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Trailblazer Fellow – Leaders in Deprivation **(Health Education England)**

Introduction

The Trailblazer fellowship year has been a steep learning curve for me. There has been a wealth of learning opportunities, including conferences and regular national trailblazer education sessions.

Through networking and meeting with public sector and voluntary organisations, I have acquired a better awareness and knowledge of resources and support for patients. Gaining further insight into the inequalities present in my local community and reflecting on my experiences has been an essential part of my personal and professional development through the year.

I have a deeper understanding of what is being done and indeed what needs to be done to address health inequalities. I believe this has shaped who I am as a GP and how I consult.

Projects and activities:

1. Cervical smear awareness and uptake- practice project:

Through the year I have been working in collaboration with The Alliance communications team, Primary Care Cancer lead, the Alliance Teaching Practices Medical Directors, Group Practice Manager, Lead Nurse and Foleshill Women's Training. We reviewed cervical screening uptake at The Alliance Teaching Practices and devised ways in which we could reach out to patients who have not responded to cervical screening invites.

Our aim is to help increase awareness and improve uptake. This project involved making calls to patients, sending letters, AccuRx messaging and displaying information leaflets. I was invited to attend a CCG organised online event with Foleshill Women's Training which aimed to raise awareness of cervical screening locally. It was informative hearing about barriers faced in attending cervical screening. The Primary Care Cancer lead has offered an education session on screening for The Alliance Teaching Practices non-clinical staff.

In a recent meeting with the Primary Care Cancer Lead, we reviewed the current data and have noted over the year a positive trend in cervical screening uptake.

2. GP VTS education afternoon:

Alongside Dr Darwazeh, I presented to the local GP VTS on health inequalities and the Trailblazer fellowship. I learnt a lot during this process about effective methods of presenting and it was encouraging to see the interest created and read the positive feedback. I have also had the opportunity to talk about health inequalities with the medical students (linked with our practice) and highlight the positive impact they can have as doctors of the future.

3. 'Moving from the Margins' conference.

I was invited to speak, alongside my colleague Dr Darwazeh and led by Dr Rachel Steen (Trailblazer scheme National Lead), on the Trailblazer fellowship at this conference. There were some very interesting presentations and I had the chance to discuss how the fellowship has created so many meaningful opportunities for education and improvement.

Learning opportunities

- National trailblazer conference-I attended the Trailblazer conference at the beginning of the fellowship and heard about the incredible work the 20/21 fellows had done. This was excellent motivation and inspiration for the year ahead. I have recently attended the conference for the 21/22 Trailblazer fellows which celebrated the positive impact the fellows have had across the country.
- Monthly national trailblazer education sessions-topics including trauma informed care, medically unexplained symptoms and chronic pain. These sessions have helped me in my day-to-day work as a GP, particularly with more complex consultations.
- Local monthly Aspiring Leaders forum with several guest speakers including Professor Dame Clare Gerada. An excellent opportunity to chair a meeting and hear from local leaders about their journeys and leadership roles.
- Webinars-including a webinar on the environment and respiratory health.
- FairHealth modules-online learning including 'Demystifying data' and 'Health related street outreach'
- Mentor meetings
- Attendance at a local virtual Marmot group meeting and reading council documents outlining health inequalities specific to my local area so that I have a better understanding of the issues where our practice is located.
- Meetings face to face and virtually with the following:
 - Foleshill Women's Training
 - Meridian Practice
 - Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre
 - Canley food bank
 - Programme Manager for Violence Prevention
 - Academic Primary Care team
 - CCG chair and CCG communications team
 - PCN social prescriber
 - High life
 - Coventry City Mission
 - Emmaus
 - Sky Blues in the Community
 - Coventry Resource Centre for the Blind

I am very appreciative of the welcome I received and time taken to share experiences, including of inequalities faced in the local community that are driving differences in health outcomes, and how this is being tackled.

Working as a GP in an area of high deprivation, I frequently see problems related to health inequalities. These meetings and discussions, as listed above, have enabled me to expand my skill set and knowledge periphery, which in turn, I believe, has a fundamental benefit to my patient care.

How you intend to capitalise on the experience? How do you see your career developing and how this may have opened up avenues you haven't thought of previously?

Throughout this fellowship year I have become increasingly aware of the value of education through my own learning and development, and indeed the teaching of both GP VTS trainees and medical students. I believe that such education helps raise awareness and inspire confidence in doctors to address health inequalities and is so important for those working in areas of high deprivation and with vulnerable groups to help improve patient health outcomes.

As a result, I applied for a new role, alongside general practice, as a clinical teaching fellow which will include undertaking a Postgraduate Certificate in Medical Education. As part of this role, I have been assigned as a group lead and to facilitate in the Population and Social Sciences module. I believe the fellowship has given me the skill set to lead with confidence in a responsive manner and facilitate modules with the objective of promoting a holistic approach to healthcare and educate our future generation of doctors on health inequalities.

What CPD courses have you attended with your study bursary. What did you learn from them?

I attended a King's Fund leadership course 'Personal Impact and Influence'. I have recently completed the first module and have learnt much about myself and my leadership strengths and areas that I now need to further develop. The knowledge and skills that have gained so far to have a positive impact as a leader, understand others' perspectives and work effectively with positive outcomes in high pressured situations has been invaluable.

Would you recommend this opportunity to a colleague?

I would undoubtedly recommend this opportunity to a colleague; I have gained much valuable experience and taken part in educational opportunities that I would not have had done without the fellowship. I feel my confidence has grown exponentially this year.

The Aspiring Leaders forum provided a fantastic opportunity to hear from local leaders and, coupled with learning from the King's Fund course, inspired me to have confidence networking and leading the project at our practice.

Having the time to reflect on my experiences throughout the year has meant that I have a better self-awareness of the needs of patients, colleagues and facilitators in the wider community.

The Trailblazer fellowship has provided me with a range of diverse opportunities to learn from and adapt my practice with a view to enhancing patient care and tackling health inequalities.