

IN PRACTICE

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STEP OUT TO CONSULTANT IN OBSTETRICS
AND GYNAECOLOGY COURSE

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Introduction: Preparing for Consultant courses often focus on what trainees think the challenges of stepping up will be [1]. A Training-Needs Analysis (TNA) suggested West Midlands O&G trainees felt writing business cases, understanding NHS finance and job planning would be their biggest challenges as new consultants where conflictingly, a survey of local consultants felt the challenges were managing on calls, difficult clinical cases and colleagues, and also job planning.

Methods: We devised a pilot course focusing on these latter elements, with a focus on really understanding the role of the consultant and the professional behaviours underpinning it, through a blend of faculty led workshops and simulated scenarios. The faculty leading the 9 candidates were well established consultants with a varied background of non-clinical interests, including research, QI and innovation, service development and postgraduate education. They were supported by SimWard faculty and an actor.

To support the aim of developing a deeper appreciation of the roles & responsibilities of a modern NHS consultant, we developed a novel session based on the idea of “speed dating”. This allowed the trainees to spend 10 minutes with each Consultant asking questions the candidates devised based on a short CV around their work life, areas of non-clinical interest and work-life balance.

Understanding job planning was brought to life through the Game of Job Planning, based on a board game with a set job plan, where the roll of a dice threw in work and life challenges to navigate.

The simulated sessions focused on managing challenging conversations with colleagues, handling complaints and managing logistical challenges of running on calls.

Results: A post course survey revealed 80% of candidates strongly agreed they now felt more confident about being a consultant. All candidates agreed or strongly agreed they understood the roles and responsibilities of a Consultant compared with only 37% prior to the course. Comments included “Great, interactive course in a non-judgmental supportive learning environment.... made me feel better prepared for a Consultant role (and excited).” “Fantastic job planning game...job planning never made sense until today”.

Discussion: The candidates were unanimous that this course is essential for ST7, as we were able to teach things which aren’t covered in the standard curriculum. The job planning game was the highest rated session, demonstrating gamification of a typically dull topic can bring it to life whilst also promoting deep understanding. The course is rolling out to all O&G ST7 in the West Midlands.

Ethics statement: Authors confirm that all relevant ethical standards for research conduct and dissemination have been met. The submitting author confirms that relevant ethical approval was granted, if applicable.

REFERENCES

1. BMJ Careers. Five areas new consultants might want to consider beefing up their skills in. 4 Nov 2019.

