

Trainee Update

Shape of Training Review: Oral evidence session 30th May 2013

The Shape of Training Review is looking at potential reforms to postgraduate medical education and training. The review website has information regarding the background to its introduction (<http://www.shapeoftraining.co.uk/review/1755.asp>). An expert advisory group, members of which are selected for their expertise rather than to represent any particular specialty or organisation, reports to the review chair Professor David Greenaway.

The work of the expert advisory group is focusing on five key themes:

- Workforce needs: generalism vs. specialism
- Breadth and scope of training
- Needs of the Health Service: tensions between service and training
- The needs of the patient
- Flexibility of training

The review initially collected written submissions of ideas and evidence. Nearly 400 submissions were received including ones from both GAT and the AAGBI (<http://www.aagbi.org/news/aagbi-and-gat-committee-respond-shape-training-review>). GAT was then invited to give oral evidence to further inform the review.

In order that we could ensure we represented the views of trainee members of the AAGBI we conducted a short survey at the beginning of May. Reassuringly 82% of respondents felt that anaesthetic training currently would prepare them sufficiently for work as a consultant. Three quarters thought the current training programme was about the right length, while 18% felt it was too long and 8% too short. Fifty per cent of respondents thought that a period of generalist training between foundation and specialty training would be useful, although 30% felt that if this was mandatory it would have an adverse impact on anaesthesia.

We also received 168 free text comments from which we were able to gauge some broad themes. When presenting our evidence we emphasised the positive comments and support respondents gave for the current anaesthetic training programme. Those who had begun training prior to MMC and had had the opportunity to work in other acute specialties before commencing anaesthesia invariably thought this was a useful experience. There was a lot of support for ACCS training programmes and concern that foundation training wasn't equipping doctors with the skills required to care for the sick patient. There was concern amongst trainees about the amount of service required in some units to the detriment of training. The review panel acknowledged the valuable role anaesthetists played supporting other specialties caring for acutely unwell patients.

Our overall impression of presenting to the review panel was positive, largely due to the survey results which we were able to use to inform the evidence. We are very grateful to all trainees who completed the survey. Collection of oral evidence continues until the end of June and the final report of the review is expected in September. To keep up to date with progress of the review sign up for newsletter updates by e-mailing ShapeOfTraining@gmc-uk.org.

