



Royal College for
Paediatrics and Child
Health

Royal College of
Paediatrics and Child Health

EWTR Survey Findings

Leading the way in Children's Health

EWTR Survey December 2010- February 2011

Background

In December 2010 a short questionnaire was sent to Clinical Directors responsible for all units in the UK providing general paediatric and neonatal services. The response rate was 84% (188 responses).

The purpose of the survey was to collect evidence on the current state of compliance with the EWTR, the extent of rota vacancies and gaps, and the concerns of those responsible for managing these services.

Summary

- 16% of rotas were reported as being non-compliant in practice, but only 2.2% non-compliant on paper.
- The results show non-compliance was more common on tier 2 (middle grade) rotas where 32.4% of shared general and neonatal rotas and 24.2% of all 2 tier rotas were non-compliant in practice.
- The data show that rotas involving neonatal cover are more likely to be non-compliant.
- For tier 2 (MG rotas) there were 238.1 vacancies due to failure to recruit and 122.7 gaps due to OOP. These vacancies and gaps totalled 360.8 representing 20.4% of reported wte tier 2 posts. This compares with 14.4% reported in the College Census in 2009.
- On Tier 1 (Junior) rotas, there were 129.2 vacancies and gaps reported by the 188 units – a rate of 6.4% of the wte positions on these rotas. This compares to 3.4% in the College's Workforce Census 2009.
- Clinical Directors and Leads reported 176.5 consultants permanently working on tier 2 rotas.
- Consultants permanently working on Tier 2 rotas, spent on average 2.73 PAs undertaking tier 2 duties.
- In the 65 units where consultants provided unplanned cover in the 4 weeks before the survey, it occurred on average 3.24 times.
- 86% of Clinical Directors and Leads said they were either very or moderately concerned that their service will not be able to cope with demands placed on it during the next 6 months? This compares with 73% who stated they were concerned in the College's November 2009 survey.

Detailed Findings

1. Rota Compliance

For each tier 1 and tier 2 rota (general paediatrics, shared general/neonatal and neonatal) we asked if the rota was compliant on paper and in practice. The results are shown in table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Number of Compliant and Non-Compliant Rotas on Paper - UK Dec 2010

| Compliant in practice | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Compliant on Paper | Yes | No | Total | % Non-Compliant on Paper |
| Tier 1 General Paediatrics | 84 | 0 | 84 | 0.0% |
| Tier 1 General and Neonatal shared | 84 | 2 | 86 | 2.3% |
| Tier 1 Neonatal | 75 | 0 | 75 | 0.0% |
| Tier 2 General Paediatrics | 57 | 1 | 58 | 1.7% |
| Tier 2 General and Neonatal shared | 96 | 5 | 101 | 5.0% |
| Tier 2 Neonatal | 48 | 2 | 50 | 4.0% |
| All Tier 1 and Tier 2 | 444 | 10 | 454 | 2.2% |

CDs answered whether they were compliant on paper for 454 Tier 1 and Tier 2 rotas in the 188 units. Only 2.2% (10 rotas) were reported to be non-compliant on paper.

Table 2: Number of Compliant and Non-Compliant Rotas in Practice - UK Dec 2010

| Compliant in practice | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------|--------------|------------------------------------|
| | Yes | No | Total | % Non-Compliant in Practice |
| Tier 1 General Paediatrics | 85 | 0 | 85 | 0.0% |
| Tier 1 General and Neonatal shared | 71 | 14 | 85 | 16.5% |
| Tier 1 Neonatal | 67 | 8 | 75 | 10.7% |
| Tier 2 General Paediatrics | 52 | 6 | 58 | 10.3% |
| Tier 2 General and Neonatal shared | 69 | 33 | 102 | 32.4% |
| Tier 2 Neonatal | 39 | 12 | 51 | 23.5% |
| All Tier 1 and Tier 2 | 383 | 73 | 456 | 16.0% |

CDs responded to the question on compliance in practice for 456 rotas. Of these 73 were (16%) reported as non-compliant in practice. The results show non-compliance was more common on tier 2 (middle grade) rotas where 32.4% of shared general and neonatal rotas and 24.2% of all 2 tier grade rotas were non-compliant in practice.

The data show that rotas involving neonates are more likely to be non-compliant.

Comparisons with 2009 WTD survey

In Dec 2010, 45 (23.9%) of reporting units stated that they had at least one non-compliant tier 2 rota, compared to 44% of trusts in Nov 2009.

2. Rota Vacancies

For each rota, Clinical Directors and Leads were asked to indicate a) the number of vacancies due to failure to recruit and b) the number of gaps due to OOP c) the total number of positions and wte on the rota.

Table 3 shows the number of vacancies and gaps, along with the vacancy rate for each type of rota on tier 1 and tier 2.

On Tier 1 (Junior) rotas, there were 129.2 vacancies and gaps reported by the 188 units – a rate of 6.4% of the wte positions on these rotas. This compares to 3.4% in the College's Workforce Census 2009.

For tier 2 (MG rotas), the situation was far more worrying, CDs indicated that there were 238.1 vacancies due to failure to recruit and 122.7 gaps due to OOP. These vacancies and gaps totalled 360.8 representing 20.4% of reported wte tier 2 posts.. This compares with 14.4% reported in the College Census in 2009.

It is clear from the table that the proportion of vacancies is higher for rotas which include neonatal services at both tier 1 and 2 compared to rotas relating only to general paediatrics.

Table 3: Rota Vacancies, Gaps and Rate for Each Rota Type – UK Paediatric Inpatient and Neonatal Units (188/224)

| | Vacancies due to failure to recruit | Gaps due to OOP | Total vacancies and gaps | Vacancies and gaps % |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Tier 1 General Paediatrics | 15.5 | 19 | 34.5 | 4.2 |
| Tier 1 General and Neonatal Shared | 28.3 | 26.8 | 55.1 | 7.2 |
| Tier 1 Neonatal | 23.3 | 16.3 | 39.6 | 7.5 |
| Tier 1 Total | 67.1 | 62.1 | 129.2 | 6.1 |
| Tier 2 General Paediatrics | 51.4 | 45.8 | 97.2 | 16.5 |
| Tier 2 General and Neonatal Shared | 131 | 44 | 175 | 21.9 |
| Tier 2 Neonatal | 55.7 | 32.9 | 88.6 | 23.4 |
| Tier 2 Total | 238.1 | 122.7 | 360.8 | 20.4 |
| Overall | 305.2 | 184.8 | 490 | 12.6 |

3. Consultants Permanently Rostered on Tier 2 Rotas.

Clinical Directors and Leads reported 176.5 consultants permanently working on tier 2 (including units such as the Royal Free where no tier 2 exists and other units where consultants only cover twilight shifts). If this figure were pro-rated for returns not received, it would imply 210.3 consultants filling these roles, an eighth (12.5%) of the general and neonatal consultant workforce.

210 consultants represent a (102%) increase from the 104 reported in the 2009 Census.

The 176.5 consultants worked in 43 units (22.8% of the total responding to the survey). In 18 of these units, funding for the posts came from DH trained doctor solutions monies.

Consultants permanently working on Tier 2 rotas, spent on average 2.73 PAs undertaking tier 2 duties.

4. Unplanned Cover

Survey respondents were asked how many times consultants have provided unplanned cover for rotas in the 4 weeks before the survey. Table 4 shows the number of units providing unplanned cover and how many instances. 123 of the 188 units did not report any instances of unplanned consultant cover.

The average no of times consultants provided unplanned cover in the 65 units where it occurred was 3.24.

Table 4: How many times have Consultants provided unplanned cover for your rotas in the last 4 weeks?

| | Number of times unplanned consultant cover provided | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|----|----|---|---|---|---|-----|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 10+ |
| Number of Units | 123 | 22 | 20 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 4 |

5. Agreed Plans for Becoming Compliant

Clinical Directors of units with non-compliant rotas were asked if there was an agreed plan to become compliant. 53 respondents answered this question. 30 said there was an agreed plan to become compliant, 23 saying there was no plan.

Of those with an agreed plan, 22 out of the 30 stated that the agreed plan was funded.

6. Concern about future

Clinical Directors were asked “How concerned are you that your service will not be able to cope with demands placed on it during the next 6 months?” and the response is reported in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Concern that service will not be able to cope during next 6 months

| | Response Percent | Response Count |
|-------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Very | 31.9% | 59 |
| Moderately | 54.1% | 100 |
| Unconcerned | 14.1% | 26 |
| | | 185 |
| | <i>skipped question</i> | 3 |

86% of all those answering this question stated that they were either very or moderately concerned. This compares with 73% who stated they were concerned in our November 2009 survey.

Martin McColgan, Workforce Information Officer
25th February 2011