

Assuring the Quality of Medical Appraisal for Revalidation

Revalidation Support Team

Appraisal and clinical governance systems have been found to be of inconsistent quality and not fit for the purpose of supporting revalidation. To address this important issue, the Revalidation Support Team (RST) has described a quality assurance framework for appraisal and clinical governance systems for the purpose of supporting revalidation. The framework, 'Assuring the Quality of Medical Appraisal for Revalidation' (AQMAR) was developed after consultation with a wide variety of experts and stakeholders across all sectors of the healthcare system and all countries of the UK. Self-assessment tools for appraisal and clinical governance systems are included which are designed to help organisations understand their strengths and weaknesses and identify priorities for improvement.

RST is using these self-assessment tools, with support from SHAs, in the NHS in England to undertake a comprehensive audit of organisational readiness for delivering effective appraisal and clinical governance systems. The information from Trusts will be used locally to prioritise development needs and nationally for benchmarking and to inform detailed planning and implementation. It is anticipated that supporting healthcare professionals in relation to professional regulation will be requirements of CQC registration and Operating Frameworks in England; it is therefore important that organisational systems are upgraded in advance of the introduction of revalidation in 2010/11.

The project has three phases:

Phase 1: Information Gathering - Completing the Self Assessment Tools

The self assessment tools should be completed by an individual or group within the Trust who have responsibility for the systems and access to the required information. It is very important that the current position is not overestimated or underestimated so areas of good practice are identified and an accurate development plan reflecting priority areas is produced.

Phase 2: Planning and Prioritisation

When the self-assessment tools have been completed a development plan is agreed between the Trust and the SHA.

Prioritising development needs is important so that improvements are made in the right sequence, for example training appraisers may need to be delayed until competencies have been agreed nationally.

Phase 3: Development

SHAs will coordinate development activity regionally so that organisations with the same improvement needs can work together. This may require regional workshops or events some of which may be sector specific, for example methods of assuring clinical governance in practices for Primary Care Trusts, or methods of support and development for appraisers in secondary care.

Future Use of AQMAR

The AQMAR project and self-assessment tools will be evaluated with a view to improving the tools in the light of using them. It is anticipated that this project will be the first cycle in an ongoing process of self-assessment and development. Repeating the AQMAR self-assessment in the first part of 2010/11 will give an indication of progress made, identify priorities for development in the following year, and demonstrate to regulators and internal and external stakeholders that the organisation is satisfying its obligations. It is likely that the first sites undertaking 'live' revalidation recommendations will need to demonstrate their organisational readiness using AQMAR tools.

The tools are available on the RST website www.revalidationsupport.nhs.uk

