

Data supplement

Some general comments about appraisal

Wholly negative

'This is a pointless exercise which has been an enormous distraction. The people it has been designed to catch are about 2% of the consultant population and it probably won't catch them anyway. The 98% who didn't need catching are now wasting their time on an annual basis for no measurable benefit. It is the logical outcome of an over-managed service. The only thing that surprises me is how readily we have all fallen for it.'

'Waste of time. Demonstration of power over consultants. Intended to bring them to heel. It could all be done on paper like income tax returns. Poor substitute for the proper statistics which should be available to management.'

'A further marker of the erosion of our role as a self determining, trusted, respected profession.'

More negative than positive

'It could be useful for professional development planning, but in practice is the self-serving, arse-covering exercise that gets between me and my job.'

'As I understand it appraisal is an enactment of the new responsibility chief executives carry for the quality of clinical services, which in turn is a reflection of the concept of clinical governance in its original meaning. The underlying process seems more political than truly clinical. I suspect that successful appraisal will be a relatively poor proxy measure for true quality clinically. Revalidation is seen as an alternative to external regulation. The appraisal process is only linked up for administrative convenience and to save money. Is it really a good idea that the two processes are regarded as almost equivalent? I wonder. If appraisal must happen it has to be by a clinical director who knows you.'

Neutral

'It is important that the person doing the appraisal is trusted by the appraisee.'

'I don't think it matters who carries out the appraisal or whether the appraiser is known.'

More positive than negative

'I support the underlying principles but not the bureaucratic reality of the appraisal process. Hopefully in time it will become a less cumbersome mechanism for facilitating our continuing professional development and supporting clinical governance. At the hospital I work at, our annual study leave budget is very likely to be doubled to £2000 per year and I suspect the necessity of appraisal has helped support our case for an approved study leave budget.'

'The most difficult aspect for me is the format of documents which is very confusing and repetitive. Otherwise I have not found any problems either as an appraiser or an appraisee. Whether the process is ultimately useful for General Medical Council purposes is doubtful, but as a personal review and supportive exercise I think it can be useful if carried out sympathetically.'

Wholly positive

'I think it was extremely useful to review what I have been doing for the last year in my clinical job (had been appraised for the managerial part of the job for years). I found some surprises. I also found it useful to have an outside perspective which was another consultant (managerial appraisals are always done by managers). He was constructive in his comments and I have tried to put the suggestions in place.'

'I find appraisal helpful in setting achievable objectives. It has boosted my morale and over 3 years I have seen my position as a consultant mature. It can be gratifying to the self-deprecating to see how good a job we can do in the midst of bureaucratic claptrap. I think it should stay and that everyone should have as professional and attuned appraiser as I have had.'