



## How One Hospital Used 360 Feedback for Professional Re-licensing of Physicians

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The world of medicine has seen unimaginable advances in our lifetimes....and lifetimes are becoming longer as a result.

Doctors must keep up to date with new knowledge and procedures if they are to maintain their competence. They now work more frequently in multi-disciplinary teams and must manage patient care with their peers and with other health professionals in the UK National Health Service (NHS).

Since 2004, all UK doctors are required by the UK's General Medical Council (GMC) to provide evidence to their employer, on a regular basis, of their continuing suitability to practice medicine. Assessment is based on appraisal and supporting documentary evidence.

Quantitative data in the form of individual performance statistics are notoriously difficult to collect and validate, given the nature of most doctors' work. How is evidence of **personal** effectiveness and competence gathered?

Poole Hospital NHS Trust introduced 360-degree feedback for its Consultant (physicians) team. The design is based on the GMC Good Medical Practice guidelines. Survey questionnaires were piloted and developed with the help of six senior consultants, using 20/20 Insight GOLD software provided by 360 is us Ltd.

The majority of the Trust's consultants have now participated in 360-degree feedback. They have received feedback from their peers, junior doctors and other colleagues – including ward staff, theatre staff, radiographers, technicians, and medical secretaries. In a few cases, patients and their relatives have also contributed their experiences with consultants' performance in managing relationships with patients.

More than 95% of those invited to complete questionnaires did so. This is a clear indication of the commitment of medical professionals at Poole Hospital to support continuous improvement and deliver top quality care to patients.

Most consultants reacted to the feedback in their reports with positive comments, for example: "I can see why they would say that. There are few surprises. It will stimulate me to do something about it, though." One senior consultant said, "I have been in this role for 15 years, and this is the first time I have had real feedback on how my colleagues perceive me. This has been extremely helpful."

The survey was administered from outside the Hospital. This way, anonymity was guaranteed. An independent party facilitated consultant feedback. One consultant commented, "I can now see how important it is to be helped to make sense of the feedback by a facilitator. It would be easy to dwell on the negative aspects, and end up rejecting the whole lot."

The 20/20 Insight GOLD software made the collection and processing of data very easy. It allowed people the choice of paper or electronic versions of the survey questionnaires, with the production of quality reports.