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**ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INSTITUTIONALISED SETTINGS –
THE ROLES OF HOSPITAL BENCHMARKING**

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Abstract

Purpose - The paper aims to analyse the roles of benchmarking by and of public hospitals in relation to ranking and institutional entrepreneurship.

Design/methodology/approach – Neo-institutional theory informs the study in particular its recent concern with entrepreneurship and strategic change. A qualitative design and method are employed incorporating primary and secondary data. Sources of evidence include: semi-structured interviews, documentation, observation and archival records. Interviews are a primary source and during site visits, 44 interviews were held.

Findings – The study offers evidence of how professionals using and recalculate benchmark data and experiment in a free/relational space that is isolated (protected from intrusion), interactive and inclusive. This free space enables a collective to use performance numbers as a reference for identifying superior practices that remedy difference and inform change. A free space is one where power relations are reworked and hierarchical accountability being pushed a bit sideways.

Originality/value - The extant literature is also still coming to terms with institutional entrepreneurship and change that happens via a collective, especially in mature fields, as well as the conditions that enable this. A lack of attention to micro-institutional change and practices is a major shortcoming in extant studies. The present study deals with micro-institutional change via new practices identified through a collective.

Keywords - benchmarking, collective entrepreneurship, free space, hospitals, institutional work, surveyed space

Paper type Research paper