

Trainee to Consultant Feedback

Joseph Swani, Toni Brunning, Emily Johnson

Introduction

- A specific focus on learning from success and positive events are concepts described in areas such as Safety-II and Learning from Excellence reporting.^{1,2}
- We created a tool for Anaesthetists in Training (AiT) and Clinical Fellows (CFs) to provide written feedback to anaesthetic consultants.
- The tool was specifically designed to gather positive feedback in order to learn from what consultants are doing well.
- The overall aim was to improve the quality of training experience in our department.

Methods

- All AiT/CFs in our department were sent a link to a webpage where they could provide written positive feedback to any anaesthetic consultant in the department.
- The feedback was optional and trainees could provide feedback to as many consultants as they wanted, via a free-text comment box for each consultant selected.
- The trainee was anonymous, unless they purposefully left their name.
- Afterwards, each consultant was sent their personal feedback individually.
- The feedback was thematically analysed using both an inductive and a deductive approach.

Results and Discussion

- Through an initial inductive thematic analysis of the feedback data the theme of psychological safety emerged.
- Psychological safety is about being open and feeling supported to speak up, it is a shared belief by members of the team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking.³ This concept has been pioneered by Amy Edmondson, a Professor of Leadership and Management at Harvard Business School, and is recognised as having an important role in establishing a positive safety culture in healthcare.
- Timothy Clark models four stages of psychological safety, where team members feel (1) included, (2) safe to learn, (3) safe to contribute and (4) safe to challenge.^{4, 5} A deductive thematic analysis of the feedback data using these four stages as themes, identified many examples of psychological safety.

Table of examples of trainee to consultant feedback collected over two feedback cycles from 2023-2024:

Stage of Psychological Safety	Description	Feedback Examples
Inclusion Safety	People are respected as individuals, they feel comfortable being present and are welcomed into the team for being people, regardless of any specific attribute or experience.	<i>'She goes above and beyond to include trainees within the department team and focus on improving wellbeing'</i> <i>'Listens to any team member no matter their role or grade'</i> <i>'You made me feel very welcome from the first moment I entered the anaesthetic room'</i>
Learner Safety	Where the person feels safe to engage in the learning process, there is respect for the individual's need to learn and they feel supported to do so.	<i>'She has taught me many skills in a supportive, safe environment and I have really developed as a trainee because of this'</i> <i>'It genuinely feels she cares about your training'</i>
Contributor Safety	The person feels safe to contribute, without fear of embarrassment or ridicule.	<i>'one of the first consultant to allow me to, semi-independently, give an anaesthetic in an elective list. Through my very imperfect anaesthetic, with her watchful eye, she gave me time and space to allow me to reflect and learn from the cases during the day'</i>

- The fourth stage of psychological safety is **Challenger Safety**. This is where members can question others, including those in authority, or suggest changes to ideas or ways of working.
- We feel this project represents challenger safety. We challenge the idea of anonymous negative feedback and created a tool which was designed to remove any possibility of providing anonymous negative feedback, with the focus purely on positivity.

Conclusion

- We found that feeling psychologically safe in the workplace is commonly described by trainees when providing positive feedback to consultants.
- This gives further insight into the importance of psychological safety and its role in optimising training experience for anaesthetists working with and under the supervision of consultants.
- We will continue to send out the feedback link to trainees in our department every 6 months.
- Consultants will continue to receive their individual feedback, which has been well received by all so far.
- Wider learning points are distributed amongst the anaesthetic department, so that we can continue to learn from what trainees find positive and try to reinforce these values in our department.

References

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- 2) Crossingham G, Ord H, Hannon F et al. Learning from excellence: a thematic analysis of staff-reported excellence in healthcare from two acute NHS trusts. *British Journal of Healthcare Management* 2023; 29(11)
- 3) National Health Service England. Safety culture: learning from best practice. NHS England. 2022. (Accessed May 19, 2024). Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/safety-culture-learning-from-best-practice/>
- 4) Clark T. *The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety: Defining the Path to Inclusion and Innovation*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2020.
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