Summary points

- the Calman reforms require consultants to train specialists in a more structured way
- Warwickshire hospital consultants responded enthusiastically to a course providing a basic training in adult educational skills
- the 'learner centred' principle, improved presentation skills, educational supervision and use of video and learning contracts were accepted as valuable in postgraduate training by the consultants
- twelve months later many of these ideas were being used in their teaching by the consultants, although pressure on time and lack of resources often prevented this

and board for all consultants and facilitators (including one night lodging for each of the three modules), honoraria for the teachers, all correspondence, hire of seminar rooms and equipment (videos, visual aids, etc). The cost

of the subsequent review days (attended by 12–15 consultants each session) was also covered within this budget. It cost, therefore, approximately £1000 per consultant to attend the six-day course and follow-up days. This would have been substantially less had the course not been residential.

Conclusions

We have shown that it is easy to set up a course designed to train consultants as trainers and that consultants value this. If the new arrangements for the training of hospital specialists are to work, the wider practice of good adult educational method will be important. Locally organised courses, on the lines of the Warwickshire course, may be a helpful way of stimulating the interest of consultants in adult education. Regional postgraduate deans can encourage better training by support for such initiatives.

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Medical Anniversary

JAMES MARION SIMS, 25 JANUARY 1813

James Marion Sims (1813–1883) was born in Lancaster, South Carolina, USA, and qualified from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia in 1835. He wrote a successful textbook of gynaecology (1866) and devised the Sims speculum, the knee – chest position for gynaecological examination, and a technique for the repair of vesico-vaginal fistulae. After 18 years general practice in Alabama he became a gynaecologist in New York City. In 1870 he helped organise the Anglo-American Ambulance Corps during the Franco-Prussian War. He was surgeon in charge of a military hospital in Sedan. For this participation he received honours from France, Belgium and Spain. He became President of the American Medical Association. A statue of Marion Sims may be found in Bryant Park opposite the New York Academy of Medicine. He died suddenly in New York on 13 November 1883. — DG James