

The Norwich Four Way Assessment

PURPOSE

To help the training practice to become a better training practice. It is an examination of the training process, not of the registrar.

TIMING

Midway through the six month training period so that training issues identified can be modified during the same training period. A 4-way assessment carried out after 5 months is of little value.

PROCESS

The registrar invites a colleague registrar.

The trainer invites a trainer from another practice.

A pre-visit pro-forma covering administrative arrangements in the practice is completed by the registrar and sent to the visitors together with a pre-visit MARS (see above) at least one week prior to the visit.

Adequate time should be set aside for the visit, usually an afternoon or an evening. A hurried lunchtime is rarely profitable for anyone. Visitors may find it helpful to confer informally before the visit. At the visit, each visitor should ensure that they spend time with both registrar and trainer alone. Training issues should be identified and discussed openly and honestly. Potential improvements to the training process should be identified and agreed at the time of the visit. There is no easy way in which to acquire the skills to analyse the training process and to offer constructive comments. It simply comes with lots of practice! Remember just that the 4-way assessment is not in any way a test of the registrar. If deficiencies in the registrar's performance have been identified, as they should with proper use of tools like the MARS, what matters is how those deficiencies have been addressed.

Because of the importance attached to this process of peer review of the training, a report of the visit should be written by the visiting trainer. Comments should be added as necessary first by the visiting registrar and then by the host trainer and registrar. A copy of the final version should be retained by all four parties and the original submitted to the office of the VTS administrator. A course organiser will respond to each report individually.

The JCPTGP has criticised us in the past for the "cosy" nature of the 4-way assessment. No district to our knowledge has anything better. It is up to us to make it work for the benefit of each visited practice.