The Effects of Examiner Performance Feedback

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Background

Since 2007, RCPCH has provided examiners in the Membership Clinical Examination with performance feedback (PERFORCE). This provides:

- Descriptive statistics
- Comparison with other examiners
- Analysis of ability to discriminate between weak and good candidates
- An indication of whether marks they award are mean or generous (Hawk/Dove Index, HDI).

This tool was developed to provide feedback and to help identify problem examiners. We report the effects of this new feedback on examiner marking.

Summary of Results

Before and after performance feedback data for 226 examiners showed no significant differences using a t-test in:

- HDI scores
- Individual correlations between examiner scoring and overall candidate performance
- Ability to discriminate between well and poorly performing candidates (those passing and failing the overall assessment)

Likewise, an ANOVA revealed no significant differences on any of the three performance areas between examination sittings.

Conclusions and Take-home Messages

- We have previously shown that 95% of examiners found PERFORCE useful, which supports its introduction as a tool to provide much wanted feedback.

- PERFORCE should be a useful tool to identify training needs of examiners by highlighting examiners who are hawks or doves and with poor ability to discriminate between weak and good candidates.

- However, feedback does not appear to have changed or influenced examiner performance and our findings concur with examiners’ perceptions that PERFORCE does not alter their examining style.

- More direct training rather than feedback alone would appear to be required to change the performance of these examiners.

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