

Providing better prepared, more confident trainees after a period of absence from work.

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Introduction

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges produced guidance in April 2012¹ to support doctors on their return to work (RTW) after a period of absence. This was followed by the Royal College of Anaesthetists' document in May 2012².

In 2013, the North West School of Anaesthesia (NWSOA) introduced a Return To Work programme (RTWP) to support all anaesthetic trainees who had been away from anaesthesia for any reason for a period of 6 months or more. Amongst the programme's recommendations are:

- Individualised, structured RTWP with clear supervision and 'signing-off' plan
- Ten days (20 sessions) supervision before first solo list / on call
- Completion of 1 Workplace Based Assessment (WPBA) per day and an ALMAT towards the end of RTW period
- Provision of, and funding for, the NWSOA RTW day with workshops and simulation training. (Photographs to demonstrate)

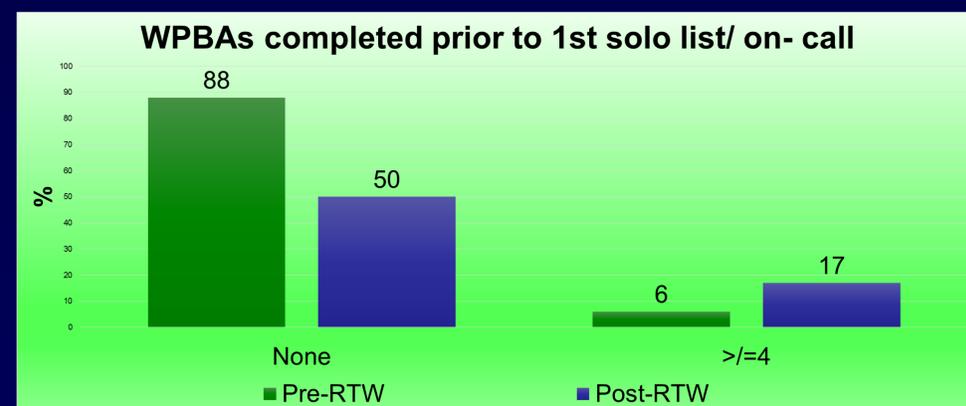
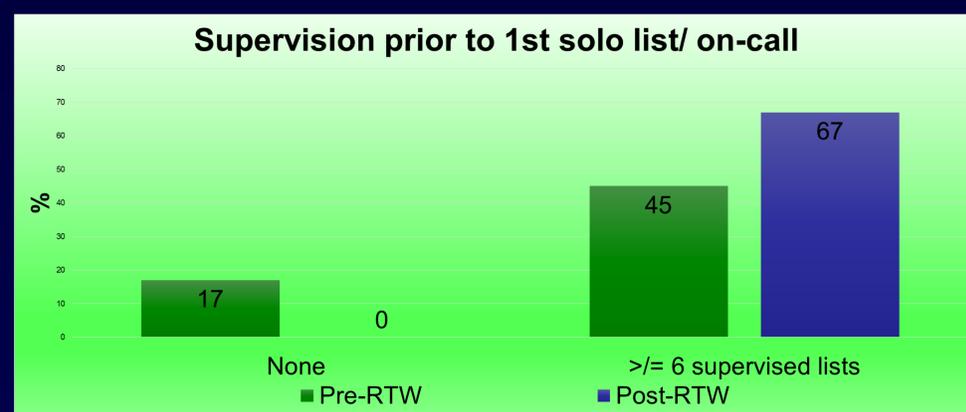
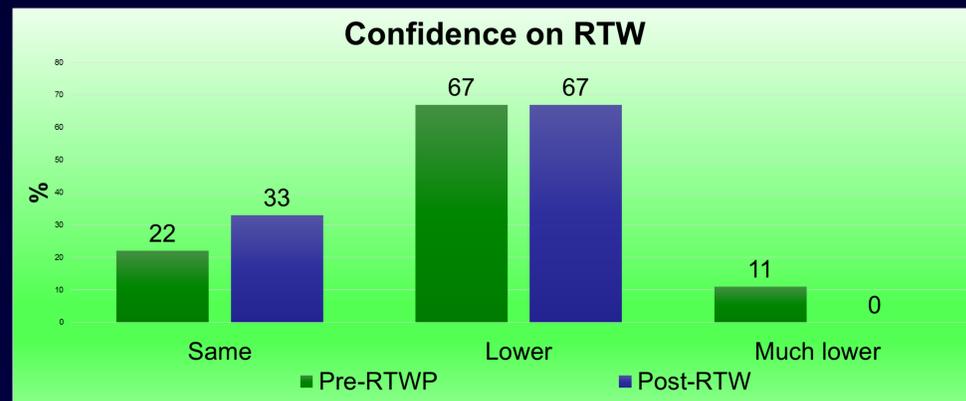
Methodology

The NWSOA has over 260 trainees. The number taking 6 months or more leave from anaesthesia has been increasing year-on-year with 19 trainees returning from maternity leave in 2013 alone. We have also supported joint-CCT ICM trainees who have undertaken their period of training in complementary specialties upon their return to anaesthesia.

We surveyed 18 of the 30 trainees who had returned to work within the 5 years before the introduction of the RTWP, and 8 of the 9 trainees who have returned since. The groups had similar lengths of break (8.9 months vs 9.8 months) and a similar amount of pre-break anaesthetic experience (5.2 years vs 5.7 years.)



Results



Discussion

The introduction of the North West's RTWP has ensured that trainees returning to work are more confident, better supervised and have more evidence of their competence. This supports good clinical governance and enhances patient safety.

References

1. Academy of Medical Royal Colleges. 2012 (www.aomrc.org.uk)
2. Royal College of Anaesthetists. 2012 (www.rcoa.ac.uk)