

## Editorial

# Learning and working together in primary care: interprofessional education and quality

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The opportunity to put together a special issue of the journal with the emphasis on interprofessional education and quality has been a pleasure. Primary care has been at the forefront of interprofessional working and interprofessional research on quality for many years now and it is fitting that the journal should recognise that through the papers submitted to this special issue.

In this issue, we have arranged for the first section to host four papers that reflect on the interprofessional nature of carrying out research in primary care and the difficulties faced and the advantages gained from carrying out research in this way.

Professor A MacDonald and colleagues write about a unique award-winning piece of research involving a number of professionals from amazingly diverse backgrounds who have worked together designing and radically improving the quality and delivery of nutritional foods for the elderly in hospitals and nursing homes.

Dr David Clarke and colleagues from Leeds write about their experience of running a large-scale national study aimed at finding out the most appropriate support for stroke care in the UK. The authors refer to the advantages of having a range of disciplines involved in both planning and carrying out the research.

Dr Paul Sinfield and colleagues working in Leicester write about the interprofessional barriers they have encountered and propose to overcome in their work in translating research into practice within the NHS.

Dr Amanda Cardy and colleagues provide an account of the interprofessional issues they have had to confront in their efforts to recruit suitable children from general practice onto research studies aimed at testing efficacy of treatments for childhood diseases co-ordinated through the Scottish Primary Care Research Network.

The second half of the issue concentrates on papers that illustrate and discuss some of the educational arguments that are arising relating to the way in which the skills needed for effective interprofessional working are taught to pre-registration health and social care students. The papers also help alert us to the shifts that are occurring in our universities as the practice of mandatory interprofessional education in pre-registration health and social care training develops.

Dr Angela Lennox and Dr Elizabeth Anderson from Leicester University present a paper explaining how they run their interprofessional education programme for a variety of health professions, including medical students in Leicester and Northampton. Dr Shona Cameron and colleagues from Queen Margaret's University write about how interprofessional education has an important role to play in the training of community nurses in Scotland. The paper discusses the importance of placement experience for these students and how the learning that occurs through that medium can best be assessed.

Dr Tara Cusack provides an Irish perspective on how interprofessional education is being developed and delivered to, and how it has been received by, allied health professionals in training in Irish universities. Finally, myself and colleagues summarise the national and international movements that have started to establish a set of agreed core competencies that interprofessional education is charged with delivering. We also provide an illustration of a novel method of assessing students' effective collaboration to team-working that we are piloting in an interprofessional education module at Glasgow Caledonian University.

As a postscript, Dr Melissa Johnson a recently qualified medical doctor, reflects on the interprofessional education she received during her university undergraduate medical training and her two postgraduate Foundation Years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the authors who agreed to submit their work for consideration for this special interprofessional issue, along with special thanks to Professor Hugh Barr (President of the Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education) for providing the keynote editorial. A special mention also to Professor Niro Siriwardena who has been immensely supportive of this endeavour.

#### PEER REVIEW

Commissioned, not externally peer reviewed.

#### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

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