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Coping and the plain radiography student: Professionalism and the crippling dilemma of accountability before and after graduation

P220

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Background: While the HCPC standards for radiography have not altered significantly since their initial publication, an examination of current NHS medical imaging workload data and case mix[1,2] reveals that real-world medical imaging practice itself is undergoing a period of sustained change and increasing professionalisation. This movement places enhanced accountability on even the most junior of clinicians, against an escalating variety of practical clinical tasks. Building on the work of Sloane and Miller[3] regarding radiography unit managers' perceptions around the "fitness for purpose" of new radiography graduates, the findings detailed herein explore in greater depth the relationship between contradictory structural pressures in UK Higher Education (HE) and the NHS.

Methods: Using a Straussian model of Grounded Theory[3,4] extended accounts provided by N=20 radiography department leads were analysed.

Results: Three themes emerged:

1. Participants voiced a degree of frustration around having to chase new graduates to undertake core roles and professional activities
2. Newly qualified staff were regularly reported to have difficulty in maintaining a work life balance in 24/7 medical imaging services
3. Recent graduates found difficulty in taking responsibility for their own mistakes.

Conclusions: The recent shifts in accountability-modelling in HE and the NHS place new radiography graduates in a profoundly difficult position regarding their adaptation/coping capacities. Shifting suddenly from an environment (HE) in which nearly all accountability is presently placed upon their lecturers and clinical tutors, into a professional context (NHS) in which all accountability is placed upon them, was noted to be crippling for them in many cases.


Select me! preparation for employment using workshops and speed dating interviews

P221

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UK Diagnostic Radiography students study similar topics as a necessity to meet legislative and clinical requirements therefore it is essential that additional "soft" skills required to gain employment are enhanced to allow competition. Preparing year 3 students in these skills is challenging particularly with large cohorts and many will have limited interview experience. To meet this challenge a new method using a triple workshop approach and speed dating interviews has been introduced with support from the university Employability and Educational Opportunities Department; clinical partners and university lecturers. Workshop 1 introduces students to electronic job searches and selection of appropriate positions. Registration onto NHS jobs takes however direction to other opportunities is given eg private healthcare and the military. Workshop 2 involves small group work looking at ten key interview questions provided by clinical partners. Students discuss and produce answers to the questions. Workshop 3 takes place on the same day as workshop 2- groups of students (4-5) rotate around ten interview stations where an interviewer asks one key question to one student.

Peer feedback is sought by the interviewer re the quality of the answer before giving additional feedback and guidance. A bell indicates time to rotate to the next station- each student will answer a minimum of 2 questions and will give peer feedback on 8 others. This process has been well received with students with positive module reviews. Anecdotal evidence exists from external interviewers that our students out perform competitors leading to 100% employment each year.