

# The Academy of Medical Educators

*Improving care through teaching excellence*



## **Educational supervisors in secondary care Stage 1 report Executive summary**

4<sup>th</sup> September 2009

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19/10/2009

# Executive summary

Recent developments in health service delivery are profoundly affecting postgraduate medical training, most notably in the acute sector. The reduction in junior doctor hours brought about by the European Working Time Directive, the disintegration of the traditional 'firm' structure and a reduction in patient exposure due to changes in care pathways have catalysed a need to safeguard and improve the quality of the supervision received by trainees.

Currently there is little national guidance on the competencies or training required of postgraduate medical supervisors and in March 2009, the Academy of Medical Educators was commissioned by the UK Departments of Health to help define training requirements for educational supervisors in secondary care and to explore options for their future accreditation and performance review. Stage 1 of the project has involved scoping the problem, identifying current practice and reviewing the literature. The output from this stage comprises this report which summarises the issues and findings from the literature and identifies current (and best) practice. Recommendations are made about how this work should be carried forward.

Evidence for the report was obtained from a number of sources through a variety of methods including a rapid systematic literature review, questionnaires, focus groups, survey data and input from a range of stakeholders. The purpose of the evidence collection was to scope the issues identified in Stage 1 of the project as well as to provide preparatory work for Stage 2.

The report identifies an international trend across all healthcare sectors towards formalising the role and training of work-based educators. In UK postgraduate medical education, the differing perceptions of the role and responsibilities of the educational supervisor across disciplines alongside a lack of consensus on responsibility for data collection and monitoring make it difficult to accurately quantify the scale of the issue. There is also considerable overlap with the role of

clinical supervisor on the ground. Considerable effort is already underway in defining and delivering training for supervisors in order to meet regulatory requirements and although there is some tacit consensus as to what this should entail, there is little formal guidance or indeed evidence to support the effectiveness of such training. A number of barriers and facilitatory factors are identified in relation to the introduction of training, accreditation and performance review which focus on a need for identified resources, and the recognition and reward of educational supervisors.

In Chapter 5, the report makes a number of recommendations supporting progression to Stage 2 of the project including the need to:

- Develop a national professional development framework for educational supervisors
- Produce guidance on the content and delivery of preparatory training
- Identify systems of recognition and reward
- Conduct an options appraisal for a process of accreditation and performance review
- Agree ongoing resourcing
- Commission further research

A set of principles has also been articulated to underpin subsequent development.