

Dr Mina Ibrahim

Trailblazer Fellow 2022-23

[\(Trailblazer Fellowship – NHS England Workforce, Training and Education \(formerly Health Education England\)](#)

Introduction

I was accepted into the Trailblazer Fellowship in October 2022. At the beginning, this was both a promising and intimidating leap into the unknown. I have now come to find that this was a very productive year. I have met with different teams and members in the local community. I have gained valuable knowledge and have become more comfortable networking with and reaching out to various local communities in the area.

Project & Activities

I have been involved in two main projects-

1. Learning disabilities annual checks at our surgery. I have taken up this project to personally conduct these checks in more detail and following a holistic approach. I believe people who live with learning disabilities have some of the widest gaps when it comes to health inequalities. I dedicate one session per week for the LD checks, and offer 30-minute appointments to each patient. We discuss general challenges, we aim to discuss lifestyle modification, screening uptake and medication reviews. I went out on home visits to some of the most challenging patients and I have linked several patients with social prescribers for various reasons including volunteering and seeking group activities, befriending services, support etc.
2. I have worked closely with CGL (Change Grow Live) which is the leading alcohol and substance misuse organization in Coventry on a project to try and link their 'clients' back to GP surgeries. This project was aimed at having a GP see the clients in CGL to discuss medical issues other than the alcohol or drug misuse issues that CGL is dealing with. This was planned after meeting with CGL partnership manager who noted most of their clients do not access GP services due to trust and stigma issues. We had high hopes and an initial success but unfortunately most would not want to engage with the new project for various reasons.

I have taken role of adult safeguarding lead in my practice. We hold a monthly meeting to discuss safeguarding cases. The meeting usually involves social prescribers and discussions about patient needs and what can be done to support, which is also in the core of what the trailblazer fellowship is all about.

I have attended the Wellness at the Margins conference in Dublin, which was a magnificent opportunity to meet with like-minded GPs, GP trainees and professionals from the UK and ROI. I have gained insight and knowledge from the lectures given, and was able to hear from others and express my ideas during the workshops stage of the conference.

I have attended the CGL open day for professionals as well as several methadone clinics as an observer. I have become more experienced in what they do and what considerations they have when prescribing opioid replacement therapies.

I have attended an afternoon session with the Coventry Foodbank, had a round at their premises and got training to become an official referral partner (that means I can refer people to the foodbank if found to be in need or in select circumstances offer emergency food voucher to those in a 'food crisis').

I have been on the receiving side of mentoring with one of the senior experienced GPs in the area. I have also participated in a project to mentor medical students. I have been in contact with my mentee since February this year with regards to his efforts to set up a mental health first aid training at his university.

I have met virtually and/or face to face with several organizations and charities across Coventry including:

- Joining communities together (JCT)
- Change Grow Live (CGL)
- Emmaus
- Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre (CRMC)
- Violence reduction unit
- Social prescribers

CPD

I have attended our monthly trailblazer teachings that usually happened last Friday every month, I have also attended the Aspiring Leaders Forum, which has been organized by the CWTH once every month as well. I have attended and completed the 'Primary Care in Practice' course that has been organized by the CWTH and Warwick University. I have also been able to access a very useful source of online learning called 'FairHealth' that had several online CPD courses around the topic of health inequalities.

I am in the process of using my CPD bursary to apply for a diploma in Lifestyle medicine. I believe this to be a very useful tool for a GP working in primary care, since most of our work should hopefully be shifting more towards prevention rather than treatment. I believe that lifestyle modification is one of the main ways that we can tackle health inequalities.

Reflections

I have gained a lot during this year. I have become more confident in reaching out to organizations in the community. I have been empowered to take initiatives and to think outside the box. The wisdom shared by other colleagues and professionals I met during this year has made me more able to tackle difficult patients or consultations with less difficulty and intimidation. This year has enabled me to create lasting relationships with different people and stakeholders in the community. Most importantly this year has allowed me to think about health inequalities and affect change where possible.

I would definitely recommend this fellowship to other colleagues in the First5 period of their career. Thank you CWTH, thanks to Sarah and Joanna who have been quite supportive and helpful.