
Abstract:

Junior doctors frequently experience delays in routine ward-based procedures. There is little published data on this subject, but it is clear that such delays can have implications in terms of costs, efficiency, length of patient stay, team working and patient safety and experience. We formulated an anonymous online survey to quantify the experiences of foundation year 1 (FY1) doctors with respect to phlebotomy services and intravenous (IV) cannulation. We gathered data on equipment availability, time taken to carry out these tasks and the factors thought to contribute to delays. The results were compared to clinically relevant standards. Between April and August 2012, 199 responses were received. For IV cannulation, 21% of doctors reported equipment availability as ‘very good’, but only 3% said that they were able to find all of the pieces of equipment they needed close to each other (‘essentially in the same place’). Similar results were obtained for phlebotomy. Nevertheless, there appears to be significant room for improvement and we offer recommendations to address delays.