

The SOFA of Anaesthesia: A Tool to Improve Learning Opportunities in Theatre

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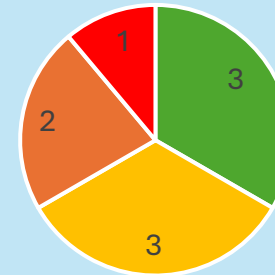
Background and Methods

An essential part of anaesthetic training is the completion of supervised learning events (SLEs) to evidence progression and the completion of specific competencies. These should be picked by trainee and trainer based on the learning objectives of the trainee and the clinical activity undertaken. The 2021 Anaesthesia Curriculum introduced supervision levels which must be assigned to SLEs by trainers, indicating from level 1 (direct supervisor involvement) to level 4 (independent) the supervision required by the trainee if they were to perform the same activity again^[1]. Evidence of increasing supervision level is required as trainees advance through the training programme. We designed and sent out two questionnaires, one for anaesthetic trainees and one for trainers, to assess the ease of completion of SLEs, provision of feedback and understanding of supervision levels.

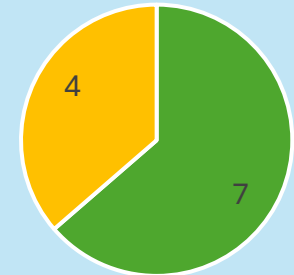
Results

We received ten responses to the trainer survey and nine to the trainee survey. The majority of respondents found it easy to undertake SLEs in the theatre environment. However, there was a lack of confidence from trainees that supervisors knew their learning objectives, and a discrepancy between trainee and trainer confidence that supervision levels were understood correctly. All trainees answered that they would like to receive feedback at the end of a clinical session, however this happened 'always' or 'often' only 56% of the time, with two respondents reporting that they only received feedback 'occasionally', and two stating that they 'never' received this.

Trainees: How confident are you that your trainer knows your learning objectives?

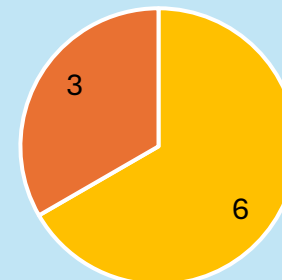


Trainers: How confident are you that you know the learning objectives of trainees working with you?

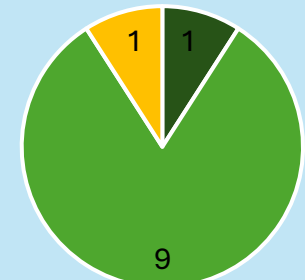


■ Very confident ■ Confident ■ Neither confident nor unconfident
■ Unconfident ■ Very unconfident

Trainees: When completing SLEs, how confident are you that your trainer understands the supervision levels on your portfolio?

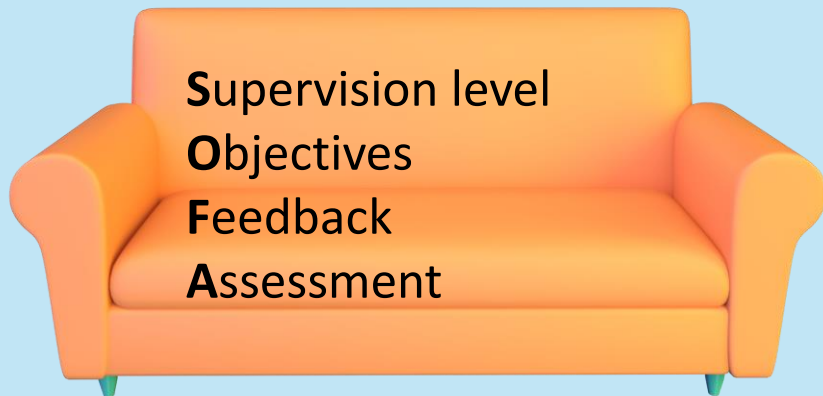


Trainers: When completing SLEs, how confident are you in assigning the supervisory level for the SLE?



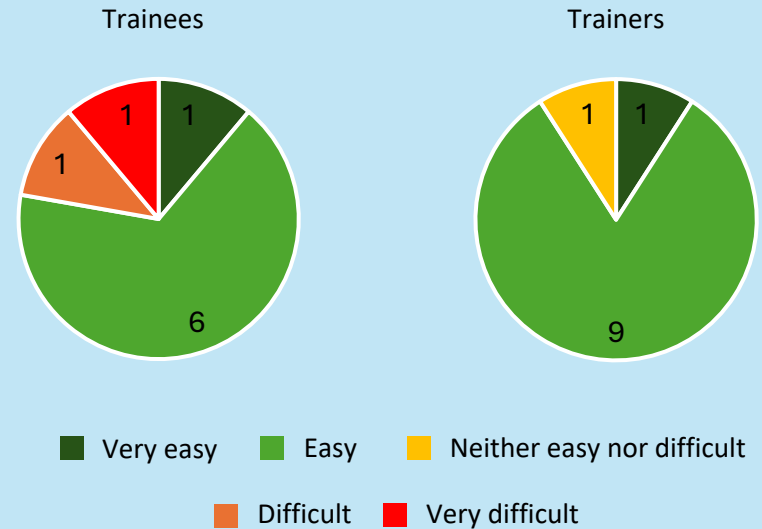
In response to this, we designed and implemented a learning conversation tool to be used during theatre sessions. This aimed to improve communication between trainer and trainee regarding the learning needs of the trainee. Inspiration for the tool came from 'The Educational Checklist'^[2], which uses the acronym LOAFnBREAD to guide a learning brief at the start of a clinical session and feedback at the end. Our tool was designed to specifically address the problems highlighted in our survey, while being simple to remember and use.

The SOFA tool covers key areas for discussion to maximise learning opportunities in theatre; these are Supervision level, learning Objectives, Feedback and Assessment. Posters detailing the tool were placed in each anaesthetic room in the hospital, alongside QR codes linking to the anaesthetic curriculum and recommended supervision levels for trainees at each stage of training.



The SOFA tool

How easy is it to undertake Supervised Learning Events in the theatre environment?



Conclusions

Our survey showed a lack of confidence from trainees regarding trainer understanding of their learning objectives and appropriate supervision levels. The SOFA tool provides a quick and simple framework for discussion between the anaesthetic trainee and trainer to ensure a mutual understanding of the learning needs of the trainee, including identification of areas for feedback and assessment.