Do rules and regulation improve quality?

Jonathan Wallis
Consultant Haematologist
Freeman hospital
Newcastle upon Tyne
How big is your filing cabinet?

Appraisal
Audit
Revalidation
Reaccreditation
Guidelines
Hospital Transfusion Committees

AARRGH......
‘Parkinson’s law - or the pursuit of progress’
C Northcote Parkinson   1957

‘Work expands to fill the time available’
## Employment in the Royal Navy

From ‘Parkinson’s Law’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>1914</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital ships</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officers and men</td>
<td>146,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>-31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dockyard workers</td>
<td>57,000</td>
<td>62,439</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dockyard officials</td>
<td>3249</td>
<td>4558</td>
<td>+40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admiralty officials</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>3569</td>
<td>+78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1954    Admiralty and dockyard officials 33,788
‘Parkinson’s law - or the pursuit of progress’
C Northcote Parkinson 1957

‘Work expands to fill the time available’

Wallis’s variant of Parkinson’s law

‘Bureaucracy expands. The time available does not get a look in’
Can we do without rules?

Sir Thomas More in Robert Bolt’s A Man for All Seasons

Roper: Yes I would cut down every law in England to do that

More: Oh, and when the last law was down and the devil turned ‘round on you where would you hide, Roper, the laws all being flat. This country is planted thick with laws from coast to coast, Man’s laws not God’s. And if you cut them down, and you are just the man to do it, do you really think you could stand upright in the winds that would blow then?
When laws break down.......  

London riots 2011
Drachten, Netherlands

Traffic signs, traffic lights, parking meters, kerbs & pavements removed

Traffic is regulated by two rules:
1. Yield to the right
2. Park in someone's way and you'll be towed.

Results:
1. Chaos.
2. Faster flow
3. Reduced jams
4. Reduced accidents
Hans Monderman

"The greater the number of prescriptions, the more people's sense of personal responsibility dwindles."

The greater the number of guidelines the more a physician’s sense of clinical responsibility dwindles.
If

_Evidence based medicine_

Why not

_Evidence based bureaucracy_
Regulation and standardisation

1. Have they a benefit?
   Are they to protect ourselves or to benefit the patient?

2. Are they cost effective

3. Are they conducive to innovation
‘Trace-ability’

- Who receives which blood unit
- Mandated by EU-BSQR
- Allows retrospective tracing of donor units
Is it important that we know who has received which blood?

Do return slips improve detection of possibly infected recipients?

Is it value for money?
Do return slips improve tracing of units?

Blood issued for a specific patient and not returned:

- Blood is transfused to that patient: Receipt returned
- Blood is not transfused but discarded: Receipt may or may not be returned
- Blood is transfused to another patient: Receipt likely to be returned for original patient

Return slips only help for emergency O negative blood kept in A/E or elsewhere
What does it cost?
Newcastle Hospitals  26,000 units of red cells pa

> £30K pa

2 part time MLAs inputting data and following up missing receipts,

TP time, porter’s time, nursing time,

Blood bank Chief time, Quality manager time,

My time (and blood pressure)
Trace-ability

No vCJD or HIV transmissions by transfusion for 10 years (UK)

Previous records have been found to be incomplete

Computer databases become unseparable with changes in software and hardware
Shibbolith

A custom or belief that is taken as being unchangeable and unique
ZERO TOLERANCE!!!!

Why? To improve labelling quality

Because? Mislabelled samples may result in the wrong blood being given to a patient

The Effect? Junior doctors label tubes from the notes or a pre-printed label and not by asking the patient

Result? More likely to receive a beautifully labelled but totally incorrect sample
Zero tolerance : Zero courtesy
Standardisation

Watney’s red barrel
Tube agglutination IAT
Starbuck’s
National Transfusion form
Harry Lime (Orson Wells) in ‘The Third man’

‘In Italy under the Borgia's they had 30 years of warfare, terror, murder and bloodshed but they produced Michaelangelo, Leonardo de Vinci and the Renaissance. In Switzerland they had brotherly love, 500 years of peace and democracy and what did they produce? The cuckoo clock...
Evolution thrives on chaos
Regulation and standardisation should always be

Evidence based
Economic
Flexible
Reviewable
Dustbinable
“Structured chaos is a more fertile ground for innovation and improvement than regimented order “

“The further away the regulator is from the bedside, the less common sense prevails”

Local Haematologist

“We should encourage a sense of personal responsibility as a means to safety”

Hans Monderman
Thank you for listening