

Improving Trainee Anaesthetist Opportunities in Clinical Governance and Research Projects

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Context

The North West School of Anaesthesia delivers training to 264 doctors. In May 2013 the North West Research and Audit Group (NWRAG) was established by a group of senior North West anaesthetic trainees to promote trainee-led research and audit in the region.

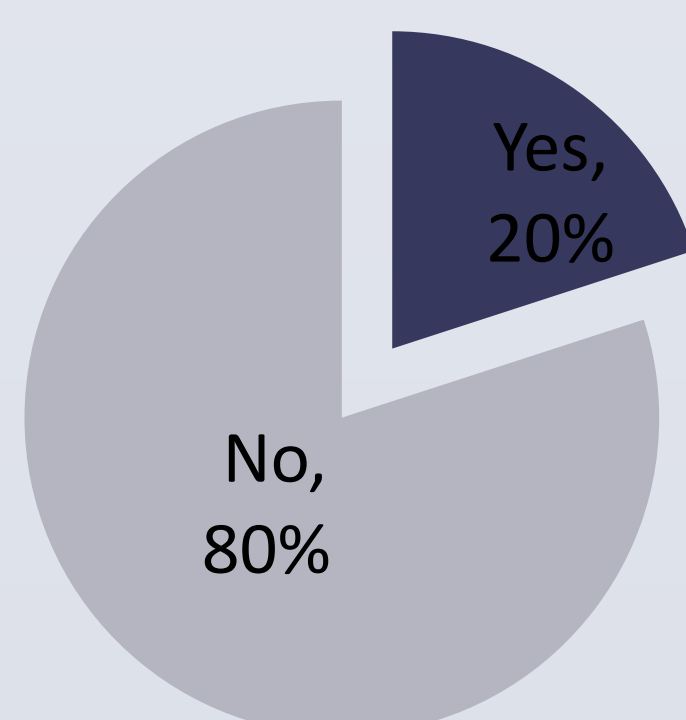
Problem

We perceived that only a small number of North West anaesthetic trainees were participating in research and believed this was due to a lack of research opportunities. This deficiency could result in a decline in high-quality research originating from our region. This decline would lead to deterioration in patient care as it is through new research that we can improve the quality of patient care and their outcomes.

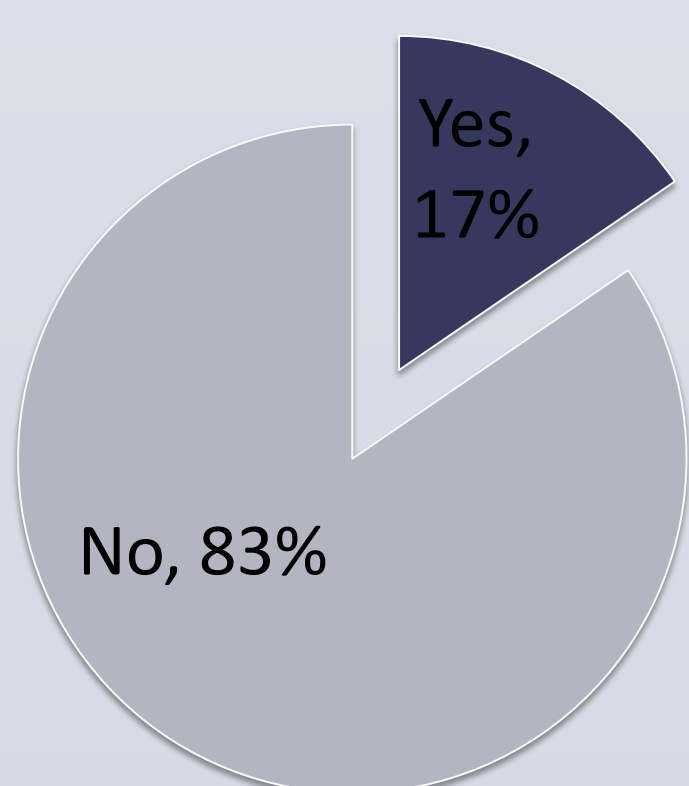
Assessment of Problem and Analysis of its Causes

We conducted an online survey of trainees. 152 responded and the results are shown in the charts below.

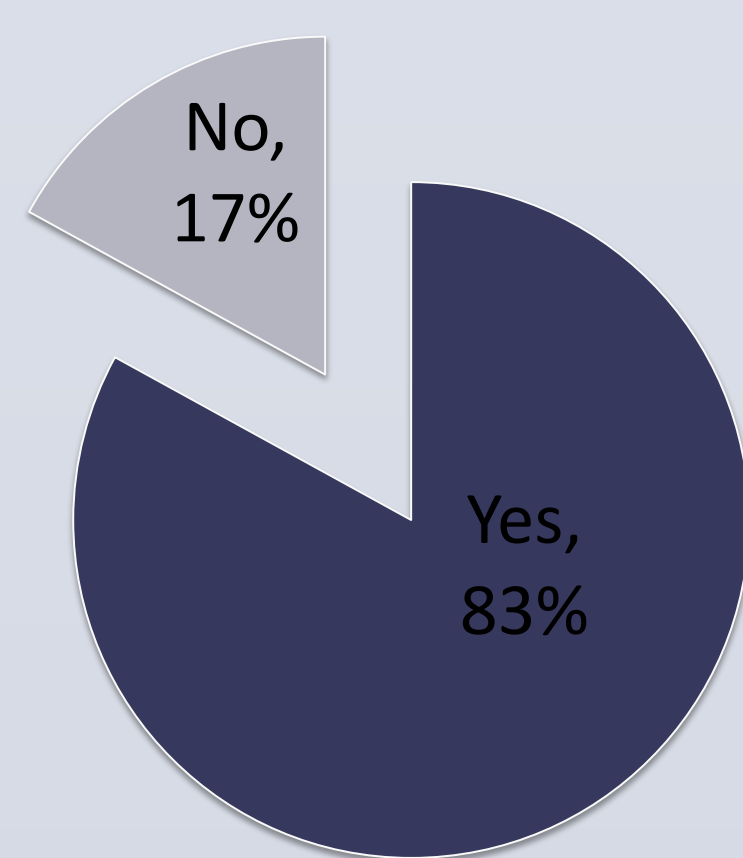
Have you participated in research?



Are there adequate research opportunities in anaesthetic training?



Would you be interested in joining research network led by trainees?



In addition poor training in research methodology and lack of training friendly opportunities were key barriers identified to carrying out research

Strategy for change

We developed the idea of training-friendly research projects that were conceived and carried out by trainees with consultant linkmen at each trust providing continuity in research projects when trainees rotated. To resolve the lack of confidence in statistics we planned to introduce a statistics education programme. We aim by the end of 12 months to have NWRAG as an established research network in the region.

Intervention

The founding members formed a committee to organise, promote and disseminate NWRAG and its projects throughout the region. We also recruited consultants to the committee to provide us with guidance. Through the use of a NWRAG website, emails and social media we facilitated information dissemination. All trainees in the region were invited to become members of NWRAG and participate in its activities and are encouraged to put forward their own ideas for research projects.

For NWRAG members we have introduced statistics workshops on medical statistics that are run by experienced research fellows, trainees and consultants.

Measurement of improvement

The main measurement of improvement is the number of North West trainees involved in or demonstrating an interest in research since NWRAG has started. NWRAG currently has more than 100 registered members and had over 4000 individual hits on its website in the first 3 months. Over 50 trainees are currently involved in research or multi-centre audit projects.

Through the use of qualitative surveys we are monitoring the confidence levels of the attendees of our statistics workshops in handling research data.

Effects of changes

Since NWRAG has been established there has been an increase in the number of trainees in the region participating in research. In 4 months we have completed a multi-centre audit, have several systematic reviews and research projects on-going and have had 4 presentations accepted at national conferences. We have run 2 statistics workshops to address the lack of statistical knowledge and confidence amongst trainees, the outcomes of which we are in the process of monitoring.

Message for others

We have learnt that trainees when working as a dedicated, enthusiastic group can cause significant changes over a relatively short time period. By creating a trainee-led research network, we provide a platform for translating trainees' ideas into research that is feasible to partake in during specialty training. Our success in engaging trainees lies in tailoring projects and training to their needs.

Conflicts of Interest

None to declare

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