



THE PHYSICIAN ASSOCIATE AND AEC/SDEC: AN IDEAL MATCH?



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AIMS

The role of PAs is widely recognised within Acute Internal Medicine (AIM) however there are no published analyses of their impact within the Ambulatory Emergency Care (AEC)/Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) setting. We assess the 1-year impact of a permanent PA in AEC at a busy District General Hospital.

METHODS

An online anonymous survey was circulated to 50 acute medicine doctors (FY1 to consultant grades), physician associates, nurses and pharmacists.

RESULTS

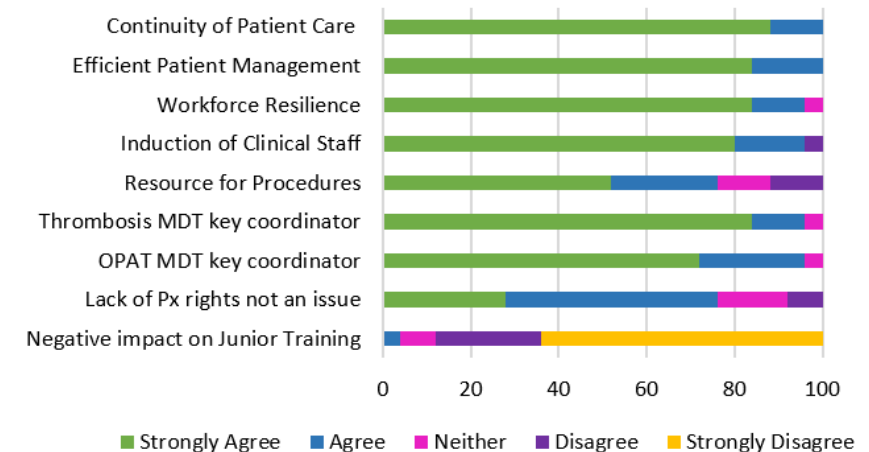
The response rate was 50%, and is displayed in the graph opposite.

Thematic analysis of written comments were representative of these findings.

CONCLUSIONS

The permanency of a PA within the AEC is felt by staff to have an overwhelmingly positive impact. This clinician enhances patient care through continuity and supporting efficient processes. They are able to coordinate complex multidisciplinary team pathways which are not supported elsewhere within the hospital, thus expanding the output from AEC. They support other clinicians, particularly junior doctors, through enhancing departmental inductions and helping with practical procedures. The PA role was felt to have little negative impact on the workload and training of junior doctors.

Impact of PA in AEC



DISCUSSION

Ensuring effective and enjoyable workplaces within a rotating team is challenging. We have found diversifying the AEC/SDEC workforce to include PAs allows a safe and efficient service to endure whilst continuing to provide excellent training opportunities for junior doctors. With the expected formal registration of PAs and the ability to prescribe this will bring, their positive impact will grow.