

## Abstract

Health-care systems need strong leadership if they are to be sustainable and responsive to the health needs of the future. There is little empirical and theoretical literature about how medical managers conceptualize management or undertake management roles. There is widespread support in the literature for the establishment of clinician management structures. In the UK, there is considerable interest in doctors becoming more involved in management of the National Health Service (NHS). The aim of the study was to explore the experiences, competencies, and development needs of doctor managers in the UK. Data were collected using a multi-method approach: qualitative interviews and a survey with doctor managers in the NHS. The template method was used for qualitative data analysis while appropriate statistical tests in SPSS were used for quantitative data analysis. The findings of the study add to the knowledge on experiences of doctor managers: motivations for a management role and difficulties encountered. Ways of addressing some of the difficulties are proposed. In addition, the study provides data on doctors' leadership and managerial competencies, training, and development needs as well as their preferred learning styles.