

# **Consultant Management Training**

**at Sligo General Hospital**

**A survey of need prepared by the  
Research & Education Foundation**

**for Sligo General Hospital**

**December 2001**



**Research & Education Foundation  
Sligo General Hospital**

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## Preface

In September 2001 the Medical Board of Sligo General Hospital requested that measures be taken to make provisions for training in management of Consultants at the hospital. The hospital then commissioned the Research & Education Foundation to prepare a document on the requirements for a training programme at the hospital in the context of the current and future changes in the health care sector.

The study involved all consultants working within Sligo General Hospital, Sligo Mental Health Services and Our Lady's Hospital Manorhamilton.

December 2001

Research & Education Foundation  
Sligo General Hospital, Sligo, Ireland

## **1. Introduction**

Consultant work practices are set to change in the coming decades. Forces driving change include the requirement that more patient care be delivered by fully trained doctors, the need for quality assurance in the delivery of hospital services, the introduction of mechanisms for clinical audit and hospital accreditation, shorter more structured training for NCHDs and increasing management responsibility for consultants.

Both doctors and management at Sligo General Hospital support the view that consultant participation in hospital management and governance contributes to the effective functioning of the hospital and is appropriate to the delivery of the above changes. It is also important that clinicians are trained for and supported in this emerging role. With the increased emphasis at Sligo General Hospital on teamwork and recent developments in clinical management, training and accreditation at the hospital, the need for a structured, tailored programme in aspects of management has become apparent. This requirement is supported by evidence suggesting that clinicians need to be facilitated and supported performing management roles (Sanderson, 1997)

There are already courses in management specifically designed for clinicians in Ireland, however they are all located in Dublin and, when travel is taken into account, require a considerable investment of time and resources. A programme with appropriate content and acceptable duration designed for and supported by the majority of consultants at SGH, would facilitate participation and ensure homogeneous training.

## **2. Aims & Objectives**

The overall aim of this working document is to inform the members of the Medical Board Hospital Management and the NWHB about the nature of a local Management Training Programme for consultants.

The requirements for management training were explored by means of: -

1. Postal questionnaire to all consultants on:
  - Previous management experience
  - Time commitment to training
  - Management topics of particular relevance
2. Consideration of recent and anticipated developments in the health care sector that may have implications for the management role of consultants

On the basis of the above, a draft proposal for a management training programme has been prepared.

### **3. Clinicians in Management – Background & Context**

This section presents the national and local management initiatives relevant to clinicians.

#### **Office for Health Management Initiative**

In 1998, the DoHC and the Office for Health Management launched a nationwide initiative to involve doctors and other clinicians in the management of general hospitals. Two of the main aims of this initiative were to:

- Decentralise decision-making and locate authority, responsibility and accountability as close as possible to the point of service delivery and patient care.
- Incorporate clinicians into the executive structure of the hospital service

Sligo General Hospital had acted as one of 4 pilot sites for an earlier DoHC initiative arising from the consultants' contract of 1991. Organisational changes within the hospital in 1994 resulted in the establishment of new medical management posts such as Specialty Coordinators (posts filled in 1994) in every department and a Hospital Clinical Co-ordinator (post filled in 1998).

An evaluation of the first years of the new management structure at Sligo General Hospital was undertaken by an external consultancy "The Farnham Group" in 2000. The recommendations of the draft final report (*Vaughan, 2001*) included that:-

- The role of Specialty Coordinator includes specific responsibility for activity, financial and improvement targets (pg. 37)
- Specific consultant development programmes be developed (pg. 45)
- Consultant staff be encouraged to participate within the NWHB overall management development programme (pg. 45)
- Incentives are offered for consultants to act as Specialty Coordinators conditional upon agreeing and completing tailored management development programmes (pg. 45)

An evaluation report of the Clinicians in Management Initiative on a national level prepared for the Office for Health Management concluded, amongst

others, “*that the **skills and competencies** of those involved in Clinicians in Management Teams need to be developed to enable them to work effectively in teams pursuing objectives in the context of overall hospitals’ strategies.*” (OHM, 2001).

Specialty Coordinator posts are equivalent to the Clinical Director posts that have been introduced in many other hospitals.

## **Forum on Medical Manpower**

The Report of the Forum on Medical Manpower published in January 2001 identified management responsibilities as part of the future consultant role. The report states that (pg 35) “*medical consultants have a key role in: -*

- *Setting up teams*
- *Providing leadership for those teams*
- *Ensuring that people who work at the point of service delivery have a major say in the decision processes as to how funding for health services should be spent*”

The report mentions Clinical Directorates such as the specialty based system piloted at SGH as one model for clinicians to become involved in the management process. These directorates can provide a significant amount of ownership to the specialty thereby increasing the influence in developments and in the choice of spending. The report recommends that in order for Clinical Directorates to work effectively, information systems on staff and costing must be available to individual Clinical Directorates.

There is significant focus on teamwork in the delivery of good quality patient care in the report. Consultants are central to the process of developing new patterns of work and they require the authority, skill and time to work with other healthcare professionals in developing effective clinical teams.

In the context of Clinicians in Management the report concludes that (pg36) “*there is a need to develop clinicians’ management and budgeting skills so that devolution of responsibility can take place at the appropriate point in the service. These new structures will empower clinicians and give them the ability to achieve change more rapidly.*”

## **Other developments**

Clinical Management is being gradually implemented in general hospitals in Ireland. Clinical Audit is already in place at SGH. It is, according to the Manpower Report, essential to ensure the quality and safety of services provided to the public by hospital medical staff. Competent implementation of clinical audit requires significant commitment in terms of time and expertise from a range of professionals in the health service.

Rises in litigation and the move towards the introduction of enterprise based liability insurance have intensified the efforts towards a more systematic approach to protecting patient safety. Risk Management has become the prime tool to foresee and prevent clinical errors and is expected to play a major role in the protection of patients and support of clinicians in decision making. Two departments at SGH are currently undertaking a pilot Risk Management research project. Experience from these departments will form the basis for expansion to the hospital as a whole.

## **Existing Management Programmes**

A number of health care management programmes are available in Ireland, however few are tailored specifically to medical practitioners.

The RCSI and the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) offer a Diploma course in management for medical doctors. The course takes place at the two institutions in Dublin over thirty week day evenings and four full time day sessions. The course covers the following core areas: Management theory and practice, legal aspects of health care, managing for quality, resource allocation and financial management, managing people, planning and information etc.

The RCSI in association with DoHC are on a regular basis organising a 2.5-day residential “Introduction to Management” course for medical and surgical registrars. It covers topics such as: management principles and techniques and their application in health care delivery, organisational dynamics and policy with the health care system, resource management and budgeting, stress and time management, team building, clinical audit and quality improvement programmes.

At present the IMO and the Office for Health Management are making progress on the establishment of a new clinical leadership programme for senior and specialist registrars focusing on the Irish Health Service. It is

envisaged that the programme will be a week-long course supplemented by subsequent single day sessions. Provisional headings for the programme include: Leadership of clinical departments, budgeting, service planning, legal framework, personnel management, team-working and interpersonal skills (IMN, 2001).

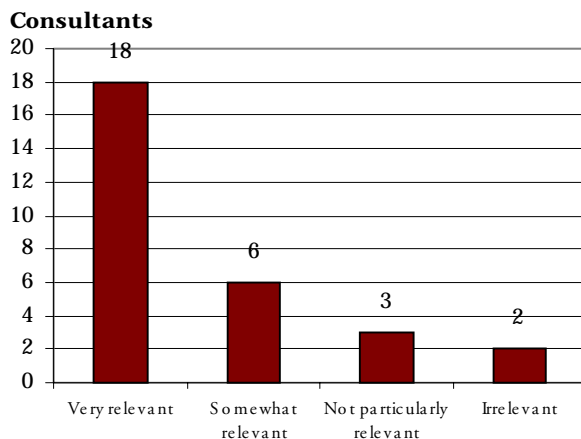
The Action Learning Programme launched by the NWHB Learning and Development Unit in June 1999 is a year-long management development programme based on peer-support in small sets of managers from a cross section of disciplines, workshops on a variety of management skills and the planning and completion of a project involving management of change. The Learning and Development Unit also makes available a number of one-day or half-day courses and seminars on a variety of management skills: Conflict and negotiating, problem solving, managing change, presentation skills, managing absence, managing meetings, team building skills, working smarter not harder.

## 4. Survey on Management Training Needs

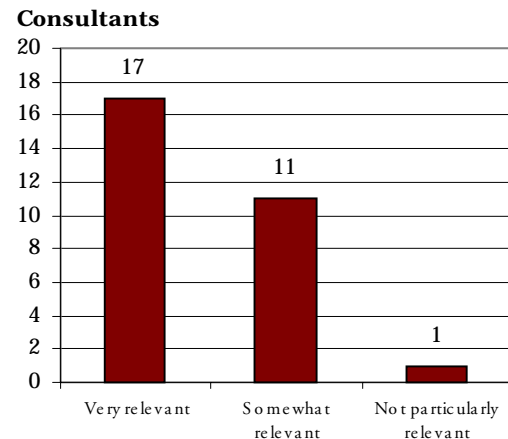
A survey of all consultants at Sligo General Hospital, Sligo Mental Health Services and Our Lady's Hospital on the needs for Consultant Management Training was carried out in October 2001 (Appendix 1). 29 out of a total of 44 consultants returned the completed questionnaire (66% response rate). The results are presented in this section.

### General Training Issues

41% of respondents had received some management training prior to taking up their post, all but one of whom had commenced working at SGH within the past 10 years. Only 5 respondents had received training whilst employed at SGH. Four had attended a NWHB course and one a RCSI programme.



**Fig.1:** *Relevance of management training at the time of employment at SGH*

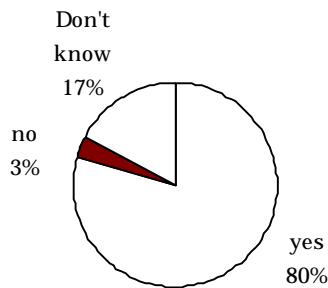


**Fig. 2:** *Relevance of management training at present*

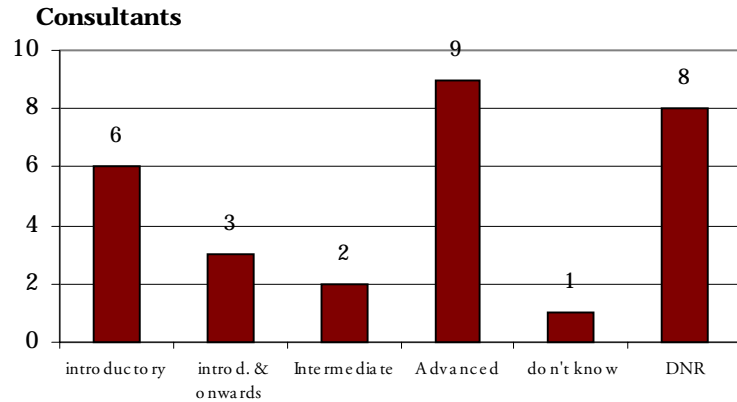
The vast majority (24) of respondents felt that management training was relevant to their role at the time of taking up post at SGH and relevant to an even greater extent (28 respondents) at present (Figure 1 & 2). Some of those that didn't find it relevant at the time of commencing employment commented that the responsibilities of consultants have changed considerably with the new hospital structure, increased emphasis on training, team-working etc. and that management is now a pivotal part of the consultants' role.

The respondents showed a great interest (23 or 80%) in attending a management training programme provided by the NWHB (Fig. 3). Most (14

or 48%) felt that a course progressing further than an introductory level would be most appropriate to their present needs (Fig. 4). However, a significant number (8 or 28%) didn't answer this question.

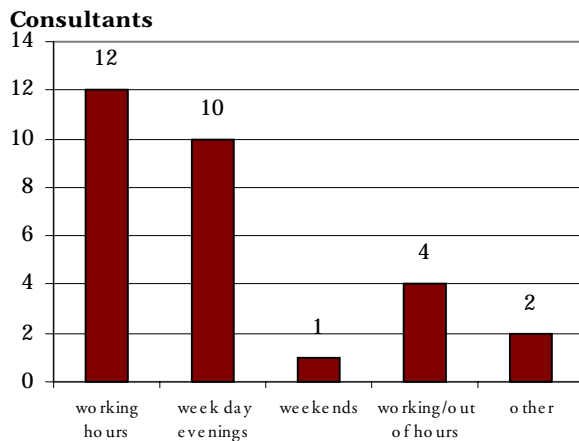


**Fig. 3:** Interest in training at NWHB

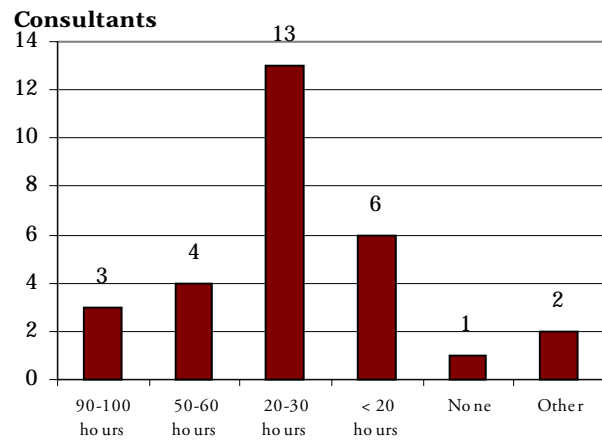


**Fig. 4:** Level of course requested (DNR = did not respond)

It suits the majority of consultants to participate in a management programme either fully or partly within working hours (16). A significant proportion is however willing to devote some week-day evenings to participate (Fig. 5). There was reasonable consensus about the total annual time commitment (20-30 hours) for management training events, excluding home assignments, study etc. (Fig. 6).



**Fig. 5:** Time of week most suitable



**Fig. 6:** Time commitment per year

## Management Training Topics

In order to devise a suitable programme on management training consultants were asked to assign a score from 1-4 indicating the perceived relevance to each of 26 topics on a list (1 = not relevant, 4 = very relevant). The sums of the scores of the top ten topics are presented in Table 1.

Topic	Sum of scores
Risk Management	101
Management for quality improvement	99
Clinical Audit	97
Legal aspects of healthcare	93
Conflict resolution	89
Health Care policy	88
Resource allocation and financial Management	85
IT Management in Clinical Practice	83
Health & Safety	82
Negotiation skills	81
Team Management	81

**Table 1:** *Relevance of topics (sum). The 10 topics with the highest score are listed. (max score: 4 points x 29 respondents = 116)*

On a separate list respondents ticked the 5 topics they deemed appropriate for inclusion in a course over the coming year. Table 2 lists the topics with the highest score when adding the number of ticks.

Topic	Sum of ticks
Risk Management	22
Resource allocation and financial Management	12
Clinical Audit	11
Legal aspects of healthcare	11
Health care policy	10
Management for quality improvement	8
IT management in clinical practice	8
Information systems	7
Conflict resolution	6
Time management	5
Project management	5

**Table 2:** *Topics requested for the coming year. Respondents chose 5 topics from a list of 26. The 10 topics with the highest score are listed.*

The topics of particular relevance to the respondents can be categorised as

- Contextual awareness
  - health care policy
  - legal aspects of health care
  
- Functional & operational skills and knowledge
  - management for quality improvement
  - resource allocation
  - risk management
  - clinical audit
  - IT management
  - information systems
  - health & safety
  
- Interpersonal and team skills
  - team management
  - conflict resolution
  - negotiation skills
  - project management

## 5. Programme proposal

Based on the recommendations of the Manpower Report and the Farnham Report, the introduction of clinical governance, the continuously developing role of clinicians in the executive hospital management structure and the information from the present survey of management training requirements it is proposed that:

The NWHB provide a Management Training Programme locally:

- of 20-30 hours duration
- during working hours
- starting at introductory level moving to more advanced level
- topics covered:
  - Risk Management
  - Clinical Audit
  - Health Care Policy
  - Legal Aspects of Health Care
  - Resource Allocation and Financial Management
  - Quality improvement
  - IT management in Clinical Practice
  - Team building

Day-courses training staff in a variety of personal and interpersonal skills (conflict resolution, project management, time management, managing meetings, team building etc.) are available at the NWHB. These topics pervade all disciplines of management and would not necessarily be separately required for a programme specifically tailored to suit consultants' needs. For personal and interpersonal skills development it may be appropriate for consultants to participate in the management development programme already offered by the NWHB.

## References

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Sanderson, D. *Managing Medicine - A Survival Guide.* FT Healthcare. 1997

*Clinicians in Management: A Review of the Initiative and Pointers to the Way Forward.* Office for Health Management. 2001

Vaughan, Christopher. *Sligo General Hospital Clinicians in Management Evaluation.* The Farnham Group. January 2001

White, Tony. *Textbook of Management for Doctors.* Churchill Livingstone. 1996

## Appendix 1

# CONSULTANT MANAGEMENT TRAINING SURVEY

1. When did you take up your post as a Consultant at Sligo General Hospital?  
Year: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Did you receive any training in Management Skills prior to taking up your post?

Yes   
No

3. Have you received training in Management Skills while working at SGH?

Yes   
No

If Yes:

- a. Title of Training Course(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Which Centre/Institution provided the training? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. What was the duration of the course? \_\_\_\_\_
- d. How would you rate the course?

*Please tick*

Excellent   
Good   
Basic   
Inadequate

4. Looking back to when you first took up post at SGH, would the provision of appropriate (customised) support in acquiring Management Skills after joining the staff have been:

*Please tick*

Very relevant   
Somewhat relevant   
Not particularly relevant   
Irrelevant

5. How would you assess the importance of you receiving training in Management Skills in the context of your Consultant post at this present time?

*Please tick*

Very relevant   
Somewhat relevant   
Not particularly relevant   
Irrelevant

6. Would you be interested in attending Management Training Events provided by the NWHB?

*Please tick*

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Please indicate the nature of the course you would find most appropriate to your needs at this present time (e.g. introductory course, advanced course etc.)
- 

8. Please indicate the time it would suit you best to participate in Management Training Events:

Week day evenings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weekends	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combination of week day evenings and weekends	<input type="checkbox"/>
During working hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Please tick*

9. Please indicate the time commitment you think you can allow to Management Training Events per year (excluding home assignments, study etc):

90-100 hours (equivalent to Man. Dip. Course at RCSI)	<input type="checkbox"/>
50-60 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
20-30 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
< 20 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Please tick*

10. Please indicate the relevance of the listed topics for **your** management training by **assigning a score** from 1-4 to each topic  
 (1 = not relevant, 2 = little relevance, 3 = moderately relevant, 4 = very relevant)

	<i>Please tick</i>			
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Health care policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management for quality improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clinical Audit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisational dynamics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IT Management in Clinical Practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operations management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical Ethics and Research Ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal aspects of Health Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resource allocation and financial management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stress management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delegation Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interview techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Presentation Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negotiation skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpersonal effectiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conflict resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dealing with the media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Please indicate 5 topics you would wish to have provided as part of Management Skills Training Events in the next year.

*Please tick 5 topics*

- Health care policy
- Management for quality improvement
- Clinical Audit
- Risk management
- Organisational dynamics
- Information systems
- IT Management in Clinical Practice
- Operations management
- Change management
- Medical Ethics and Research Ethics
- Legal aspects of Health Care
- Resource allocation and financial management
- Project management
- Managing meetings
- Stress management
- Time management
- Team management
- Delegation Skills
- Interview techniques
- Presentation Skills
- Communication skills
- Negotiation skills
- Interpersonal effectiveness
- Conflict resolution
- Dealing with the media
- Health and Safety
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_