

University of Tasmania Open Access Repository

Cover sheet

Title

Self-assessment in General Practice Vocational Training

Author

Goldman, SP

Bibliographic citation

Goldman, SP (2007). Self-assessment in General Practice Vocational Training. University Of Tasmania. Thesis. <https://doi.org/10.25959/23210756.v1>

Is published in:

Copyright information

This version of work is made accessible in the repository with the permission of the copyright holder/s under the following,

Licence.

If you believe that this work infringes copyright, please email details to: oa.repository@utas.edu.au

Downloaded from University of Tasmania Open Access Repository

Please do not remove this coversheet as it contains citation and copyright information.

University of Tasmania Open Access Repository

Library and Cultural Collections

University of Tasmania

Private Bag 3

Hobart, TAS 7005 Australia

E oa.repository@utas.edu.au

CRICOS Provider Code 00586B | ABN 30 764 374 782

utas.edu.au

Self-assessment in General Practice Vocational Training

Susan Peta Goldman
B Ed, Grad Dip Soc Sci

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

School of Human Life Sciences
University of Tasmania
December 2007

Candidate Declaration

I certify that the thesis entitled *Self-assessment in General Practice Vocational Training* submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Tasmania contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis. To the best of my knowledge and belief no material has been previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

Susan Peta Goldman

19 December 2007

Statement of Access

This thesis may be made available for loan and limited copying in accordance with the *Copyright Act 1968*.

Publications and Presentations

The following published works and presentations arose from the self-assessment study in this dissertation:

Goldman, S. (1998). National medical educator and supervisor focus group data. Unpublished transcript.

Goldman, S., Jasper, A., & Wellard, R. (1998). *A pilot study to evaluate registrar views on outcomes of the RACGP Training Program*. Melbourne: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Goldman, S. (1999a). *A study of registrar views to evaluate outcomes of the RACGP Training Program*. Melbourne: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Goldman, S. P., Swerissen, H., Jasper, A. A., & Wellard, R. F. (1999). Self-reporting of competence by general practitioners with vocational training. *Focus on Health Professional Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 1(2), 50–59.

Goldman, S., Jasper, A., & Wellard, R. (2000). *A study of registrar views to evaluate outcomes of the RACGP Training Program*. Melbourne: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Goldman, S. (2000b). *A pilot study to evaluate supervisor views of general practice vocational training*. Melbourne: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Goldman, S. (2000d). *Supervisor views on aspects of the RACGP Training Program*. Melbourne. Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Goldman, S., Cooper, B., Jasper, A., & Wellard, R. (2001). *The effects of gender and locality on registrar views of the Training Program*. Melbourne: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Goldman, S., Jasper, A., & Wellard, R. (2001). *A further study of registrar views to evaluate aspects of general practice vocational training*. Melbourne: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Goldman, S., & Jasper, A. (1998). *GP Training towards the 21st Century*. Paper presented at the RACGP National Medical Education Conference, Canberra.

Goldman, S. (2000a). *A comparison of registrars under new training arrangements with those who were not*. Paper presented at the National Medical Educator Conference, Sydney.

Goldman, S. (2000c). *Does general practice vocational training achieve its objectives?* Paper presented at the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Annual Convocation, Sydney.

Cooper, B., Goldman, S., Jasper, A., & Wellard, R. (2001b). *Deconstructing feedback*. Paper presented at the National Medical Educator Conference, Townsville.

Acknowledgements

A large team of individuals provided support and encouragement during the completion of this project. Professor Madeleine Ball provided supervision and ongoing support for my research. With her encouragement, the research and the dissertation came to fruition. Associate Professor Dominic Geraghty also deserves a thank you for his help during the last stages of the submission of the thesis. I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of Dr Rod Wellard. In addition to providing support for the research on behalf of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Rod provided his own insights from an educational perspective. Amy Jasper, also from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, played an important part in providing ongoing support for the research.

I was fortunate also to have the help and assistance of Dr Chris Peterson. As well as statistical assistance and comments on drafts, Chris provided invaluable support and inspiration. Heather Gardner was another valuable support person who patiently proof read the dissertation.

There were 1500 trainees over three years, who contributed their valuable time in completing questionnaires and providing their views about general practice vocational training. Without the trainees' preparedness to declare frankly their own strengths and weaknesses, there would not have been a self-assessment study. A thank you is also due also to Glynis Ramsay whose administrative assistance was outstanding. A dedicated crew of telephone callers, largely responsible for the high response rates for the three surveys, also deserve my thanks.

Finally, I thank Dr Stephen Goddard who has supported and encouraged me, not only on this journey, but also in life.

Contents

Candidate Declaration	iii
Statement of Access.....	iv
Publications and Presentations	v
Acknowledgements	vii
Abstract	xvi
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
The Beginning of the Evaluation of General Practice Training	1
Context.....	2
Evaluation Approach of the Outcomes Evaluation Unit	3
Origin of the Self-assessment Study.....	4
Research Study Strategy and Questions	5
Significance of the Self-assessment Study	7
Thesis Overview	9
Chapter 2: General Practice Vocational Training.....	11
Origins	11
Influences on the Curriculum	17
The Development of Australian General Practice Competencies	18
Summary of the Origins of General Practice Vocational Training	22

Chapter 3: Perspectives of Learners.....23

The Field of Self-assessment Studies and General Practice	
Vocational Training.....	23
Self-assessment and Educational Evaluation	26
Attitudes to Training	26
Summary of Self-assessment and Educational Evaluation	35
Validation Studies.....	37
Questions Around Validation Studies and Self-assessment	38
Interpretations Around Difficulties of Validation Studies....	41
Summary of Validation Studies.....	43
Interventions to Teach Self-assessment.....	44
Summary of Interventions to Teach Self-assessment.....	45
Current Frameworks for Self-assessment	45
The Need for Self-assessment in Medical Education	46
Benefits of Self-assessment	47
Assessment as a Collaborative Process	48
Measurement Rigour versus Educational Relevance.....	49
Changing Methodologies.....	50
Summary of Current Frameworks for Self-assessment.....	51
Towards a Model for Evaluating Training	51

Summary of the Field of Medical Vocational Training and Self- assessment Studies.....	52
Chapter 4: Perspectives of Medical Educators and Supervisors.	54
Origins of Experiential Learning and Self-assessment.....	55
Uncertainty in Medicine.....	58
The Critique of Traditional Models of Learning and Teaching in Medical Education	60
Influential Theories in Australian General Practice Training.....	62
Reflective Practice.....	64
Theoretical Basis for Reflective Practice.....	65
Reflection-in-action	66
Summary of Reflective Practice.....	71
Adult Learning	71
The Need to Know.....	72
Learner's Self-concept.....	74
The Role of the Learner's Experience—Emphasis Upon Experiential Techniques and Peer Learning	77
Readiness to Learn.....	78
Orientation to Learning.....	79
Motivation.....	80
Conclusion on Influential Theories on General Practice Vocational Training.....	81

Chapter 5: A Study of Aspects of General Practice Vocational Training.	84
Aims	84
Design Considerations.....	85
Research Strategy	88
Hypotheses.....	91
Ethics	93
Method.....	93
Procedure	98
Questionnaire Development.....	100
Sample.....	103
Recruitment	103
Questionnaire Data Analyses	104
Comparison of Questionnaire and Examination Data.....	107
Summary of the Design of the Self-assessment Study	107
Chapter 6: Study Findings.....	109
Characteristics of Respondents.....	109
Self-assessed Competence	109
Domain One: Communication Skills and the Patient-Doctor Relationship	112
Longitudinal Results on Domain One	115

Domain Two: Applied Professional Knowledge and Skills	116
Longitudinal Results on Domain Two	121
Domain Three: Population Health and the Context of General Practice.....	122
Longitudinal Results on Domain Three	125
Domain Four: Professional and Ethical Role	126
Longitudinal Results on Domain Four.....	129
Domain Five: Organizational and Legal Dimensions	129
Care of Particular Patient Groups.....	133
Longitudinal Results on the Care of Particular Patient Groups	139
Care of Patient Presentations.....	141
Longitudinal Results on Patient Presentations.....	145
Satisfaction	145
Longitudinal Findings on Satisfaction	149
Satisfaction and Self-assessed Competence	149
The Relationship Between Self-assessments and Examination Results	154
Self-assessed Competence.....	154
Satisfaction	156
Findings in Relation to Study Hypotheses	156

Chapter 7: Discussion of the Self-assessment Study.....	158
Reflections	158
Study Research Questions and Contribution.....	159
Methodology	161
Limitations	163
Perspectives of Learners and Self-assessed Competence	
Findings	165
Stage of Training	167
Gender	169
Locality	170
Workload	171
Longitudinal Results	173
Perspectives of Learners and Satisfaction Findings	173
Perspectives of Educators and Study Findings.....	178
Conclusion	182
References	185
Appendix A.....	200
Appendic B.....	232
Appendix C.....	269
Appendix D.....	271

List of Tables

Table 1: Characteristics of current and former trainees.....	110
Table 2: Further characteristics of current and former trainees.....	111
Table 3: Stage of training by Domain one.....	114
Table 4: Workload by Domain one	115
Table 5: Longitudinal findings for Domain one	116
Table 6: Stage of training by Domain two.....	118
Table 7: Stage of training by referrals	119
Table 8: Workload by Domain two.....	119
Table 9: Workload by further items in Domain two	120
Table 10: Longitudinal findings for Domain two	121
Table 11: Stage of training by Domain three	123
Table 12: Stage of training by public health items	124
Table 13: Longitudinal findings for Domain three	125
Table 14: Stage of training by Domain four	127
Table 15: Workload by Domain four	128
Table 16: Longitudinal findings for Domain four	129
Table 17: Stage of training by Domain five	131
Table 18: Workload by Domain five	132

Table 19: Stage of training by particular patient groups	134
Table 20: Stage of training by women to indigenous people	135
Table 21: Stage of training by people with mental illness to chronic conditions.....	136
Table 22: Workload by particular patient groups.....	138
Table 23: Workload by women.....	139
Table 24: Workload by men to people with chronic conditions	140
Table 25: Workload by people with disabilities.....	141
Table 26: Longitudinal findings for particular patient groups.....	142
Table 27: Predictors of self-assessed competence for year one.....	151
Table 28: Predictors of self-assessed competence for year two	153
Table 29: Predictors of self-assessed competence for year three	154

Abstract

- Objectives:*** This dissertation explores the utility of self-assessment for trainee general practitioners in Australia and examines the implications of self-assessment for skills acquisition by reflecting upon educational theory and research.
- Aims:*** The study at the core of this dissertation aims to evaluate general practice vocational training from the perspective of learners using self-assessment. Using a model developed from the self-assessment literature, the study examines the extent to which trainees view themselves as competent in key curriculum areas. Research questions consider whether participation in general practice training results in a measurable increase in self-assessed competence in the key areas of general practice training, and to what extent trainees are satisfied with the program. Also considered is the relationship between the two concepts of satisfaction and self-assessed competence, and the correlation between examination results and self-assessments.
- Method:*** Qualitative analysis of empirical research on self-assessment studies in medical education and selected theories of adult and experiential learning produced a model with which to evaluate aspects of general practice vocational training from the perspective of the learner. A national sample of trainees of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners participated in a three-year longitudinal panel study from 1999 to 2001.

Results:

Six hundred and twenty-two trainees completed the survey in year one, 549 trainees in year two and 472 trainees in year three. The sample mirrored that of the population of general practice trainees. A sample of 161 trainees participated in all three surveys and their results on competence and satisfaction were compared over time. The model tested provided information about the significance and role of self-assessment to evaluate aspects of general practice vocational training from the perspective of the learner. It established that participation in general practice vocational training resulted in an increase of self-assessed competence in areas of the curriculum, and that trainees were generally satisfied with their training experiences. The variables of stage of training, gender, locality and workload provided insights into the utility of trainee self-assessments, particularly in relation to their strengths and weaknesses. The results suggest that as they progress, the longitudinal cohort of trainees viewed themselves as improving an average of nine percent in their self-assessed competence rating in the five domains of general practice, seven percent for the care of particular patient groups and 11 percent for the management of particular patient presentations. This pattern of consistent differences, in the same individuals over time, supported the idea that a process is at work whereby trainees' confidence improved as they progress through training.

Implications: The baseline data emerging from this study provide findings that might usefully contribute to the debates surrounding future training needs and self-assessment, and the enhancement of the conditions around the delivery of general practice vocational training. This is particularly pertinent to the environment of general practice vocational training, in which there are multiple training providers, and to the development of continuing medical education.