

The development and application of a protocol evaluating the educational and safety environment of intern training posts in the Republic of Ireland.

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Background

- Compared to undergraduate training, the Intern year in Ireland can be unstructured and lack educational opportunities.
- Medical council has attempted to address this through developing generic job descriptions, and establishing “Network of Intern Coordinators and Tutors” (Medical council, 2001)
- While many interns were positive about their internship when surveyed, there were still issues surrounding protected education time, educational opportunities, and feedback. (Finucane & O’Dowd, 2005)



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Aims

The study had **two key aims**:

- 1) To evaluate the intern training posts in the West-Northwest intern training network according to their clinical learning environment and patient safety climate.
- 2) To utilise data collected from interns to target intern posts for improvement.



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Methods

Stage 1: Questionnaire

- Interns in West Northwest intern training network completed survey at end of each rotation.
- Two measures
 - Postgraduate Hospital Educational Environmental Measure” (PHEEM; Roff, McAleer & Skinner, 2005)
 - Junior doctor-patient Safety Attitudes and Climate Questionnaire (Durani, Dias, Singh & Taub).



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Methods

- Interview schedule developed from Irish Medical Council's eight domains of professional practice.
- Questions relating to perception of aspects of posts including experiences of teaching and patient safety.
- 69 interns interviewed.



Results

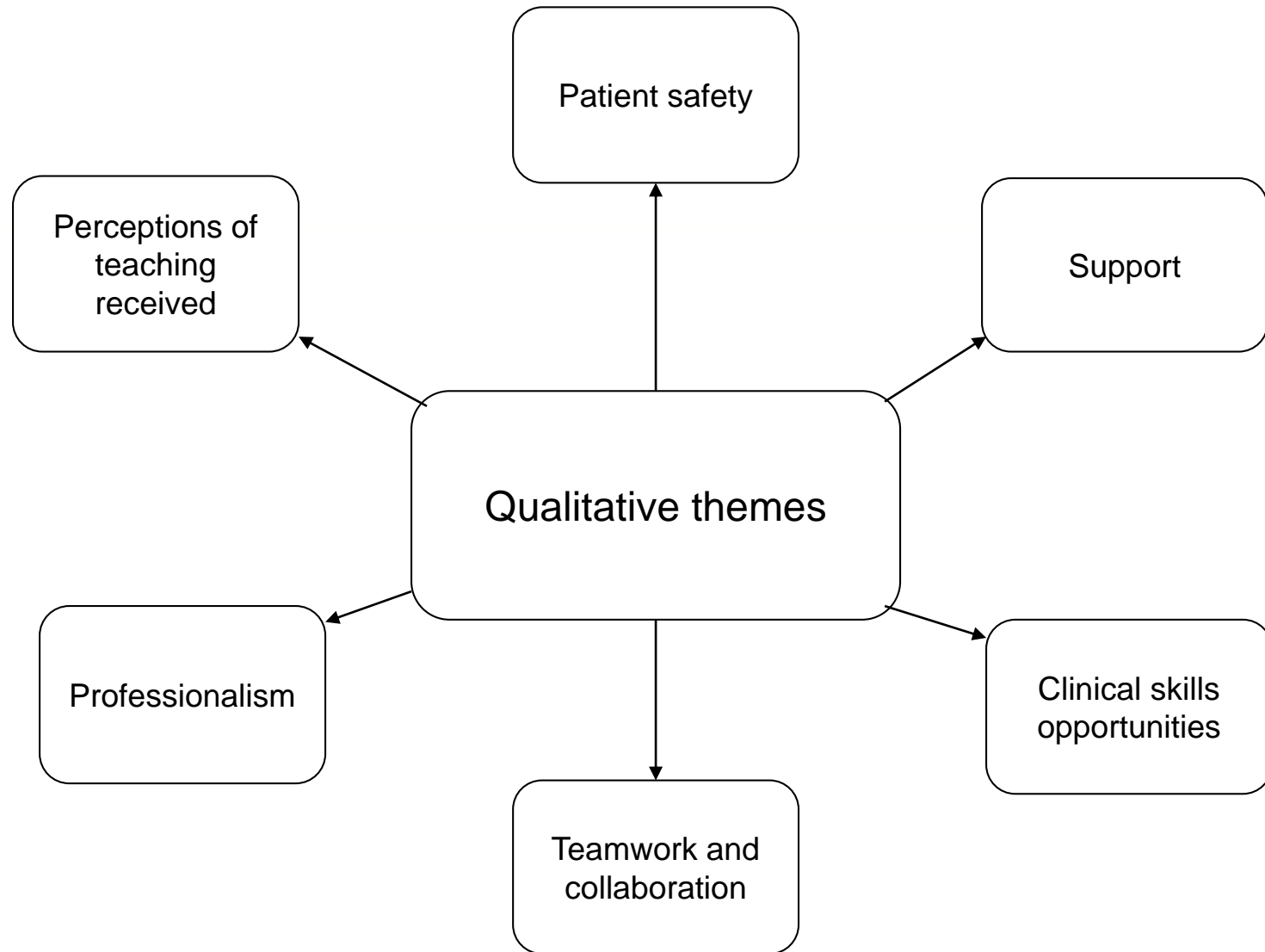
- N=131, 49.6% Female, 89.3% Irish.
- Educational environment was predicted by Time and Specialty.
- Both surgery and “other” specialties had lower scores for educational environment than medicine.
- Safety scores were predicted by Specialty only.
- Surgery was significantly lower than medicine on safety scores.
- Hospital where they completed their posts was not a predictor of either outcome.



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Moving forward

- This study offers a methodology that could be implemented nationally across intern training networks to;
 1. Identify intern posts to be targeted for improvement and
 2. Ensure the intern year constitutes a formative educational experience for all interns.
- Educational environment in surgical posts needs to be examined, and work done on improving that for interns.



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