

Reporting on outcomes of regular medical physics journal club meetings

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Journal club

- Journal clubs have participants discussing merits of publications
 - Assisting health practitioners to stay up-to-date with developments in their respective disciplines
 - Reported as valuable in clinical environments by numerous studies
 - Reviews on running effective reviews have been published - a consistent recommendation is assessment of performance
- The aim of this study was to evaluate the success of a departmental radiation oncology medical physics journal club, by seeking feedback from its participants, per published recommendations

Deenadayalan et al. (2008)
How to run an effective journal club: a systematic review.
J Eval Clin Prac 14:898-911, 2008

Royal Brisbane model

- RBWH has weekly physics meetings (discussing, e.g., service delivery issues, ongoing service development, latest gossip)
- Prior to September 2015, one of these meetings each month nominally included a 30 minute presentation on a publication by a physicist (selected on a rotating schedule)
- This model was similar to journal club organised by radiation oncologists
- Some staff had previously attended journal clubs with this model in other centres; though frequency varied (e.g. 'as-needed' with new AAPM task group reports)

Royal Brisbane model

- This model was replaced with a monthly hour-long journal club in which a (sole) facilitator selected 3-5 recently published papers for discussion, distributed 2 weeks prior to the meeting (to allow pre-reading)
 - Priority was given to articles recommended by participants (uncommon), or authored by physicists known to staff (i.e. we had many Australian papers)
- Attendance was recorded, but not mandatory
 - 1-3 QUT students were usually invited (though often did not contribute)
 - Average of 10 people (of 12 staff members, and students) attended each month
- 10 participants were surveyed on the success of this format 20 months after its introduction (and results categorised as positive, neutral or negative)

Journal club survey

- 15 questions covering attendance, reading habits and satisfaction.

How many journal clubs have you attended?	Has journal club improved your reading habits? (i.e. # papers read)	Has the journal club had an impact on critical appraise skills?
Would you describe the forum as convivial?	Which format of journal club do you prefer? (past or current)	Are you interested in continuing without a major change to format?
Are you happy with how papers are identified for discussion?	Are you happy with a monthly format?	Do you think attendance should be mandatory?
Do you maintain written notes on any articles discussed?	Are you reporting your attendance, as CPD activity or TEAP learning?	Are you happy with attendance of local students?
Do you look forward to journal club?	Have you attended them in other departments?	Any other comments?

Royal Brisbane model

- Number of attendances of respondents varied from 6 (24%) to 20 (100%), with mean of 15 (75%)
- All felt the meeting was friendly
- Most (n=8) were happy with the monthly frequency
- Most (n=7) preferred the current format to the previous
- A majority (n=6) reported an increase in reading habits (exceptions included 2 clinical staff were currently enrolled in PhDs) and ability to critically appraise a manuscript
- A majority (n=6) were happy with identification of papers

Royal Brisbane model

- A majority reported (n=6) only looking forward to journal club conditionally - when they had time to read the papers or where papers were of particular interest to them
- (People frequently attended despite not having read the papers)
- Most (n=8) attendees weren't reporting their attendance in terms of CPD or TEAP learning outcomes (n=8)
- Most (n=9) attendees didn't keep any written notes

Royal Brisbane model

- Only 50% were interested in continuing without a major change
 - This surprised me, given attendance
- The most frequent complaint was the number of papers, with majority agreement that this prevented everyone from reading all of them
- This was identified as limiting both contributions to- and the depth of- discussion
- Other suggestions included having attendees suggest papers and selecting papers with greater local context
- Benefits of journal club were identified, suggesting it's worthwhile

Revised Royal Brisbane model

- Since conducting the survey, some changes were made
- A volunteer is asked to select 1 paper to present on and lead discussion surrounding - we haven't run short of volunteers so far
 - This has resulted in some productive meetings (e.g. conversation of TG100)
- The presentation allows a productive discussion even if attendees have not read that particular paper
- Each month 3 papers are discussed, and 1 editorial/debate
 - Facilitator has prioritised inclusion of short clinical papers, which are quicker to read and simpler to appraise
 - This is perhaps still too many sometimes (depending on clinical load)

Other departments

- PMCC (current): Once a month, attendance is encouraged but not everyone attends. Attendees present on a paper they've read.
- PMCC (historical): Each physicist was responsible for a journal (i.e. PMB, IJROBP), and updated group on recent publications.
- COBLH: Infrequent formal meetings with mandatory attendance, with 2-3 presentations (own choice); and frequent informal ad-hoc chats (when interesting papers are published).
- Genesis: No formal journal club, just informal ad-hoc discussion.
- CMN: Journal club held every 2 weeks, with desktop sharing to other centres. People present on things they've read.
- USyd: Comprehensive meetings held weekly, with focus on particular journal issues.

Other departments

- PAH: Monthly journal clubs, as part of formal CPD program; with one person presenting two papers. Attendance is mandatory.
- MNCCI: Monthly journal club, performed as part of CPD program.
- ICON: Fortnightly national meetings, with teleconferencing, delivered as part of a formal CPD program.
- Saiful Huq & Peter Dunscombe: Frequent journal clubs (e.g. monthly), with mandatory attendance for residents.

- What about yours?