctors in postgraduate specialist training commenced as a pilot in 2008. The MLP aims to develop doctors with the potential to fast-track into future leadership positions and/or leadership roles. Additional aims were to a) fully integrate leadership into clinical training; b) integrate theory with practice; c) accredit the programme to Masters Level and d) facilitate multidisciplinary learning with the MLTs and the NHS Graduate Management Trainees. The evaluation of the programme focused on investigating the expectations and experiences of all aims and collates outcomes for all aims and leadership development in general. The evaluation of the initial 2008 MLP cohort has resulted in the following outcomes to date: a recruitment evaluation report, a year one evaluation report, and an interim outcomes evaluation report. End of year two data is to be collected in December 2010. 3 papers planned for 2011 (i) Joint working MLTs/GMTs (BMJ), (ii) Realities of Medical Leadership Career Objectives and (iii) a Case study of experience from MLT Perspective.

A strategy is also being developed for ongoing evaluation of the programme. For the 2010 MLP cohort, baseline data has been collected. With regard to embedding the MLCF 2010, statistical and impact evaluation have been completed. Model of integrated leadership development (Poster) and medical leadership development tools were presented at the Academy of Medical Educators Conference in January 2010. Medical Leadership Development Tools are being used more widely than the programme. Starting to be used by trainees wider than the programme and have been taken up by certain specialties. Medical Leadership model, experience and learning presented at many national and regional conferences and events. Continual evaluation of all programmes and events as well as plans to produce papers from findings. MBTI – staff and team development. Presentations on MBTI and Leadership.

Start date: May 2008  End date: ongoing
Teaching, supervision and advisory work

Deanery Psychologists’ Research Group (C Tregoning, G Phazey, A Brockbank)

The Deanery Psychologists’ Research Group was established by CT, a chartered health psychologist, and comprises colleagues with Masters and BSc degrees in Psychology. Additionally, members are qualified in psychometric testing. The group was set up with the aims of supporting each other as lone psychologists working within a medical education environment, contributing a psychological perspective to each other’s work and by doing so to enrich it, and maintaining and strengthening knowledge of psychology. The group aims to disseminate its collective knowledge and work through writing journal articles and delivering “Lunch & Learn” training sessions for deanery and SHA staff. The current program of sessions is running from November 2010 to March 2011 and includes change management, stress management and assertiveness. The change workshop has already taken place and feedback was positive. There were further requests for more workshops to be provided so the group has now arranged some further dates. Members of the group are also available as a resource to other colleagues who may benefit from support when carrying out psychology-related projects. CT will be running training sessions for the wider SHA, as part of the HR department’s move to provide more training in-house. Discussions with the HR manager to identify topics which can be of most use are underway and are likely to be psychology-based. The SHA Mentoring Scheme has asked for members to contribute a chapter to a book they’re compiling on mentoring. CT has substantial experience of mentoring, both as mentee and mentor, and has been asked to write a chapter for the book, which is currently being drafted.

Research methods (A Stylianou, S Agius)

AS has commissioned and co-delivered bespoke training sessions in quantitative research methods for the entire 1st cohort of MEFs and continues to provide follow-up support. He is also the primary supervisor for one of the 2nd cohort MEFs.

SA has devised and taught a number of qualitative research methods workshops for doctors in training in 2010. More are planned for the coming year.

Writing for publication (S Agius)

‘Writing for Publication’ workshops have been devised and led by SA for associate directors, section heads, and medical educators from the wider deanery, including at the annual deanery conference during 2010. Further workshops will be held in 2011 at the academic clinical fellows’ conference to be hosted by Manchester University, and the annual deanery SAS conference.

External examining (S Agius)

SA is an external examiner for the University of Leeds’ M.Ed. in Clinical Education.

Peer review (S Agius)

SA is a peer reviewer for Medical Education.
Data management

Research collaboration with the quality, information and education teams (S Agius, A Stylianou)

A collaborative group has been established to share knowledge and expertise in relation to data collection and analysis issues across key deanery sections. As an example, AS is currently working with Fiona Ball on a project to review the quality of data held on the Intrepid database which relates to all Foundation and hospital specialty trainees, excluding GP and Dentistry. AS is providing statistical supervision in developing a strategy which will allow FB to generate reliable results for the whole population of trainees by only checking the minimum required sample size.

Research governance

Research governance (S Agius, R Marland)

The R&D Committee, administered by the North Western Deanery, has continued its responsibility for approving all research activity falling within its jurisdiction across the North West Strategic Health Authority. The process of granting SHA Organisational Approval is managed by SA and administered by Rebecca Marland, with each application being considered for approval or rejection by at least two committee members. All approvals are reported to the full committee which normally meets twice a year.

Developing the Medical Educator workforce:
North Western Deanery Medical Education Fellowships

The North Western Deanery Medical Education Fellowship has been designed to facilitate the development of trainees who have a specific interest in medical education. The scheme aims to nurture the trainee’s interest and develop their skills and knowledge base through collaboration with and support from the North Western Deanery. There are currently 17 Medical Education Fellows (MEFs) in 2 cohorts within the scheme. 8 commenced in August 2009 and 9 in August 2010. Appointments are for an initial period of 1 year with a 2nd year subject to satisfactory progress. Successful MEFs undertake the fellowship alongside their current training commitments. No additional training time is allocated.

There are a number of elements to the Medical Education Fellowship, one of which is to undertake an educational project which will span at least the first year of the fellowship. This may be a collaborative deanery project alongside deanery colleagues, or it may be an educational project of the MEF’s own choice. Details of the MEF projects, many of which have been or continue to be supported and/or supervised by members of the deanery R&D team are given below:
### 2009 cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anja Weidmann:</th>
<th>Creation of an online learning and assessment tool for Dermatology Trainees to assess trainee knowledge about their learning needs and provide directed learning (GIM curriculum 2009)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Ahearn:</td>
<td>Identifying the factors influencing health or stress related trainee doctors’ absence from work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jonathan Bannard-Smith:</td>
<td>A project aiming to gain a consensus expert opinion on how to modify and develop ICM training in Northwest England and to use this information to assist STC (ICM) in improving the current training programme. [Jonathan has received the trainee's prize organised by the Association of North West Intensive Care Units (ANWICU) for this work. It was the first time the prize has ever been awarded for a piece of qualitative (rather than quantitative) research.]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lyndsey Highton:</td>
<td>Development of an online learning package for the emergency treatment of burns – available from the BMJ learning site. Aimed at Medical students, Foundation doctors, Emergency medicine doctors and nurses, General practitioners and primary care nurses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neel Halder:</td>
<td>Evaluating the portfolio as a learning tool – targeted at all psychiatry trainees within the North Western Deanery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phil Laws:</td>
<td>Audit of Dermatology training and FY1 confidence in the North Western Deanery: To assess FY1 knowledge and confidence and to identify areas of weakness in FY1 training. A paper has been submitted to the Journal of Clinical and Experimental Dermatology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophie Bishop:</td>
<td>Development of an e-learning package for Midwives: Epidural training package.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suzanna Gawne:</td>
<td>Investigating the expectations of newly qualified doctors – also looking at the expectations of other Healthcare professionals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2010 cohort

| Nick Carleton-Bland: | Introducing a half day learning package for neuro trainees and evaluate the use of this in improving skills in the procedure. |
| Tim Holzmann: | Simulation in improving Core Medical Trainees management of critical illness. |
| Vera Gotz: | Identification of specific areas of the curriculum where simulation can enhance ST training and CPD in acute medicine. Secondly to look at the importance of team working skills in patient safety. |
| Ricky Pal: | To introduce a mannequin based simulator for teaching an ENT procedure. To test trainee competence after utilising this method of training. |
| Alex Peel: | The production and evaluation of an e-learning site using Moodle for Medical Microbiology trainees |
| Liz O’Brien: | A project looking into how CMT 1 and 2 trainees’ careers are supported within the specialty, and how this can be improved. |
| Paul Barrow: | Surgical trainees feedback on educational supervision to provide a mechanism for feedback to supervisors and information for other trainees on the quality of their surgical placements. |
| Jonathan Schofield: | Trainee and trainer feedback about curriculum competencies in Diabetes. To improve delivery of the curriculum in this specialty. |
| Wayne Thornton: | Development of a Motivational Interviewing training session for foundation trainees. |