

Consortium for the Accreditation of Sonographic Education

NEWS

July 2010

This newsletter aims to provide up to date information regarding CASE activities & requirements regarding validation, annual programme monitoring & other relevant issues.

Key Updates from CASE

In this edition of the Newsletter : -

CASE Update

Workshop/Open Forum Dates & Info

Review of May 2010 Workshop

APMR update

Screening Programme Update

Update from June 2010 CASE meeting

The members' representatives to CASE met on June 24th in London to discuss wide-ranging issues on its agenda.

The final amendments have been made to the CASE standard operational procedures (SOPs) to incorporate the small alterations required to parts of the document following the change of administrative body. The final link before they are implemented is to hold a member organisation meeting to discuss the necessary changes to the Memorandum of Agreement and associated financial arrangements. This will take place shortly. Once again, I would like to reiterate that the introduction of the SOPs and the changes in administration will not result in the loss of CASE independence and how it operates as a consortium.

The annual performance monitoring review (APMR) was completed at the beginning of June. Unfortunately this was a little later than scheduled due to unforeseen circumstances. Overall this was a satisfactory monitoring process with good student recruitment, results and progression demonstrated in the majority of programmes. Innovative learning and assessment strategies were also identified. Comments from external examiners were complimentary and programme teams responded quickly and appropriately where challenges were identified. Good student support is generally provided. The programme leaders and training providers should have received an individual letter and now a final email together with the general report for 2008/09 is due.

As previously reported, we are aware at CASE of the difficulties both in completion of the proforma and the sometimes slow review procedure. I can report that discussions are being held *to go electronic* for the 2009/10 process. As we are at the final stages of compiling the queries for the database, if you have any comments or suggestions to make, please can you email me (hrlsupportus@googlemail.com) as soon as possible. Michele Landau will be contacting you in early October with details of the new process. CASE would like to thank programme leaders, external examiners, members of the APMR sub-group and Michele Landau for their assistance in this important process.

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Update from June 2010 CASE meeting - continued

Programme and course accreditation takes up a large amount of time at our meetings. Several programmes were re-accredited this last time. These discussions can be a complex, not only do we agree on the outcome from each accreditation episode but we appoint accreditors for new events. The decisions taken during these discussions are done in the best interests of students, trainees, patients and programme teams. Occasionally it is not possible to approve an accreditation as the full and final report from the accreditors is not available to us. There is then an inevitable delay in accrediting programmes until the next meeting and Chair's action is not always possible. Please can I remind all programme and course teams that CASE does not generally retrospectively accredit a programme or course after the students have commenced their study period. This is only done in exceptional circumstances. The take-home message is, please advise CASE of your intention to (re-)accredit a programme as soon as possible. A timetable for an accreditation is published in the 2009 CASE Handbook, available on the website.

There were several new accreditation applications for which accreditors were appointed. Accreditors are not selected randomly. They are chosen for their educational expertise and ultrasound knowledge that matches the programme or course under review. Also, accreditors must have attended a training session within the last 3-year period. If accreditor training is not valid, this can reduce the number of experts available to undertake accreditation events. There are two training sessions during 2010. A report of the May meeting and details of the October event can be found in other sections of this newsletter. Please sign up for the October workshop if your training period has expired. (If you are unsure, please contact the CASE Coordinator.) There is no registration fee. The next training workshop will be held in London in May 2011. The guidelines associated with accreditor training have not changed and these can be found in the Handbook.

Recently, CASE has received enquiries related to the accreditation of undergraduate ultrasound programmes. Undergraduate education and training in medical ultrasound leading to a BSc (Honours) degree is a hot topic. This is being explored by some training providers to address the severe shortage of sonographers in UK as workloads soar. There are many educational and professional hurdles to overcome before this becomes a reality and it is probably at least three years away from implementation. Currently, CASE may only accredit postgraduate programmes and focused courses as stated in its constitution. However, CASE is always ready to respond to this sort of enquiry and the representatives have asked that the members of the Consortium hold preliminary discussions on accreditation of undergraduate programmes in the future.

A significant number of requests for information on clinical training, assessment and mentoring guidelines have been made to the Office. This is an area of ultrasound education that is important to everyone and currently, the only information related to this part of the students' training can be found in the Handbook. A CASE Open Forum on clinical education will take place at the University of Portsmouth next March (further details can be found in another section of this newsletter). It is hoped that this event will provide the foundations, together with a project recently commissioned by CASE, to inform a paper on clinical education. CASE does not expect the outcome from the project to be available before the beginning of the academic year 2011.

During the CASE year, the Handbook is reviewed for minor alterations and re-issued. Final adjustments are about to take place and the revision will be available on the website shortly. There are no major changes in the accreditation process so there should be no problem for those programme teams who have been working with the 2009 document. All CASE communications are now taking place by email or through the website. However we are continuing to ask programme teams to send hardcopy documents during their accreditation process. Quite simply, the printed documents are by far the easiest to use for the accreditors during the many discussions and meetings. Please see details in the Handbook.

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Update from June 2010 CASE meeting - continued

This is my final CASE meeting report for the Newsletter. My term as Chair will be complete at the beginning of October. It has been a very busy period with several challenges to face (but I never could resist a challenge), the loss of a member organisation, introduction of focused course accreditation, development of the standard operational procedures, a change in CASE administration to name but four and one that I never expected would come my way. I would like to thank past and present CASE representatives and all accreditors especially those involved with the organisation of the training workshops for constructive comments, Alice and Michele and the host administrative bodies for your help and support over the last two years. I will remain with CASE until my tenure as the APMR Group lead is completed next year.

The future looks exciting – focused course accreditations increasing, practice regulation on the horizon, undergraduate programme accreditation a possibility – all of which will probably affect the work of CASE. Please give all the support you can to the consortium, its new chair, Lynda Mulhair, member organisations, their representatives, the accreditors and coordinator.

The next meeting of CASE will take place on Thursday 7 October 2010.

Rosemary Lee
CASE Chair

Training for CASE Accreditors and a Report from the Bristol Workshop

All current CASE accreditors are asked to attend 1 training workshop every 3 years in order to retain their skills and a place on the register. Newly appointed accreditors must attend a workshop prior to being placed on the register and participating in an event as a shadow accreditor (CASE Standard Operational Procedures, 2010). Training is necessary in order to ensure that wherever possible the accreditation service that CASE offers is of a similar standard and all programmes and courses are treated equitably.

Each workshop is structured in such a way as to ensure that there is a variety of expert presentations and plenty of participant discussion. Topics of common interest relating to the lead, co- and shadow accreditor roles and pertinent issues identified in feedback from previous workshops are included in the presentations. Previously there had been a tendency to book up every single minute with presentations and focused activities. There is now an informal, flexible approach to the day allowing for detours into matters of particular concern and providing more 'free' time. Activities such as working through programme documentation have proved very valuable to the participants. New for the October workshop will be the opportunity for accreditors to review CASE final reports from recent events. Incidentally all documentation which is used for training is completely anonymous and if still in current use, permission is sought from the programme leader to use it as a training opportunity. Typically a workshop programme includes no more than 3 short presentations, 1 extended period of accreditation activity with feedback opportunity and an open forum or troubleshooting session. This seems to be the best-fit for everyone. From 2011, workshops will be held once a year in May. Additional workshops may be arranged if there is an increase in demand for accreditations.

The latest workshop took place on 17 May in sunny Bristol to which 9 accreditors from several healthcare professions attended. Although numbers are not restricted at these workshops, an ideal group size of 14 is most suited for the focus sessions. There were 2 presentations in the morning session given by Rosemary Lee and Gill Harrison. Gill brought along 1 of her interactive *Bingo* lectures so we were all entertained (and kept awake!) as she addressed the skills required by an accreditor. During the group discussions, there was an opportunity to exchange elements of good practice and to catch up on new ideas in education and training.

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After an excellent lunch, including the opportunity to shop at the on-campus farmers' market(!), there was still enough energy to address clinical competency issues in an open forum. The accreditation of trainee competency is critical and it is this area of the accreditation process where CASE should be as consistent as possible across all programmes and courses. The debate was interesting and has provided some of the background for an open meeting on the topic to be held in Portsmouth in March 2011, details of which can be obtained from Michele Landau. The final session was related to focused ultrasound courses and Rosemary Lee gave a presentation on the accreditation of these shorter events.

The workshop evaluation was very positive. Suggestions and comments from the participants are listed below, all of which are to be addressed:

- Strongly recommend that clinical assessment should be externally assessed for quality and equity reasons
- Strongly recommend that CASE guidelines for trainers, mentors and assessors should be developed
- Postgraduate programme and focused course accreditations should be dealt with separately even though they may be closely linked
- Recommendation that workshops are organised for ultrasound programme leaders and members of academic quality units
- Dates for training workshops to be loaded onto the website

Once again, this was an excellent day. CASE would like to thank Vivien Gibbs and her team at the University of West of England for their hospitality and for making all the local arrangements, to Gill Harrison for her informative and interactive presentation, also assistance with the focus group work, programme leaders for their permission to use documentation and Michele Landau for coordinating the administrative tasks at the office.

The next training day is on Thursday 21 October 2010 at Sheffield Hallam University (details below). All accreditors are invited, particularly those who have just indicated their interest, for shadow accreditors who have not yet completed their training and also those who may need a refresher.

Rosemary Lee
CASE Lead Accreditor

CASE Accreditor Training – October 2010

As referred to in the paragraph above by the CASE Chair, the next CASE accreditor training session will be taking place on 21st October 2010 at Sheffield Hallam University.

The day will begin with registration & coffee at 9.15am. Evaluation & closing remarks are scheduled to take place at 3.30pm.

Attendance is free, however, CASE is unable to reimburse travel expenses.

For full details of the programme, and to book your place, please contact me by email: michelel@sor.org

Michele Landau
CASE Co-ordinator

Screening Programme Updates

Following a tendering process, the contract for Training AAA Screeners for the National AAA Screening Programme has been awarded to the University of Salford who will be providing Screener training for the whole of England from this autumn. The AAA Screening Programme continues to be rolled out across the country and it is now anticipated that there will end up being a total of 41 programmes rather than 60 as originally thought. This is because some programmes will be bigger than expected and cover a wider area. Further information on all aspects of the NAAASP can be found on their website <http://aaa.screening.nhs.uk/> .

Crispian Oates

Regulation of Ultrasound Practice

Following the change in Government at the last election in May 2010, there is currently no news regarding Ultrasound Practice Regulation.

Michele Landau
CASE Co-ordinator

CASE Open Forum – March 2011

CASE would like to give you advance notice of its next planned open forum due to be held on Tuesday 15th March 2011 at the University of Portsmouth. The topic for this open forum will be Clinical Competency.

A full programme will appear in the October 2010 CASE Newsletter, together with a registration form, so for now, please mark this date in your diary!

Michele Landau
CASE Co-ordinator