

THE ENDOSCOPIST

Key point

A consultant was the senior endoscopist for 97% of ERCPs.

From the data available it could be seen that a consultant was the senior endoscopist for 97% (226/233) of ERCPs performed (Table 45).

Table 45. Specialty and grade of endoscopist for ERCP			
Specialty	Grade	Total	(%)
Physician	Consultant	154	(66)
	Associate specialist	1	(<1)
	Staff grade	2	(<1)
	SpR of three years or more	1	(<1)
Surgeon	Consultant	57	(24)
	Associate specialist	1	(<1)
	SpR - post CCT	1	(<1)
	Not answered	1	(<1)
Radiologist	Consultant	15	(6)
Sub-total		233	
Not answered		4	(2)
Total		237	

Where the data were available, in 11% (23/202) of cases the senior endoscopist performed less than 50 ERCPs a year. The exacting nature of this procedure, with its high complication rate, suggests that when an individual or unit is performing few ERCPs the advisability of them undertaking these procedures should be considered. However, there is no evidence on the number required to maintain competency and departments and individuals should be reviewing their own performance. Rationalising the service with internal referral to lead endoscopists for ERCP or inter-hospital referral may be indicated. (For a more detailed discussion on training and the problems of assessing competency, please refer to the chapter entitled 'Training and Education').