

## An audit of research activity among trainee psychiatrists

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Productivity in research is now an almost mandatory requirement for trainee psychiatrists. There is an increasing awareness among psychiatric trainees of the necessity to participate in and indeed publish research in order to ensure career progression (Junaid & Staines, 1990). This paper describes the research activity of psychiatrists in the training grades, during the year October 1988 to September 1989.

### The study

The *British Journal of Psychiatry*, the *Psychiatric Bulletin* and the *Abstracts of Proceedings of Meetings of the Royal College of Psychiatrists* (supplement 2 to the *Psychiatric Bulletin*) were used as sources of publications with a research component.

Information was collected from the publications, medical personnel officers in the authors' hospitals and by personal communication. The grade of the author, the type of publication, the number of authors per paper, the type of rotation (i.e. teaching hospital or non-teaching hospital) and the area of the country in which the research was carried out were subjected to analysis.

Scotland, Wales, Midlands, North East, North West and South Western correspond to the College Divisions. Oxford represents Oxford Regional Health Authority. East Anglia represents East Anglia Regional Health Authority. London represents the four Thames regions.

### Findings

In the 12 journals during the audit, 45 trainees contributed to 16% of the 253 original research articles and case reports. Of the trainee contributions, 60% were case reports, 40% were original research articles; 16% were single author publications. Senior house officers produced 2%, registrars 62% and senior registrars/lecturers 36% of the publications.

Four centres, the Maudsley, Prestwich Hospital Manchester, the Royal Liverpool, and the Royal Edinburgh accounted for 35% of the publications. Only one publication originated in a non-teaching hospital.

Of the 157 review articles and original research papers in the *Psychiatric Bulletin*, 22% involved contributions by trainees. Review articles accounted for 63% of the trainee contribution. Only 37% were original research papers.

Of the publications, 57% were by single authors. Of the trainees, 55% were of senior registrar or lecturer grade, and 45% were registrars.

Six per cent of the publications were produced by trainees in non-teaching hospitals.

There were 243 entries in the *Abstracts*. Trainees contributed to 32% of the total. Of the trainees, 85% were either senior registrars or lecturers, 15% were registrars. Of the contributions, 5% were produced by trainees from non-teaching hospitals.

TABLE I  
 Published research by psychiatric trainees – October 1988 to September 1989

Area	I %	II %	III %	IV %	Number of teaching hospitals	% Research per teaching hospitals
London	26	40	36	35	8	4.3
Northwest	21	14	16	17	2	8.5
Northern	10	9	15	12	2	6.0
Midlands	10	20	5	11	4	2.8
Oxford	8	3	10	7	1	7.0
Wales	3	0	12	7	1	7.0
Scotland	13	3	4	5	4	1.3
South Western	8	9	1	5	1	5.0
East Anglia	0	0	0	0	1	0.0

Key: I *British Journal of Psychiatry*  
 II *Psychiatric Bulletin*  
 III *Abstracts of Proceedings of Meetings of the Royal College of Psychiatrists*  
 IV Total

Research by trainees is predominantly undertaken in teaching hospitals. Only 3% of all the research came from trainees in non-teaching hospitals.

Table I provides an indicator of regional productivity. The three sources of publications are combined to give information on total production expressed as a percentage by each of the areas. Expressing research productivity per unit teaching hospital indicates that the teaching hospitals in the North West are the most productive. Each teaching hospital producing 8.5% of the research published during the study. The teaching hospital in East Anglia was the least productive.

### Comment

There are certain deficiencies in our methodology. In order to accurately ascertain trends in research productivity a year may be too short a time. The selection of three sources of publications will exclude work published in other journals during the year studied.

Our study shows significant regional variation in research productivity among trainee psychiatrists.

The most productive division is the North West. The least productive division is Scotland. It is most

surprising that East Anglia produced no published research in the sources analysed during this audit.

It is not surprising that London with the Maudsley and several teaching hospital based rotations is the most productive area. Of greater interest is the North West Division. This division has two teaching hospitals but has produced an equal amount of research as the Scottish, Welsh and South Western divisions combined with three times as many teaching hospitals. What are the factors contributing to the high level of productivity in the North West?

### Conclusion

There is a wide variation in the production of research by trainees in psychiatry in the United Kingdom. Further work needs to be carried out to identify those factors which encourage trainees to successfully complete research.

### Reference

- JUNAIID, O. & STAINES, J. (1990) Career progression in psychiatry: perceptions and realities. *Psychiatric Bulletin*, 14, 484-486.

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*American Journal of Mental Retardation*  
*American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*  
*American Journal of Psychiatry*  
*Annales Medico-Psychologiques*  
*Annali di Neurologia e Psichiatria*  
*Archives of General Psychiatry*  
*Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*  
*Biological Psychiatry*  
*British Journal of General Practice*  
*British Journal of Medical Psychology*  
*British Journal of Psychiatry*  
*British Medical Journal*  
*Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic*  
*Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*  
*Ceskoslovenska Psychiatrie*  
*Comprehensive Psychiatry*  
*Convulsive Therapy*  
*Current Work in the History of Medicine*  
*History of Psychiatry*  
*Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*  
*L'Information Psychiatrique*  
*International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*  
*Israel Journal of Psychiatry and Allied Subjects*  
*Journal of Affective Disorders*

*Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*  
*Journal of Audiovisual Media in Medicine*  
*Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Related Disciplines*  
*Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*  
*Journal of the History of the Behavioural Sciences*  
*Journal of Mental Deficiency Research*  
*Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*  
*Journal of Neuropathology and Psychiatry (Russian)*  
*Journal of Psychosomatic Research*  
*Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London*  
*Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*  
*Lancet*  
*Mental Health Nursing*  
*Open Mind*  
*Pavlov Journal of Higher Nervous Activity (Russian)*  
*Psychiatrie Francaise*  
*Psychiatry*  
*Psychiatry Research*  
*Psychological Bulletin*  
*Psychological Medicine*  
*Social Psychiatry*  
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