

**Analysis of Focus Group for Staff and Associate Grade doctors, held at Imperial Hotel, Russell Square on October 21<sup>st</sup> 2008**

**Summary**

- *Protected and dedicated study time allocated in Job Plan* is required to allow SASGs to engage in e-Learning and CPD activities. SASG doctors considered it vital that funding be allocated at an appropriate level to allow for what is regarded as an essential activity that benefits CPD.
- *Within each of the themes discussed, there is a wide range of abilities and skills*, ranging from awareness of e-Learning resources currently available to the level of training required to access and use these resources. The varied IT skills need to be taken into consideration before commissioning any new resources
- *Sub-speciality training is very important* as a proportion of SASGs run clinics in their own right; the level of the training also needs to be taken into consideration
- *It is important to raise awareness of what is already available*, including e-Learning courses and other resources e.g. Healthcare Libraries based in hospitals and postgraduate centres are available for use by all staff including SASGs
- *Mandatory and statutory training does not need to be a requirement*, as most Trusts have this covered
- *Skills in critical appraisal skills to ensure evidence based practice is an identified need* by all those who took part in this focus group

**1. To gauge and explore the qualitative aspects that SASGs need for training/CPD as part of a larger training needs survey**

a) Type of CPD. Impact upon clinical practice and career development (**Average rank: 1=essential**)

- Skills Update (e.g. ATLS)
- Knowledge Update
- Communication skills
- Clinical Audit
- Research
- Exam Techniques
- CESR
- Management Skills
- Teaching
- Interpersonal (e.g. MDT working, Leadership)
- Careers advice

b) Relevance of critical appraisal skills and ways of improving this (e.g. literature searches, Evidence Based Practice)

- Review and analysis of research; needs to be clinically relevant
- Journal Clubs with other SASG doctors
- Conducting evidence-based literature searches
- Writing research protocols (including study design and statistical analysis)
- Clinical Audit
- Attending specialist clinical meetings

c) Developing management responsibilities (**Average rank: 2=Desirable**)

- Leadership skills
- Conveying clinical information to commissioners
- Clinical Governance
- Managing complex cases
- Attending consultant meetings
- Supporting clinical staff

d) Role of leadership skills in enhancing role

- Allow to take more responsibility
- Aids career progression (e.g. consultant post)
- Enables working across disciplines
- Leading MDT
- Enabling independent practice

e) Upgrading/learning new clinical skills

- ATLS
- Specialty specific update (e.g. Mental Health Act, Laser Surgery, Neurodisability)
- Secondment to specialist centres (e.g. teaching hospitals)
- Simulation training

f) Enhancing communication skills

- Clinical teaching
- Organising and chairing meetings
- Breaking bad news
- Leading MDT

g) Statutory/Mandatory training

- General consensus is that this is adequately provided locally

h) Mentoring needs

- General enthusiasm for both having and becoming a mentor

i) Developing teaching and training skills (**Average rank: 2=Desirable**)

- Diploma in Medical Education
- Much enthusiasm for teaching and assessment at both UG and PG levels

## 2. Role of e-Learning

- Knowledge based rather than skills based
- Better awareness of what Royal Colleges and Deanery have to offer
- Flexibility (e.g. easily accessible and should be able to come back to module at a later time)
- Could use familiar portals, e.g. Doctors.net
- Some SASGs clearly already engaged with e-learning, but not the majority

**(a)** ICT Skills and issues for accessing e-Learning

- General popularity of web-based programmes
- Needs to be accessible from a variety of sites (e.g work and home)
- Need for some training (e.g. ECDL)
- Need for attending formal IT skills course
- Availability of PCs/laptops at work place

**(b)** Other issues regarding CPD and e-Learning

- Dedicated time within job plan (by far the commonest theme)
- Access to hardware (and software) at the workplace
- Access to sites available (some sites may block specific access)
- Different levels of training to assess progression
- Annual updates or as soon as evidence base changes
- Validated modules recognised as giving CPD points
- Should be cost free
- List of resources
- Training in how to use e-learning

**\*electronic Knowledge Access Team (e-KAT) December 2008\***