

A study of the impact of service user engagement as peers and partners in commissioning and leading health and social care services with clinicians

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Title:

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Background and context:

Since April 2013, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have been responsible for over two thirds of the National Health Service (NHS) budget in England ⁽¹⁾. CCGs are now legally required to involve and engage service users (patients and carers) and the public ⁽²⁾. Direct engagement with clinical commissioners, predominantly General Practitioners (GPs), is a relatively new concept; a cultural shift with regards to the commissioning and leading of services, improving their design and decommissioning when not effective and efficient. In addition, there are growing financial pressures to meet the health and social care needs of an aging population with increasing incidence of long term conditions.

Purpose:

The study is focusing on contributing new knowledge to the evidence base regarding:

- i. How to develop an effective peer/partner approach between clinicians and service users in commissioning and leading health and social care services.
- ii. How to identify and measure the essential features of effective models of service-user clinician engagement as peers in commissioning and leading.
- iii. The impact of the emerging research findings on the curriculum design for student and postgraduate health professionals on the topic of patient and public involvement.

Methods:

This is a qualitative PhD project concerned with the experiences and practices of service users and clinicians working together to commission and lead health and social care services in local communities. Evaluation and effectiveness of service user involvement in commissioning presents methodological challenges ^(3,4). The poster charts work in progress to inform a case study design with an ethnographic approach in two local CCGs.

Implications:

The project is intended to develop the evidence base in higher education to advance the understanding of patient and public involvement. In particular, new knowledge to:

- i. Identify and share on a national basis how commissioners, leaders and members of the public can engage as trusted peers in making significant decisions which shape local health and social care services, and
- ii. Inform curriculum design on partnership, public engagement, and clinical leadership for students and postgraduate health professionals.

Keywords: Clinical commissioning, patient and public engagement and involvement,

Funding acknowledgement:

This is a three year PhD project sponsored by the Higher Education Academy Mike Baker Doctoral Programme.

Ethics approval:

Brighton and Sussex Medical School Research Governance and Ethics Committee (BSMS RGEC) –

R&D Ref No. 15/080/FER. Health Research Authority (HRA) approval pending for NHS Proportionate Review.

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