

How can active involvement in Risk Management be facilitated for O&G trainees

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Objective

There are common misconceptions around Clinical Governance and Risk management that can develop as a trainee's career progresses.

Firstly, it seems the remit of managers or involvement begins 'once a Consultant' and secondly participation in an audit, completing incident reports and attending adhoc Governance meetings is sufficient experience and knowledge to 'tick the box' for training requirements.

Risk management is only one component under the umbrella of clinical governance, a framework for improving the quality of care and safeguarding high standards. It focuses on the processes, structures and culture within an organisation to identify opportunities to improve care and patient safety and manage and learn from adverse events. This can be misconstrued to be only a reactive process.

Involvement both in terms of the investigation and learning from incidents and the proactive element, including risk identification, evaluation, action planning and sharing/learning, should be an integral part of training and is valuable preparation for a Consultant post.

Design & Method

The O&G department developed a Risk Management registrar role-Clinical Governance Trainee (CGT).

CGT liaised directly with the Governance Team and key Clinical leads to identify opportunities for involvement proactively.

This included:

- attending and establishing links to specific meetings and groups such as the weekly incident review, Clinical Governance, Perinatal Mortality Review Tool (PMRT), Clinical Review meetings
- producing or updating guidelines
- baseline assessments against NICE guidelines
- produced weekly 'huddle' to ensure updates, changes in practice and lessons learnt could be cascaded to the department. This was shared electronically as well as twice daily at clinical handovers
- Attending RCA (route cause analysis) training

Results

The role provided valuable experience of the processes and importance of risk management culture. The experience includes the practical framework of how national policies and procedures impact locally, how they can be used to improve the quality of patient care and safety proactively, and the process of investigating and learning lessons from adverse events.

Conclusion

Early introduction of trainees to risk management is a good investment, and proactive engagement provides important experience and benefits. It should be integral to the NHS' definition of quality in healthcare, alongside effectiveness and patient experience. It is at the heart of ensuring patient safety and providing the best quality care, which is the responsibility of all clinicians, not only the department, regardless of grade or level of training. This practice will be in synergy with the NHS Patient Safety Strategy- Safer culture, safer systems, safer patients.