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Postgraduate trainees' perception of the impact of a web-based histopathology reporting system on their training: a single-centre experience

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Introduction and objectives: The Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, Ragama uses a web-based histopathology reporting system (WeB-HRS) to generate routine reports. Additionally, it functions as a workplace-based assessment tool by assessing the routine reporting of the postgraduate trainees in histopathology (PGTH) and enables monitoring of their progress. This study aimed to assess PGTHs' perceptions regarding the impact of the WeB-HRS on their workload and training.

Methodology: A qualitative study was carried out among 15 PGTHs, who were at various levels of training and had been using the WeB-HRS. They were interviewed in-depth by a non-pathology-related peer interviewer, experienced in qualitative research. Transcribed interviews were analysed using framework analysis.

Results: Three themes were identified: improved efficiency of reporting, facilitation of training and technical issues that impacted its use. According to the PGTHs, improved efficiency of reporting was brought about by the avoidance of multiple revisions, use of templates, disease categorization, and the ability to track the progress of the samples. Their training was facilitated by preparing a complete report before reporting with the consultant, the ability to refer past reports easily, tracking progress by grading trainees' performances and enhancing computer literacy. The technical issues encountered by the PGTHs included fluctuation of the internet facility, lack of access outside the faculty and limitations in the search function.

Discussion and conclusion: The PGTHs considered that the WeB-HRS had a positive impact on their training by improving the efficiency of reporting and facilitating their training. They believed that feedback to the trainees could be improved by providing periodical summaries and suggestions for improvement. They also highlighted a few technical issues encountered during the use of WeB-HRS.

Keywords: postgraduate training, histopathology, feedback, workplace-based assessment

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