Optimal training environment for surgical trainees in a 48-hours week

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BACKGROUND:
Adequate surgical training is becoming a fundamental concerning issue for every surgical trainee, particularly in the current European Working Time Directive regulations. Despite constant effort to optimize the training environment at both trainers and trainees level, complete satisfaction has not been achieved.

AIM:
The aim of this study is to identify the optimal training environment from both trainees and trainers prospect.

METHODS:
19-items questionnaire about optimal training environment was sent to all surgical trainees in our hospital at all levels (FY1 to ST3+) focusing on Work Based Assessment tools utilization, usage of simulation to optimize surgical training opportunity, how to convert the normal daily activity into a training environment where progression and development can be assessed and how to get the correct balance between service provision and training opportunity without compromising the patients’ care. A similar questionnaire was also sent to surgical trainers (Consultants) at the same hospital.

RESULTS:
36 Questionnaires

Junior trainees = 16 (11 FYs + 5 CTs)
Senior trainees = 9
Consultants = 11

DISCUSSION
This questionnaire showed wide variation in opinion regarding optimal surgical training environment, even from trainees at the same level of training. Nevertheless, from the consultants’ prospect.

CONCLUSION
We strongly recommend a deanery-based questionnaire or even, a nationwide-based questionnaire across all surgical trainees and trainers in order to establish an ideal training environment to cope with the current challenges in surgical training.