Unwanted variation in quality of clinical supervision of medical students in Norwegian general practice

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I do not have an affiliation (financial or otherwise) with a pharmaceutical, medical device or communications organization.

Je n’ai aucune affiliation (financière ou autre) avec une entreprise pharmaceutique, un fabricant d’appareils médicaux ou un cabinet de communication.
Norway, 5,35 mill inhabitants

Bergen, 280 000 inhabitants
• 4 universities with medical education in Norway
• Bergen; 2nd largest city in Norway
• Bergen: 6 weeks outplacement in GP 6th year (last).
Norway – The GPs

- 4800 GPs with public contract
- Patient listing system
- List size = 1100 persons
- 48 years
- 43% female
- Self-employed (87%)
- 64% specialist FM
GPs as supervisors
Training and recruitment

- GP Supervisors- difficult to recruit
- Reimbursement 140 Can $ per day
- Self-motivated
- Yearly non-compulsory faculty development courses
- Receive written instructions
- Rarely personal contact between practice supervisors and faculty staff at the university
Background of the survey

• Assess **supervision quality** in general practice outplacement and describe practice experiences

• **Study group**: 149 final-year medical students from two classes in 2018

• Before and after an **increase of outplacement** from 4 to 6 weeks

• Digital questionnaire; frequency and quality of supervision and feedback

• **Perceived learning value** of different supervision experiences, such as observing a role model, and being observed during a consultation
Students´ practice experiences

![Bar chart showing practice experiences](image)

- **Independent consultations**: P<0.01, Δ39
- **Observing the GP**: Δ-2
- **Complete consultations observed by the GP**: P=0.17, Δ5
- **Supervision with feedback from GP**: *P=0.01, Δ17

- 4 weeks spring, N=85
- 6 weeks autumn, N=64
Variations in 6 weeks practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent consultations</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>24-240</td>
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Feedback variations

Students

- No concrete feedback
- <5 times concrete feedback
- more than a 100 times concrete feedback

4 weeks spring N=85
6 weeks autumn N=64
When did you learn the most?

Students were largely positive

Most valuable practice in their education

1. «independent consultations followed by discussion with supervisor»
2. «looking at many patients with different problems»
3. «observing how mentors did their consultations»
How could you learn more?

Many students reported a lack of direct supervision and feedback on clinical performance:

“I did not receive constructive feedback. Only “this is good”, “well done”, “now you are working independently””
Clinical tasks

• Students’ experiences with 49 different clinical tasks showed great variations

• 1/3 of students did not get any experience with performing a gynaecological examination
Conclusions

- Most students profited strongly from general practice outplacement
- The content of their outplacement had great variations in numbers and quality
- The quality of supervision was often low
- We need to improve faculty development programs for family physicians in supervising roles
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