

Appendix 1. Topic list for semi-structured interviews with attending surgeons and residents.

Introduction

- Background and objectives
- Information about interview (anonymity, safe)
- Information about participant: years of work experience at the department.

Morbidity and Mortality conference (M&M)

- How do you feel about M&M practice? What do you value? What do you miss/would you like to change?
- Do you consider M&M part of your profession (i.e. core business)?
- What affects whether learning occurs through M&M?
- What affects whether improvement occurs through M&M?
- What is the role of adverse event reporting in this?

Other topics:

Case selection

Prompts:

- What criteria should be used to select cases for M&M and why?
- Could a case of another surgical subspecialty be of educational value (to you)?

Presentation

Prompts:

- Who could best present the case and why? (senior or junior staff; involved in case or not)
- Would a fixed presentation format be beneficial or limiting?
- What information is essential to a successful M&M (e.g. local data)?

Attendance

Prompts:

- To what extent do logistic factors, e.g. OR schedules, influence M&M attendance rates?
- Would attendance rates benefit from mandatory attendance, e.g. with sign-in sheets, or from exemplary behaviour of staff?
- How would personal beliefs or motivation influence attendance rates?

Moderator

Prompts:

- Who could best moderate and how?
- To what extent does the moderator influence success of M&M (e.g. environment)?

Culture

Prompts:

- Is there an open environment, free of shame and blame? What illustrates/influences that?
- If you're at another department, how could you assess whether there is a blame-free culture?
- Example: a postoperative haemorrhage case is presented at M&M, you've also been present in operating room and you now remember that you had doubts about haemostasis, would you mention that? What (potential) consequences could such a comment have?

Plans for improvement

Prompts:

- What affects whether formulated plans of action are successfully implemented?
- Are lessons explicitly formulated and documented? How would this affect implementation?
- How are plans tracked for implementation? Who should be responsible for this?