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EDITORIAL

How Covid-19 has changed research and practice

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Background

The research response to the Covid-19 pandemic has excelled internationally and in tandem raised the profile and diversity of research activities. Maxton and colleagues (2020) highlight how research culture has changed overnight in response to the need to collaborate on unprecedented scale and pace. This has locally been witnessed with our Trust's offering early access to many of the international clinical trials for staff and patients in primary care as well as secondary care services.

Our local response

From the start of the pandemic, it was acknowledged that rapid changes, at all levels across the organisation and its services would have to be actioned. Although difficult during such change, capturing learning and improvements that could inform and influence future service developments would be crucial. Without the ability to understand at the time, or very close to the time how we responded to the dramatically unfolding circumstances our communities faced, and as a healthcare provider had to respond to, there would be vital insights and intelligence lost as time went by. In response the Clinical School kept active this #400Word writing competition, encouraging people to think about the changes they were taking, sometimes on daily basis; to think about the underpinning evidence used to inform these decisions; and to record them to enable sharing.

Time was scarce and the impact on healthcare staff during the various surges of the virus are becoming well documented (Barrett and Heale, 2021). They make an interesting 'reflection' on the image of nursing – saying the profession will need to work hard over the coming year to shift the public's image (and gratitude) from the 'angles and heroes' narrative to the knowledge-based, research informed and highlight skilled professional that's needs witness. This message has relevance across midwifery and allied health professional groups to, who like nursing are significantly challenged by workforce recruitment and retention demands at this time.

It is great to celebrate in this quarter's journal publication a few of the #400Word submissions received in response to our focus on Covid-19. Their authors demonstrate the ever important connection to the patient in their care as they tackle the challenges the pandemic posed.

References

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