

How many anaesthetists and intensivists will we need in England in future? Can you help us answer this question?

Can you please spare 4-5 hours in February 2014 to join a virtual Delphi panel?

What does being on this panel entail?

We are looking for approximately 20 people with various perspectives on anaesthetics and intensive care medicine (including commissioners, providers/ employers, patients, anaesthetists, intensivists, trainees, educators, and other health professionals) to complete an online questionnaire TWICE within a three-week period. The questionnaire will take up to four hours to complete each time, due to the amount of thinking involved. The exercise will not involve any meetings and you will complete the online questionnaire at your convenience. Previous participants have found the process 'interesting' and 'stimulating'.

What's the context for this request?

Health Education England (HEE) and the Department of Health (DH) have commissioned the Centre for Workforce Intelligence (CfWI) to conduct a review of the anaesthetics and intensive care medicine workforce in England. This means we need to understand:

- What are the drivers of demand and supply for anaesthetists and intensivists for the next 20 years?
- Based on the current workforce (including trainees), and taking into account changing supply factors, what is the number of anaesthetists and intensivists England will have in 20 years' time?
- Taking into account the changing population and needs as well as future commissioner and provider intentions, what is the number of anaesthetists and intensivists England will need?
- What actions could the system take to minimise any imbalance between demand and supply?

We need a Delphi panel because the future is intrinsically uncertain. It's not possible to predict the exact number of anaesthetists and intensivists England will need, but with your help we will get it 'less wrong'.

What questions will I be asked? Do I need to be a deep expert in anaesthetics and intensive care medicine?

We are looking for people with various perspectives on anaesthetics and intensive care medicine, including but not limited to clinicians. We will ask how you think things would change in the next 20 years, in each of four future scenarios. So, compared to today:

- Do you think the POPULATION'S AVERAGE NEED for anaesthetists and intensivists' time would change, relative to today?
- As a result of changes in EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY, do you think the demand for anaesthetists and intensivists' time would change relative to today?
- Do you think the demand for anaesthetists and intensivists' time would change relative to today in order to deliver the COMMISSIONED LEVEL OF SERVICE in 2033?

- What do you think would be the AVERAGE PARTICIPATION RATE (full and part-time working) of anaesthetists and intensivists' by 2033, by gender?
- What do you think would be the AVERAGE RETIREMENT AGE of anaesthetists and intensivists' by 2033, by gender?

How will the Delphi panel's collective judgment be used by the CfWI? And what decisions will this review inform?

The CfWI is building a new model of demand and supply for anaesthetists and intensivists, using the data that currently exists within the system. However, simply projecting past demand and supply trends forward 20 years will not help decision-makers understand the impact of things that may change in the future. The Delphi panel's collective judgment will feed directly into our projections of expected demand and supply for a range of four future scenarios. Decision makers will be able to use our projections to inform training numbers and other commissioning decisions.

How will the process work and what feedback will I get?

For the first round of the Delphi panel exercise we will send you a small amount of information to read. We will summarise what we know about the workforce today, for example the extent to which anaesthetists and intensivists work part-time (both men and women). After round one – in which you'll say how you think things would change and why – we will feed back to you anonymously the panel's judgments and rationales. After round two – in which you'll consider whether to revise your judgments in the light of others' arguments – we will feed back to you the panel's median judgments. Later, once we've fed the median judgments into our model, we will share with you our range of projections of demand and supply.

We will credit the Delphi panel members in our report, but no judgments or rationales will ever be attributed to individuals. It's an anonymous process in which all perspectives receive equal consideration from the panel.

Thank you for considering our request. We hope you will be interested to take part.

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