

Education and Training Committee – 18 November 2010

Review of annual monitoring activities of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

This paper details the work conducted by the Education Department to review the annual monitoring activities of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts.

The review is focused on the outcomes of the annual monitoring activities and the implications for the future annual monitoring of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts.

Background information

- “Review of annual monitoring activities of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts – paper to note” September 2010
- “Review of the programme of visits to pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance NHS trusts” March 2010
- “Pre-registration education and training for Paramedics”, Education and Training Committee, March 2008, enclosure 14
- “Pre-registration education and training for Paramedics”, Education and Training Committee, June 2007, enclosure 11
- “HPC Approval of IHCD Paramedic Programmes”, Approvals Committee, 5 September 2006

Decision

The Committee is asked to discuss the paper and its outcomes and agree the content before inclusion in the full summary report of approval visits and annual monitoring activities for UK ambulance trusts.

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Appendices

Appendix A – Outcome summary of the annual monitoring activities of pre-registered education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts

Date of paper

8 November 2010

Review of annual monitoring activities of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts

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About this document

This report details the work conducted to review the annual monitoring activities of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts.

The review is focused on the outcomes of the annual monitoring activities and the implications for the future approval and monitoring of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts.

The paper draws on:

- qualitative review of Education Department records of the amended annual monitoring process used for pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts;
- structured interview with members of the Education Department who have been leading operationally on the annual monitoring of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts; and
- quantitative and to a limited extent qualitative review of the reports produced after the amended annual monitoring assessment.

The history leading to the annual monitoring of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts

On 12 June 2007 the Education and Training Committee (ETC) decided that all ambulance trusts were to be subject to an approval visit. During 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 academic year the Education Department conducted approval visits to all pre-registration education and training delivered by UK public ambulance trusts.

In 2009/2010 the Education Department undertook a review of the programme of visits to pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts to determine if there were any consistent trends and/or areas requiring further action. As a result of this review, ETC agreed on a variation to the normal annual monitoring process for all pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts to allow additional areas of these programmes to be monitored.

Brief overview of the annual monitoring process for pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts

When we approve an education programme the programme obtains what we refer to as 'open-ended approval' and is then subject to our monitoring processes. Annual monitoring is a documentary, retrospective process where we consider whether a programme continues to meet our standards of education and training (SETs) and continues to effectively deliver and assess the standards of proficiency (SOPs).

From the review of the programme of visits to pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts ETC decided that the annual monitoring process should be adapted to reflect the outcomes of the review. In particular three areas for further monitoring were highlighted:

- implementing and embedding professional skills into the delivery of the programme;
- implementing the range of appropriate placements; and
- availability of resources and confirming the ongoing provision.

The Education Department adapted the annual monitoring process to reflect this and asked UK ambulance trusts delivering pre-registered education and training to submit additional documentation.

When we carry out an annual monitoring audit it is normally reviewed by two HPC visitors. At least one visitor will be from the relevant part of the Register and all visitors undergo a conflict of interest process. The documentation is reviewed by the visitors, along with previous reports from the approval, annual monitoring and major change processes.

The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Panel (ETP). They either outline that there is sufficient evidence to show that the programme continues to meet the standards or outline that there is insufficient evidence to show how the programme continues to meet our standards. The visitors can ask the education provider for further documentation before making a recommendation to ETP. If the visitors and ETP agree that there is insufficient evidence to show how the programme continues to meet our standards a visit would be required to gather evidence to show how the programme meets the standards and, if required, place conditions on ongoing approval.

In the amended UK ambulance trust annual monitoring review the visitors were asked to make a recommendation on both the standard annual monitoring submission (which all HPC approved programmes go through) but also a separate recommendation on the additional annual monitoring requirements previously outlined. For ongoing approval to be recommended the visitors need to be content that both elements were evidenced.

Outcomes from the UK ambulance trust annual monitoring process

All the visitor reports have been produced and approved by an Education and Training Panel and all pre-registration education and training programmes delivered by UK ambulance trusts were granted continued approval.

All the reports can be found online in the Education and Training Panel papers and on the Education Department webpage. Appendix A summarises the outcomes reached in the case of the 8 UK ambulance trusts who deliver pre-registration education and training.

Evidence base

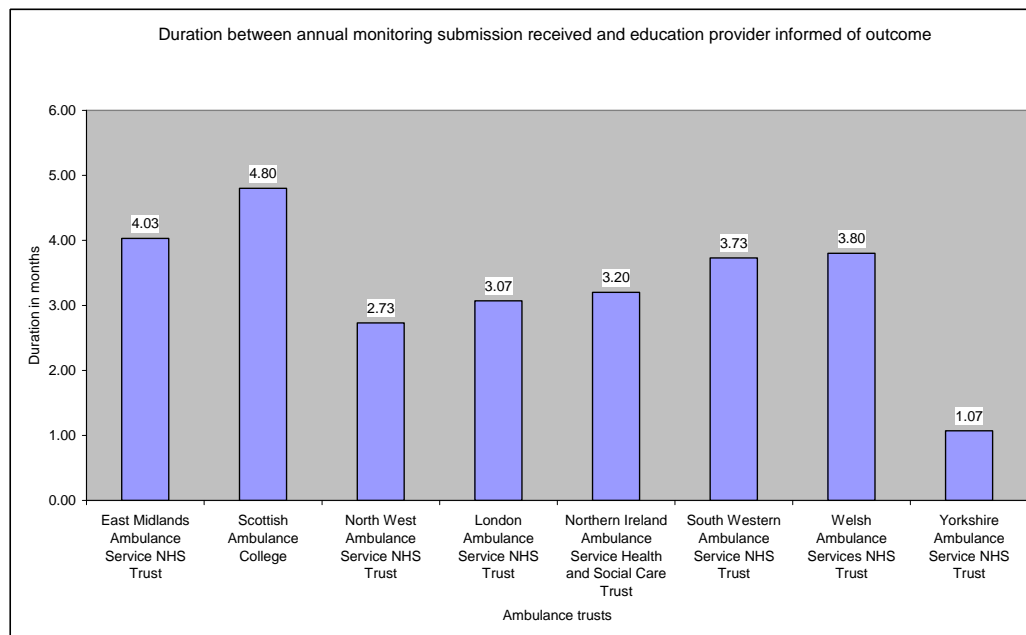
The evidence used to review the annual monitoring process for pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts was gathered from visitor reports produced from the review of 8 annual monitoring audits, Education Department records and from the experience of members of the Education Department responsible for planning and overseeing the implementation of the annual monitoring process. Please note that 10 pre-registration education and training programmes are currently being delivered by UK ambulance trusts, however within the annual monitoring process it is usual to review full time and part time programmes within the same audit and for these to be represented in the same report. The graphs that follow within this report therefore only represent the 8 UK ambulance trusts and the 8 audits (as full and part time are usually submitted as one audit).

Please note also, East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust submitted a major change to HPC in September 2009 which initiated an approval visit as an increase to student numbers was planned. The visit took place in March 2010 and took account of all standards of education and training. As normal, when a

programme is subject to the full scrutiny of an approval visit, it is removed from the annual monitoring process.

Resource impact for the HPC

From an operational perspective, the work undertaken to monitor each of the UK ambulance trusts programmes was significant and required an increased resource provision at various stages in the annual monitoring process. However the overall duration of the annual monitoring process was not significantly extended.

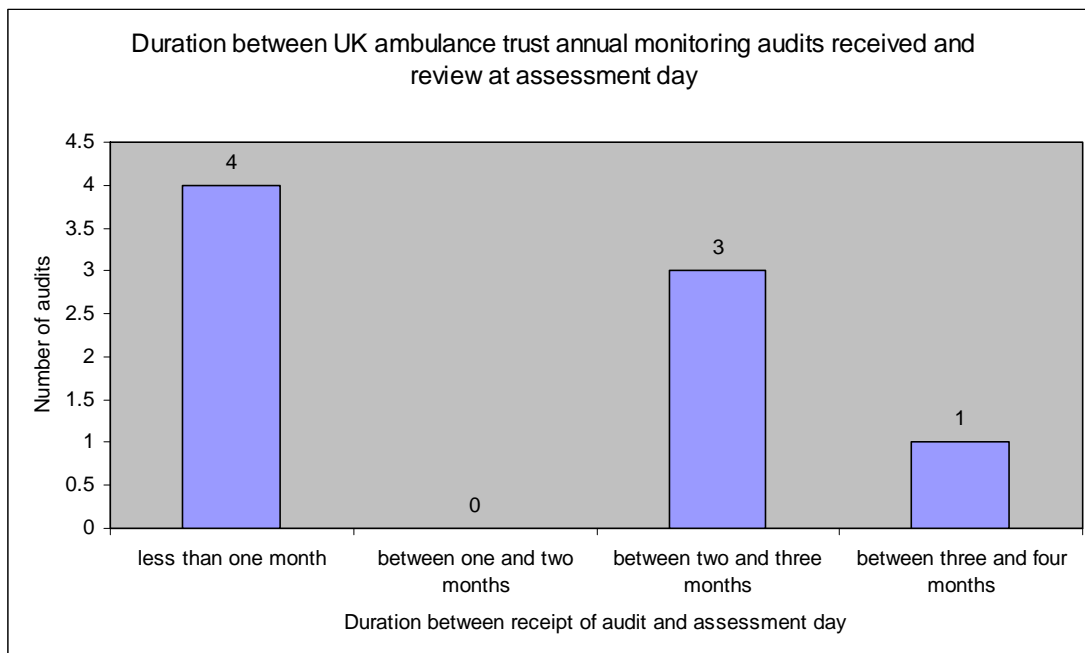


East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS trust submitted 10 weeks earlier than the other UK ambulance trusts and as such this has affected this submissions overall duration.

The graph above illustrates the individual durations for the UK ambulance trusts to complete the full annual monitoring process from the date on which the submission was received to the date the ambulance trust was informed of the outcome. The average duration for the full annual monitoring process for pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts was 3.3 months. The average duration for the full annual monitoring process for all other HPC approved education and training for the academic year 2009/10 was also 3.3 months. Achieving the same overall annual monitoring timescales can largely be accounted for by an increased resource demand within the Education Department; however the UK ambulance trusts complied effectively throughout with annual monitoring process deadlines.

217 annual monitoring audits were reviewed in the academic year 2009/2010. On average the Education Department was able to submit an audit to an annual monitoring assessment day within 5 weeks of receipt. UK ambulance trusts

programmes went to an assessment day on average within 6 weeks of receipt. Although this is not a significant delay, it had originally been planned that all 8 UK ambulance trust audits would be reviewed in one assessment day, and that the time to review the UK ambulance trust audits at an assessment day would be significantly less than 5 weeks. On 15 June 2010, 5 UK ambulance trust audits were reviewed. A second assessment day was required and this was undertaken on 3 August 2010. The graph below reflects this split between the two assessment days.



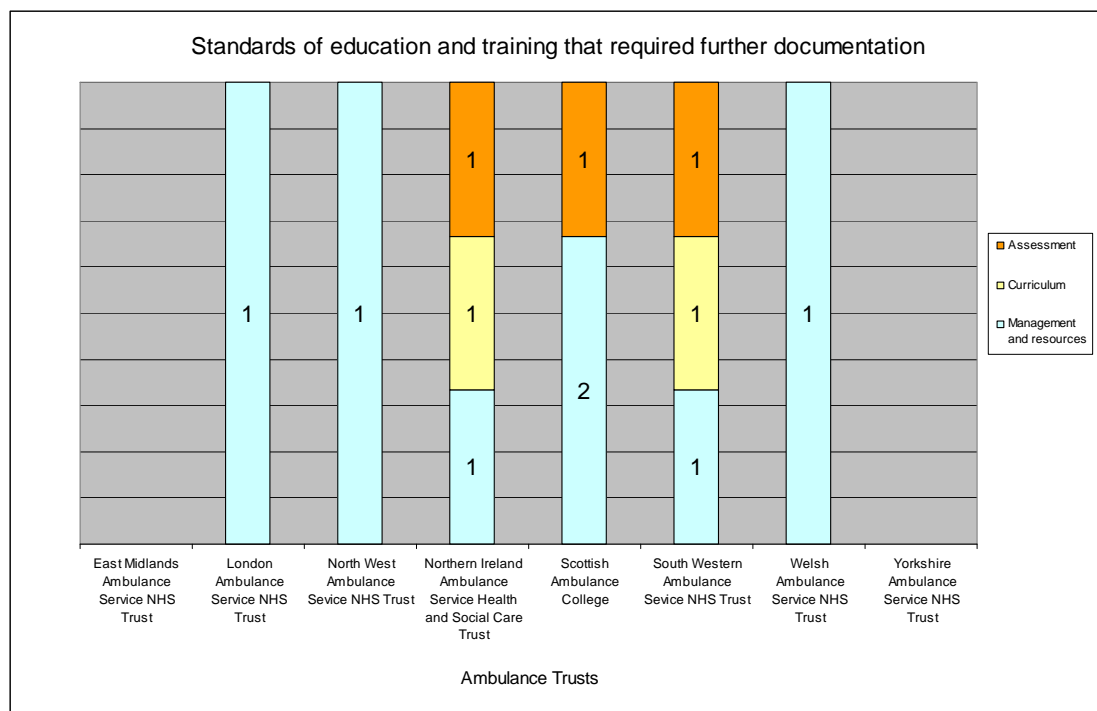
The main factor that caused the UK ambulance trust annual monitoring process to be delayed and to impact on Education Department resources was that the Education Department was required to undertake a second unplanned assessment day. Although we do not record the exact duration that each audit takes to be reviewed, the UK ambulance trust programmes took on average 75 minutes each to review. Normal operational planning is based around 45 minute reviews for each submission. The extended duration can be attributed to a variety of reasons including:

- comprehensive nature of the submission with some documentation lacking relevance;
- documentation inaccurately referenced with visitors unable to find documentation that the education provider stated as being submitted;
- an apparent lack of understanding of the retrospective nature of annual monitoring with documents being submitted well outside of the required timeframes including confusion between the changes that had been looked at during the approval process and those which had taken place since; and
- the submission of major changes within the documentation

The outcomes from the UK ambulance trust annual monitoring assessment days differ in comparison to the outcomes from all the other annual monitoring assessment days in the 2009/2010 academic year. 6 out of 8 the UK ambulance trust annual monitoring audits required additional documentation. This compares with 55 out of 217 audits requiring additional documentation for all other pre-registration education and training going through the annual monitoring process this year. The requirement to seek additional documentation does have a small impact on the resource provision within the Education Department as some post assessment day action is required. All the UK ambulance trusts that were asked for additional documentation provided this on time and in line with our operational requirements.

Standards of education and training

If visitors request further documentation they frame requests around specific standards of education and training. In the amended UK ambulance trust annual monitoring review the visitors were asked to make a recommendation on both the standard annual monitoring submission (which all HPC approved programmes go through) but also a separate recommendation on the additional annual monitoring requirements previously outlined. The graph gives an indication of the area where the visitors requested further information.



Following a review of the audits by the visitors, 6 of the 8 UK ambulance trusts were required to submit additional documentation linked to the management and resourcing of the programmes. From the issues identified all but one was based around standard 3.2, which refers to the effective management of the programme. The recurring issue around 3.2 was that the visitors were not provided with evidence that the programmes continued to be effectively managed

because incomplete annual monitoring submissions were submitted; in particular several programmes did not include internal quality documents and external examiner reports and some included information relating to different programmes. In one submission the visitors noted a change to the programme leadership, which they noted from reviewing an external examiner's report. This suggests UK ambulance trusts did not have a thorough understanding of the annual monitoring process and its requirements.

Two of the UK ambulance trusts required additional documentation linked to the curriculum. In one submission the visitors required additional documentation to clarify issues around the implementation and embedding of professional skills into the delivery of the programme (the first additional requirement in the amended ambulance trust annual monitoring assessment). The visitors were referred to documentation in the appendix of the submission to address this; however the visitors were unable to find this documentation.

Three UK ambulance trusts required additional documentation linked to assessment. From the issues identified 2 were specific to standard 6.1 (which is linked to assessment strategy and meeting the standards of proficiency). In one submission a comment in the external examiners report indicated a lack of clarity around the assessment strategy. The visitors therefore asked for additional documentation to clarify the assessment design and procedure. Another area addressed under assessment related to a change in external examiner. The visitors required clarification that the external examiner was on the appropriate part of the register. In one review the visitors noted changes to the practical assessment guidelines and required further information.

Analysis of visitors comments

As part of the annual monitoring process the visitors have the opportunity to add comments to a visitor's report. A comment would not require any direct response from the education provider however it gives the visitors the opportunity to offer advice on areas the education provider may want to consider addressing for future annual monitoring submissions.

Two main areas were raised by the visitors within the eight UK ambulance trust annual monitoring reports. Three of the reports had comments around issues with confidentiality. The visitors noted that education providers had submitted information about individual students, including results and individual comments in minutes. The second issue raised in the visitors' comments in 75 percent of reports was around the comprehensive nature of the submissions as discussed previously.

Summation of trends

Analysis of the UK ambulance trust annual monitoring visitor's reports shows that UK ambulance trusts did not have a thorough understanding of the annual

monitoring process. In particular a number of UK ambulance trusts did not fully understand the retrospective nature of the process and the requirement to submit specific referenced documentation.

Analysis also shows that whilst a lack of understanding of the annual monitoring process was common to many of the ambulance trusts, the issues arising from each monitoring submission were unique. Where additional documentation was required each programme was asked to submit additional documentation for individual programme specific reasons.

All UK ambulance trusts running pre-registration education and training have successfully completed the HPC annual monitoring for 2009/2010.

Conclusions

It is clear from the data and analysis in this report, that the annual monitoring activities of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts has had some resource burden on the Education Department. This resource burden appears to have been the result of:

- the need to undertake a second UK ambulance trust annual monitoring assessment day due to the individual complexity and comprehensive nature of audit submissions; and
- UK ambulance trust not always understanding the retrospective nature of annual monitoring

Analysis has shown that UK ambulance trusts were not always fully aligned to Education Department annual monitoring processes. However all UK ambulance trust pre-registration education and training programmes have been able to provide additional documentation when required and have been able to do this within operational deadlines. Additionally, all programmes have been able to meet the additional requirements for annual monitoring requested by the Education and Training Committee. Data and analysis also indicates that the outcomes of the annual monitoring activities of pre-registration education and training delivered by UK ambulance trusts do not significantly differ from those of other HPC pre-registration education and training. The report concludes that:

- each programme is distinct;
- UK ambulance trusts are able to conform to the requirements of annual monitoring (though at the next audit cycle for ambulance trusts it will be sensible to ensure that copies of the annual monitoring supplementary information are enclosed in initial correspondence);
- all UK ambulance trust programmes have been granted continued approval by ETP; and
- no further amended annual monitoring process will be required and the UK ambulance trust programmes are able to fit into the normal annual monitoring schedule.

Appendix A – Summary of outcomes

Ambulance trusts	Program Name	Mode of Study	Status
East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust	IHCD Paramedic Award	FT and PT	Continues to meet the standards
London Ambulance Service NHS Trust	IHCD Paramedic Award	Block	Continues to meet the standards
North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust	IHCD Paramedic Award	Block	Continues to meet the standards
Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Health and Social Care Trust	Paramedic-in-training	FT	Continues to meet the standards
Scottish Ambulance College	IHCD Paramedic Award	FT	Continues to meet the standards
South Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust	IHCD Paramedic Award	FT	Continues to meet the standards
Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust	IHCD Paramedic Award	FT	Continues to meet the standards
Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust	IHCD Paramedic Award	FT and PT	Continues to meet the standards