

Using the Visible ImpaCt Of Research (VICTOR) questionnaire to evaluate the benefit of an NHS funded fellowship programme for nurses midwives and allied health professionals (NMAHP)

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Introduction

Over the last 12 years there has been heightened focus on increasing research capability and capacity within nursing

2007: Finch report – recommendations in increasing research capability and capacity within nursing

- Structured research-based educational pathway
- Flexible career structure to enable nurses to work clinically as well as having a research role
- NHS career advisors to promote the range of opportunities in research

2015: Association of UK University Hospitals (AUKUH) – transforming healthcare through clinical academic careers for nurses, midwives and allied health professions (NMAHP)

- Practical guidance for the NHS to support clinical academic careers

2018: Council of Deans

- Highlighted the challenges and opportunities for clinical academic careers

History of UCLHs model of support

- 2015
 - Biomedical Research Centre/Research Capability Funding to set up the Centre for Nursing and Midwifery Led Research (CNMR)
 - Supported a research strategy based on five clinical themes, each led by a senior nurse/midwife who was research active
- 2015
 - Support extended to AHPs in line with AUKUH guidance (no additional funding)
- 2017
 - UCLH launch a new NMAHP research strategy
- 2018
 - CNMR launch a CNMR research strategy containing detailed objectives in which success can be evaluated against
 - Appoint a clinical research facilitator to support the implementation of the strategy
- 2019
 - Appoint three Senior Clinical Lecturers 0.4 FTE to be research leaders in their clinical field
 - Change from CNMR to CNMAR to reflect inclusion of AHPs

Support provided by the CNMAR

- Trust NMAHP journal: Connect (<https://www.uclh.nhs.uk/OurServices/ServiceA-Z/Nursing/Pages/ConnectJournal.aspx>)
- Research education programme
- Fellowship/Intern programme
- Annual Research in Clinical Practice Conference
- Support for other Trust research-based education, e.g. Neuroscience Masterclasses
- Support groups

CNMAR Fellowship programme

- Started in 2016
- Aim to provide time to undertake research and academic activity to submit a competitive application to the NIHR fellowship schemes
- Eligible to all NMAHPs employed on a substantive contract in the Trust for at 12 months
- Back fills time for up to 2 days a week for 12 months, plus £1,500 towards training and research costs
- Objectives of the fellowship set by the applicant, tailored to their specific needs
- Honorary contract option with UCL to facilitate library and journal access
- Formal application process requiring support from line manager and proposed primary supervisor (if aiming for a doctoral fellowship)
- Formal interview with presentation; panel of four senior leads for research and clinical academics

Evaluating the fellowships using VICTOR

- VICTOR has been designed to help capture the impact of research
- Based on literature and co-produced with NHS organisations, the questionnaire contains six domains potential impact
- VICTOR questionnaires for each research project are completed by multiple stakeholders, i.e., principal investigator, research nurse, patient
- Evaluation of the CNMR 2016/17 fellows (n = 6) using VICTOR to guide personal reflection
- Content analysis of the responses and presented according to the VICTOR summary template

Conclusions

While VICTOR was developed to evaluate the impact of a research project, it proved helpful in guiding reflection of the fellowship programme. In addition to time and funding, a structured monthly support group has been included with coaching from one of our senior clinical academics. There have now been 14 NMAHPs appointed to the CNMAR fellowship programme. However, despite nurses being the biggest professional group in our workforce, there have been fewer applications from nurses. Work is currently ongoing to understand the reason for this.

References

- AUKUH (2015) Transforming healthcare through clinical academic roles in nursing, midwifery and allied health professions: A practical resource for healthcare provider organisations. AUKUH Clinical Academic Roles Development Group
- Baltruks D, Callaghan P (2018) Nursing, midwifery and allied health clinical academic research careers in the UK. Council of Deans
- UKCRC (2007) Developing the best research professionals. Qualified graduate nurses: recommendations for preparing and supporting clinical academic nurses of the future (Finch report). UK Clinical Research Collaboration Subcommittee for Nurses Working in Research
- VICTOR – details about obtaining VICTOR are available through the website: <http://clahrhrc-yh.nihr.ac.uk/victorimpact>

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Results

Six fellows: nurse (n=1), midwife (n=2), physio (n=2), dietician (n=1).

Academic outputs as a result of the fellowship:

- Number of fellowship/research grant applications = 16
- Five were shortlisted for interview, three were successful
- Number of publications = 14
- Number of conference presentations = 15
- Number of conferences and training days attended = 14

Completed VICTOR questionnaires were returned by five former fellows (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Summary of the impact of the fellowships



Challenges

- Honorary contract with UCL only for the duration of the fellowship not to the point of interview
- Lack of support from line manager
- Line managers not back filling posts so additional pressure on the rest of the clinical team