

Endocrine training in the UK: A survey of higher surgical trainees

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Purpose. We looked at the current perceptions of higher surgical trainees in the UK with regards to individual exposure/experience in endocrine surgery. We aimed to gain knowledge of the current deficiencies in the FRCS syllabus and methods by which this can be improved. Methods. A web-based questionnaire was distributed amongst higher general surgical trainees in the UK. The questionnaire looked at current exposure and expected numbers of procedures performed by the end of training. We explored expectations of trainees allowing quantitative and qualitative analysis of what the current restrictions of training are. Results. The questionnaire was distributed to all higher surgical trainees in the UK numbering over 1000. Provisional results show that numbers of cases performed varies greatly with most falling short of the numbers they expect they would like to have performed by end of training. Specialised workshops and simulator based training was looked upon favourably as an adjunct to surgical procedures. Lack of exposure to acceptable/significant volume of cases was thought to be the most important factor in undermining training to become an endocrine surgeon with lacking in the current FRCS syllabus as contributory factor. Conclusion. Endocrine surgery remains the only subspecialty in the UK that does not offer indicative numbers of operations which should have been performed by the end of surgical training. High-volume centres should be identified and training placements offered to higher-level trainees who wish to pursue a career as endocrine surgeons. These findings will be shared with the national speciality advisory committee with regards to deficiencies in the current UK training syllabus.