



Effective Staff Engagement Promotes Academic Medicine Culture

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Introduction

The Obstetrics & Gynaecology Academic Clinical Program (OBGYN ACP) has a mission to improve the lives of patients through excellent clinical care, teaching and research in OBGYN. To fulfill this mission, strong culture with effective staff engagement and teamwork are required. The OBGYN ACP comprises clinicians from KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital and Singapore General Hospital.

Aim

The aim was to assess whether staff engagement initiatives as identified by a multi-dimensional culture survey can improve academic medicine culture after the inception of the OBGYN ACP.

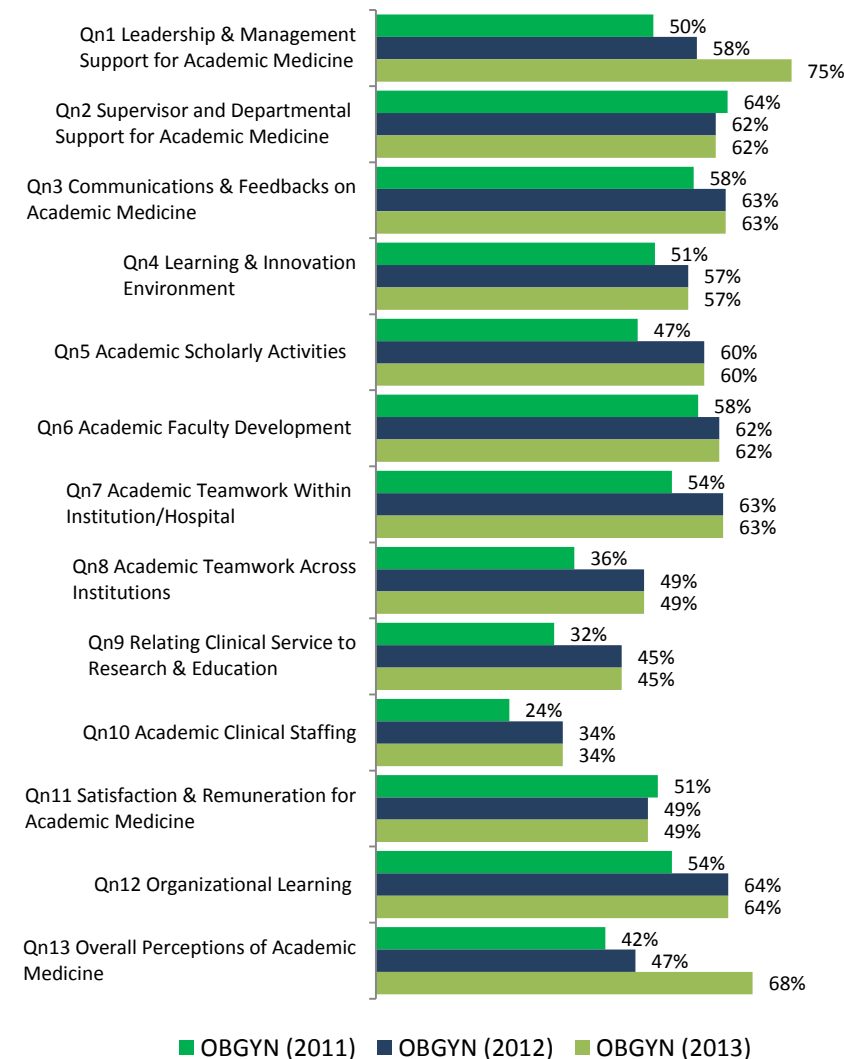
Methodology

A web survey collected data from obstetrics & gynecology (O&G) specialists and doctors within the academic programme on various aspects of academic medicine. Thirteen dimensions relating to the culture of academic medicine were identified in the survey. Each dimensions contains four relevant questions with answers on a 5-point Likert scale. The same survey was conducted for 3 consecutive years since 2011. The survey was sent to all OBGYN ACP faculty and staff. Various focus areas were identified and addressed with appropriate initiatives.

Results

The Academic Medicine Culture Survey was first introduced on 2011 in OBGYN ACP. The same survey was conducted in subsequent year 2012 and 2013.

Percentage of positive responses in various domains of Academic Medicine culture



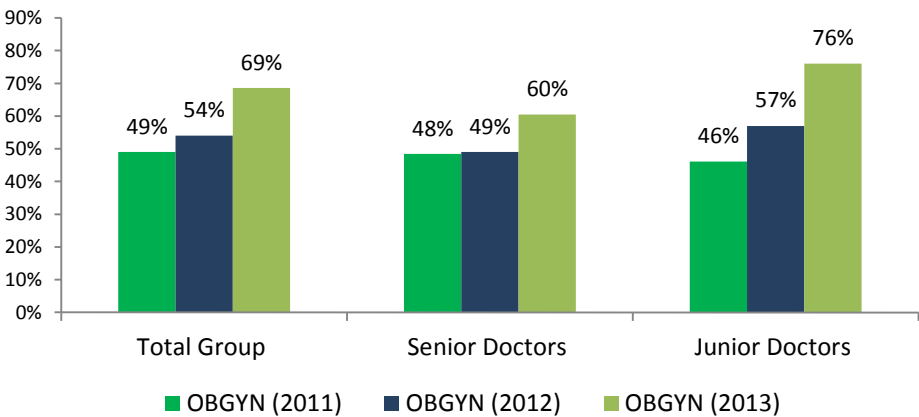
Positiveness in the survey was defined as responses of respondents to ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’ in a positively worded questions or vice versa.

The first survey revealed the top three favorable dimensions (highest percentage of composite positive response) were: Supervisor and Departmental Support for Academic Medicine (64.0%); Communications & Feedbacks on Academic Medicine (58.0%) and Academic Faculty Development (57.9%); and The bottom three dimensions which were areas for improvements were: Academic Clinical Staffing Issue (23.8%); Relating Clinical Service to Research & Education (32.0%); and Academic Teamwork across Institutions (36.3%). Initiatives were launched and enhanced to address these areas.

In the second survey, compared to previous year, there was overall improvement in Academic Medicine culture in 12 out of the 13 dimensions surveyed. There were significant improvements in areas involving Relating Clinical Service to Research & Education (36.0% to 45.0%), Academic Scholarly Activities (47.0% to 59.0%) and Academic Teamwork Across Institution (36.3% to 47.6%). The lowest-scoring dimension in the first survey, Academic Staffing Issue also revealed improvement, from 23.8% to 32.9% in the second survey.

In the third survey, the result showed improvements of academic medicine culture in all 13 dimensions surveyed. The average improvement in positiveness in each dimension was about 13.4%. It revealed significant improvements in Academic Clinical Staffing (32.9% to 54.6%), Overall Perceptions of Academic Medicine (47.0% to 68.3%) and Leadership & Management Support for Academic Medicine (57.9% to 75.4%). The results identified very encouraging improvements of Academic Medicine culture in the OBGYN ACP.

OBGYN ACP: AMC Positiveness Index



Composite results or scores measure 13 different areas of academic medicine culture. They were calculated for each group by averaging the percentages of positive responses on the items within a composite. Positiveness Index is defined as the average of all the composite scores for all the 13 dimensions.

Conclusions

There were positive changes in promoting academic medicine culture with effective staff engagement. The academic medicine culture survey is useful in identifying, assessing and monitoring changes in promoting academic medicine culture. Different initiatives were launched and enhanced to address different areas after the survey each year.

The OBGYN ACP places great importance on developing staff and recognising their dedication. Awards were presented to doctors who excelled in their academic & teaching pursuits during inaugural OBGYN ACP Education Day. A newly established Academic Medicine Education Institute (AM-EI) has been working closely with ACPs to enhance the education mission by offering inter-professional learning and faculty development programs. Junior doctors were also being given opportunities and strong encouragement to teach medical students.

A Pitch for Grant Award was set up in OBGYN ACP to promote clinical and translational research within OBGYN ACP especially amongst junior doctors. Outstanding oral and poster were given to residents and students for their research projects.

Other initiatives included protected educational & research time and appropriate service backfill for clinical care. Nurses were also trained to take more responsible roles in patient care. A Workflow Improvement Committee and various evidence based workshops were set up which brought new efficiencies to clinical service areas. Additional staff engagements include regular email engagements and specific sharing platforms like Education Day, Research Day and Clinical Practice Improvement Day etc.

The survey showed a positive correlation between various initiatives brought by OBGYN ACP since its formation with the overall increase in positiveness in academic medicine culture. In summary, the survey observation is in line with the OBGYN ACP’s efforts and engagement with staff and faculty to enhance academic medicine culture.