The Opportunity Cost Of Incentivising Project Work In Medical Training

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“Turning the Tide” Report – Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), 2012
- poor opportunities for research training and participation within our medical education system

RCPCH Annual Conference 2019 – Some Data:
- total 640 abstracts accepted and presented (!)
- large percentage presented by paediatric specialty trainees; project work conducted during specialty training
Common issues identified:
- small-scale projects; very few collaborative
- insufficient data analysis and presentation (to justify conclusions / recommendations)
- not measuring clinically important outcomes
- data commonly based on questionnaire / survey results
- demonstrating inadequate methodological quality
Project work....

...Clinical Audits, Quality Improvement projects, Research Projects
→ requirement for career progression
→ score highly on specialty training and consultant job applications
→ higher incentive if "leading" a project and "completing the audit cycle"

BUT!
Experience shows...

- Poor data presentation at audit meetings
- Journal Clubs lacking critical thinking and methodology
- "Critical Appraisal" – most feared station at final specialty assessment
- EBM study day least attended one of London Regional Paediatric Study Days
Intrinsic vs Extrinsic Motivation

Adult Learning Theory - M. Knowles

Self-directed

Intrinsically motivated
The benefit, profit, or value of something that must be given up in order to acquire or achieve something else

“Opportunity Cost”

Projects with no patient-important outcomes
Projects not leading to meaningful change
Research waste
Jeopardise judgement and critical thinking

... and focused on teaching data methodology and promoting pragmatic, collaborative, patient-important studies?
Thank you for listening!

Feedback?
Thoughts?
Suggestions?

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