

Paper to note

Education and Training Committee – 16 September 2010

Review of annual monitoring activities of pre-registered education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

This paper invites the Committee to note the initial review of the annual monitoring activities of pre-registered education and training by UK ambulance trusts.

A complete data set is not available to describe the final trends however an initial analysis has been undertaken with the data available. A final report with complete analysis and recommendations will be presented to Committee on 18 November 2010.

Background information

- “HPC Approval of IHCD Paramedic Programmes”, Approvals Committee, 5 September 2006
- “Pre-registration education and training for Paramedics”, Education and Training Committee, June 2007, enclosure 11
- “Pre-registration education and training for Paramedics”, Education and Training Committee, March 2008, enclosure 14
- “Review of the programme of visits to pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance NHS trusts” March 2010

Decision

None at this time.

Resource implications

None at this time.

Financial implications

None at this time.

Date of paper

16 September 2010

Review of annual monitoring activities of pre-registered education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts

About this document

This report details the work conducted to review the annual monitoring activities of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts.

The review is focused on the outcomes of the annual monitoring activities and the implications for the future annual monitoring of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK public ambulance trusts.

The paper draws on:

- qualitative review of Department records of the amended annual monitoring process used for pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts.
- structured interview with a member of the Department who has been leading operationally on the annual monitoring of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts; and
- quantitative and to a limited extent qualitative review of the reports produced after the amended annual monitoring assessment.

The history leading to the annual monitoring of pre-registered education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts

On 12 June 2007 the Education and Training Committee (ETC) decided that all ambulance trusts were to be subject to an approval visit. During 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 academic year the Education Department conducted approval visits to all pre-registration education and training delivered by UK public ambulance trusts.

In 2009/2010 the Education Department undertook a review of the programme of visits to pre-registered education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts to determine if there were any consistent trends and/or underlying concerns. As a result of this review, ETC agreed a variation to the normal annual monitoring process for all pre-registration education and training delivered by UK public ambulance trusts to allow additional areas of these programmes to be monitored.

Brief overview of the annual monitoring process for pre-registered education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts

When we approve an education programme the programme obtains what we refer to as 'open-ended approval' and is then subject to our monitoring processes. Annual monitoring is a documentary, retrospective process where we consider whether a programme continues to meet our standards of education and training (SETs) and continues to effectively deliver and assess the standards of proficiency (SOPs).

From the review of the programme of visits to pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts ETC decided that the annual monitoring process should be adapted to reflect the outcomes of the review. In particular three areas of concern were highlighted:

- implementing and embedding professional skills into the delivery of the programme;
- implementing the range of appropriate placements; and
- availability of resources and confirming the ongoing provision

The Education Department adapted the annual monitoring process to reflect this and asked UK ambulance trusts delivering pre-registered education and training to submit additional documentation.

When we carry out an annual monitoring audit it is normally reviewed by two HPC visitors. At least one visitor will be from the relevant part of the Register and all visitors undergo a conflict of interest process. The documentation is reviewed by the visitors, along with previous reports from the approval, annual monitoring and major change process.

The visitors make recommendations to Education and Training Panel (ETP). They either outline that there is sufficient evidence to show that the programme continues to meet the standards or outline that there is insufficient evidence to show how the programme continues to meet our standards. The visitors can ask the education provider for further documentation before making a recommendation to ETP. If the visitors and ETP agree that there is insufficient evidence to show how the programme continues to meet our standards a visit would be required to gather evidence to show how the programme meets the standards and, if required, place conditions on ongoing approval.

In the amended UK ambulance trust annual monitoring assessment the visitors were asked to make a recommendation on both the standard annual monitoring submission (which all HPC approved programmes go through) but also a separate recommendation on the additional annual monitoring requirements previously outlined. For ongoing approval to be recommended the visitors need to be content that both elements were evidenced.

Evidence base

The evidence used to review the annual monitoring process for programmes delivered by UK public ambulance trusts was gathered from visitor reports produced from the review of 8 annual monitoring submissions and the experience of a member of the Education Department responsible for planning and overseeing the implementation of the annual monitoring process.

Outcomes from the UK ambulance trust annual monitoring process

All the visitor reports have been produced and finalised with the visitors. Of the 8 reports 5 have been approved by ETP and granted continued approval. 1 report is going to ETP on 16 September 2010 with the recommendation of granting continued approval. 2 reports are currently with the education provider as additional documentation has been requested. It is anticipated that these reports will go to ETP on 21 October 2010.

As a complete data set is not available to describe the final trends from the UK ambulance trust annual monitoring process a complete analysis has not been undertaken.

A final report with complete analysis will be presented to ETC on 18 November 2010.

It has however been possible to undertake some work to highlight some initial trends.

Resource impact for the HPC

From an operational perspective, the work undertaken to monitor each of the programmes was significant. The duration of the annual monitoring process was extended owing to the time it took visitors to complete the assessment of both the standard submission of annual monitoring documentation and also the requested additional documentation. It was anticipated that all 8 submissions could be reviewed in 1 day well in line with normal operational scheduling. On 15 June 2010, 5 UK ambulance trust programmes were reviewed. A second assessment day was required and this was undertaken on 3 August 2010.

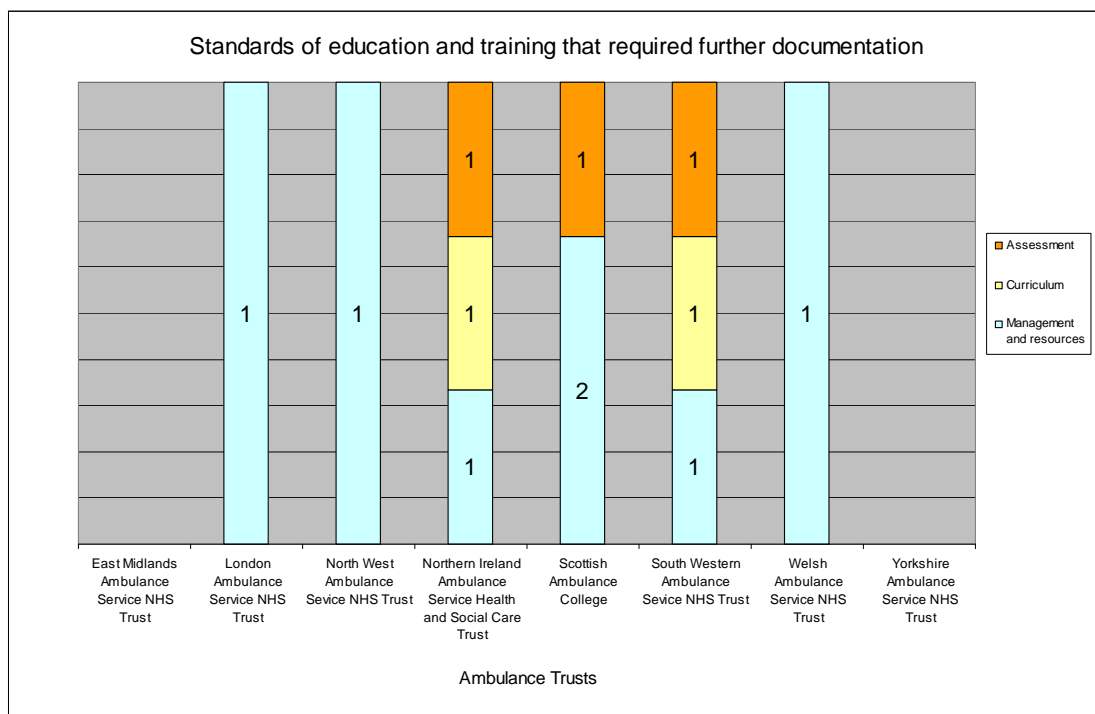
Although we do not record the exact duration each submission takes to be reviewed by the visitors, the programmes took on average 75 minutes each to assess. Normal operational planning is based around a 45 minutes assessment for each submission. The extended duration can be attributed to a variety of reasons including:

- comprehensive nature of the submission with some documentation lacking relevance;
- documentation inaccurately referenced with visitors unable to find documentation that the education provider stated as being submitted;
- an apparent lack of understanding of the retrospective nature of annual monitoring with documents being submitted well outside of the required timeframes; and
- the submission of major changes within the documentation

6 of the 8 reports required additional documentation and therefore post assessment day action. Of the programmes that required additional documentation all have turned around the additional documentation request within the operational deadline of two weeks.

Standards of education and training

If visitors request further documentation they frame requests around specific standards. The graph gives an indication of the types of areas where the visitors requested further information.



75 percent of programmes required additional documentation linked to management and resources. Of the issues identified all but one was standard 3.2 which refers to the effective management of the programme. The recurring issue around 3.2 was incomplete annual monitoring submissions; in particular several programmes did not include internal quality documents and external examiner reports and some included information relating to different programmes. In one submission the visitors noted a change in programme leader and from referring to an external examiner's report noted changes to

the practical assessment guidelines which the education provider had not disclosed.

25 percent of programmes required additional documentation linked to curriculum. In one submission the visitors required clarification around the status of the programme and conformation of when the current cohort started. Another submission required additional documentation to clarify the first additional question in the amended ambulance trust annual monitoring assessment around implementing and embedding professional skills into the delivery of the programme. The visitors were referred to documentation in the appendix of the submission to address this; however the visitors were unable to find this documentation. They required this documentation to demonstrate the use of a step wise airway management record book.

The final area where visitors requested additional documentation was assessment. 38 percent of programmes required additional documentation linked to assessment. 2 programmes were specific to standard 6.1 which is linked to assessment strategy and meeting the standards of proficiency. In one submission a comment in the external examiners report indicated a lack of clarity around the assessment strategy and triggered the visitors to ask for additional documentation to clarify the assessment design and procedure. The other additional document request that linked to 6.1 was a request where the visitors required clarification around the status of the programme. The final area addressed under assessment was a programme that had changed an external examiner. The visitors sort clarification that the external examiner was on the appropriate part of the register.

Analysis of visitors comments

As part of the annual monitoring process the visitors have the opportunity to add comments to a visitor's report. A comment would not require any direct response from the education provider however it gives the visitors the opportunity to offer advice on areas the education provider may want to consider addressing for future annual monitoring submissions.

Two main areas were raised by the visitors within the 8 UK ambulance trust annual monitoring reports. 38 percent of the reports had comments around issues with confidentiality. The visitors noted that education providers had submitted information about individual students, including results and individual comments in minutes. The second issue raised in the visitors' comments in 75 percent of reports was around the comprehensive nature of the submissions as discussed previously.

Initial conclusions

Initial trends indicate that the outcomes of the annual monitoring activities of pre-registered education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts do

not significantly differ from those of other HPC approved programmes. Initial analysis has shown that the amended annual monitoring process has had some Department resource implications and that UK ambulance trusts are not always fully aligned to Department processes however all programmes have been able to provide the additional documentation when required within operational deadlines and all programmes have been able to meet the additional requirements outlined by ETC. Initial trends suggest:

- Each programme is unique;
- 6 of the 8 programmes have met the SETs (2 programmes currently with visitors assessing additional documentation);
- No further amended annual monitoring process will be required and the UK ambulance trust programmes are able to fit into the normal annual monitoring schedule

A final report with complete analysis will be presented to ETC on 18 November 2010.