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EDITORIAL

Nurturing clinical academic talent

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Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the South West Clinical School Journal. The Clinical School in Cornwall was established in 2014 and expresses the collaborative partnership between the University of Plymouth's Schools' of Nursing and Midwifery and Health Professions and NHS provider Trusts in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The Clinical School exists to develop and promote integrated clinical academic career pathway opportunities for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals (NMAHPs) working in these Trusts.

Background to the Journal

The Journal has developed in response to the successful Clinical School engagement activity known as #400Words. #400Words is ultimately a writing competition, introduced to stimulate the visibility and further promotion of evidence-based practice through staff writing four hundred words connected to the Trust's NMAHPs strategic vision to tackle unwarranted variations in practice. This first issue of the Journal shares submissions from some of our recent competition winners. The writing competition has become an important activity to assist the Clinical School leadership team to identify clinical areas that are actively involved in the adoption of the latest evidence-based practices (JBI, 2020); the #400Words has become central to its wider clinical academic talent spotting role. For these NHS Trusts: Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust and Cornwall Partnership Foundation Trust, this new Journal makes an important contribution to recognise and celebrate these talents, as well as stimulating further engagement with evidence-based practice and research inquiry.

Nurturing clinical academic talent

Across nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions, all three organisations in this partnership are committed to identifying clinical academic talent from a diversity of clinical settings and to nurture these individuals, providing opportunities for them to be our research active clinical leaders of the future. The promotion of National Institute for Health Research and Health Education England's Integrated Clinical Academic (NIHR/HEE ICA) pathways to support our future clinical academics on pre-doctoral, doctoral and post-doctoral programmes are reaping benefits. Concerns have been highlighted by Saunders,

et al. (2020), who articulate a familiar challenge that clinical academics face as they progress along these pathway; a growing disconnection with service and workforce planning, creating a retention dilemma. The great news locally is that agreement has been reached for all NMAHPs with recent doctoral degrees to have protected post-doctoral research sessions in their job plans. This commitment will retain clinical academic talent in the service and this will encourage and involve many others to engage in research too. The Clinical School hopes to nurture many future staff from their #400Words on a trajectory towards post-doctoral success across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

We hope this first edition of the Journal inspires colleagues working in the Trusts to contribute their #400Words.

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