

Introduction:

Despite making up only 12% of the endoscopist workforce, Clinical Endoscopists (CEs) undertake almost a quarter of endoscopies nationwide. April 2023 saw the end of the Health Education England (HEE) nationally co-ordinated clinical endoscopist training programme, with funding diverted to individual training academies.

The South West Endoscopy Training Academy (SWETA) supports CEs in acute trusts across the South West of England in both their training and continued professional development. SWETA also funds a regional training programme for General Practitioners (GPs) with Extended Roles (GPwER), which is currently training 5 GPs. Alongside their clinical training, the GPs complete a comprehensive online educational programme. To enhance their knowledge base and clinical decision making, this online educational programme has been offered to qualified CEs. We present their feedback and knowledge attainment from the programme.

Methods:

Clinical endoscopists from across the SW were invited to join the GPwER Upper and Lower GI online modules. Each module consists of a pre-module assessment to gauge knowledge, live online lectures, interactive case-studies, written assignments and an end-of-module assessment.

Data collected from delegates includes pre- and post- module assessment scores, module completion rates, and subjective feedback from delegates on the online platform, course organisation and the impact of the training on knowledge and confidence.

Wilcoxon rank test is used to identify significant differences in assessment scores from before and after each module. Feedback data is presented narratively.

Results:

10 CEs joined the Upper GI module, and 12 joined the Lower GI module. 80% (n=8) completed the Upper GI, and 83% (n=10) completed the Lower GI module.

The mean pre-module assessment score among the CEs was 52.38% in the Upper GI module and 45.20% in the lower GI module. The online training led to significantly improved mean scores of 74.13% ($p=0.014$) and 70.80% ($p=0.009$) respectively.

Both modules received unanimously positive feedback, with all elements rated at least 4.5 out of 5. In particular, candidates felt that the modules had increased their knowledge of common presentations and conditions, and that the knowledge gained would directly enhance their daily clinical practice. The online platform and course organisation was also unanimously praised.

Conclusions:

Clinical endoscopists provide an essential service, performing high-quality endoscopy across the UK. We describe a novel way of enhancing their clinical knowledge and decision-making by utilising an existing training programme for GPwERs. By allowing CEs to complete elements of this programme we have demonstrated objective and subjective improvements in their clinical knowledge without any additional cost or time outlay. Furthermore our online platform is highlighted as an accessible and easy way of accessing training.