

# Experiences of a Clinical Leadership Programme and its Subsequent Impact: A Constructivist Inquiry

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## Introduction

This PhD study will offer an original contribution to knowledge, through providing a critical exploration of a particular clinical leadership programme and its subsequent impact. The Delivering Better Care Leadership Programme uses the Senses Framework (Nolan et al, 2006) as a philosophical underpinning, as well as a facilitation and delivery mechanism. Evidence in relation to sustaining impact over time following clinical leadership development, is minimal. This study aims to address this gap in our understanding, using the Delivering Better Care Leadership Programme as an exemplar.

## The Senses Framework

The Senses Framework suggests that safe, effective, quality care for older people involves the creation of a set of six Senses or experiences, for older people, for family carers, for staff and for students:

- A sense of **security** - feeling safe and receiving or delivering competent and sensitive care
- A sense of **continuity** - the recognition of biography, using the past to contextualise the present
- A sense of **belonging** - opportunities to form meaningful relationships or feel part of a team
- A sense of **purpose** - opportunities to engage in purposeful activities or have a clear set of goals
- A sense of **achievement** - achieving meaningful or valued goals and feeling satisfied
- A sense of **significance** - to feel that you matter, and that you are valued as a person.

*The Senses Framework (Nolan et al, 2006)*

## Research Aims

The overall aims of the study are to explore from the perspectives of Nurses, Midwives, Allied Health Professionals, Managers and Colleagues;

- Their motivations and expectations for undertaking the programme
- To discover how they experience the programme and whether or not their expectations change over time
- To develop an understanding of a number of potential impacts following participation and the factors that both facilitate and hinder these.

## Study Design

Using a constructivist methodological approach, this longitudinal qualitative study supports the emergence of themes, as the study evolves (Rodwell, 1998) and comprises of 3 Phases.

- Phase 1** consisted of 2 elements (A and B) which ran concurrently during Phase 1 (September 2015 - May 2016). Element A engaged with participants starting the Delivering Better Care Leadership Programme in September 2015 (n=9) and their managers. Semi-structured interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed using a grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Element B adopted a case study approach with past participants (n=5), their managers, junior colleagues and peers
- Phase 2** (August 2016 - April 2017) is following up with participants, their managers, junior colleagues and peers at the end of the programme to explore how their experience was, what they have noticed personally and professionally
- Phase 3** (August 2017 - April 2018) will include further qualitative data collection to explore perceptions of impact and change, and factors that hinder or facilitate impact, over time.

## Progress to Date

Phase 2 Element A data collection began in August 2016, in parallel to the continuation of Phase 1 data analysis, using a Constructivist grounded theory approach. Data is managed using NVivo software.

Emerging themes so far include;

- Feeling valued, creating a sense of significance and being given permission to lead and develop “...even the title of the programme feels important and I feel privileged that I am on the course.”
- The creation of an enriched learning environment (creating all the Senses, particularly security, belonging and continuity) within the workshop “I didn’t realise I’d feel so euphoric after each session, it was a surprise to me in a way because why would you, I don’t generally feel so happy after a study day”. “I think its transporting that kind of positiveness over to my workplace.”
- The significance of continued learning beyond the programme timeline (creating a sense of continuity, achievement and purpose) “it’s the study, using the stuff and thinking about it, it’s like being back on the course again, reading around it and recognising...this is fantastic...it’s re-energising me again.” “...what sustains me is education, completing it, having the confidence, being supported.”

The findings of this research will potentially inform policy and practice in healthcare, by contributing new evidence to enable individuals, teams and organisations to maximise any impact following leadership development, thus build capacity and capability.

## References

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