



NEWS

The Newsletter of the Early Clinical Career Fellowships

Editorial

Ann Rae, Educational Projects Manager, NHS Education for Scotland

Welcome to the third issue of ECCF News. Here we share the fellows' progress and impact on practice and bring news of a further cohort of ECCF.

The Early Clinical Career Fellowships are being piloted in NHS Scotland on behalf of the four UK countries as part of modernising nursing careers. The fellowships are an investment in talented nurses and midwives at an early stage of their career, with the aim of developing the clinical leaders of the future.

This newsletter is produced by the fellows and this third issue was led by Nancy Njoroge from NHS Lothian. Nancy's own experience of the ECCF journey features on this first page; and Emma Little shares her research proposal as part of her masters dissertation. Gemma Bell and others get published; whilst Veronica Hill and Martin Smith share how they are contributing to the development of ePortfolio. June Adamson describes a new role in which she has been involved in NHS Fife; whilst Fiona Steel goes a little further afield to the Amazon. In addition, Ian Duncan, who is one of our action learning set facilitators shares his reflections.

We congratulate the first cohort of ECCF, who commenced in late 2007, and are now completing the fellowship. We say "keep up the great work" to the rest of the ECCF pilot who are progressing well in their masters study. A third cohort of around 20 fellows will commence in September 2011 and this will be called ECCF 2011 as it differs from the pilot. A robust selection process will ensure a high calibre of fellows and we wish them well in this exciting stage of their careers.

A Journey through ECCF

Nancy Njoroge, ECCF Fellow and Staff Nurse ICU NHS Lothian

"ECCF has been an excellent programme and I would recommend such initiatives to any nurse. It is a great opportunity for nurses and midwives to achieve masters' level practice and education that will enable the nursing profession to develop, as well as improve the patient journey either in the community or hospital setting."

The fellowship selection process was very rigorous and involved psychometric testing and an in-depth interview. Only a few managed to get a place on the fellowship, so I counted myself lucky.

I am currently on my final stages of the masters (Dissertation). It has been a tough journey of juggling work, study and extracurricular activities. However, I have thoroughly enjoyed it and I believe the benefits for me outweigh the challenges experienced on the way.

During this time, I have also done things I had not thought of doing such as attending master classes (they were always informative in different ways of my nursing career); other events organised by NES; writing a journal article; writing an article for competition where I won a prize. I have also met many wonderful and inspiring people and most important of all improved my practice and patient experience.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

The journey has at times been challenging as not all celebrated my achievement. I found myself defending why the fellowship was offered to newly qualified nurses. However, the negativity only made me stronger, more motivated and determined to work hard to achieve my dreams and making a difference to patient outcome in my care.

My action learning set (ALS) provided the support I needed, as my set members come from different health boards and work in different clinical areas, and hence are able to share a variety of experiences. The action learning group helped me find answers to my queries, see things from a different perspective and to learn from others. I also had very supportive colleagues, and friends who have always been there when I was struggling, especially those who have done part time studying and others who thought the fellowship was a great idea.

Lastly, I hope to continue sharing the knowledge gained and to have a positive impact on patient care now and in the future.

Quote from a Practice Education Facilitator

“ Just a note to say after reading the newsletter I was caught up in the enthusiasm of the contributors and if they are contributing the NHS workforce of the future then what a good place it will be to work.

Well done.”

Exploring Parents’ Experiences When They Place Their Child with Complex Needs into Residential Care

Emma Little, ECCF Fellow and Staff Nurse Continuing Care Service NHS Lothian.

My masters dissertation, taken as part of the ECCF fellowship, took the form of an extended literature review and research proposal and stemmed from a personal and professional interest in the experiences of parents whose children have complex needs. It also followed on from a project currently being undertaken within the Continuing Care Service to gain an insight into the views of families that use the service by obtaining parent stories.

Current literature relating to out-of-home placements for children with learning disabilities and complex needs was reviewed along with their potential reasons for placement. Parental experiences of, and feelings surrounding, out-of-home placement was also explored. The research proposal, based on these findings and my professional experience, was designed to help health care professionals understand parents’ experiences and feelings when they place their child with complex needs into residential care.

My dissertation concluded that parents whose children have complex needs face unique, highly challenging and stressful situations in their every-day lives and that the complex and exhausting demands of caring for these children at home, with or without professional support, can lead families to seek permanent, out-of-home placement for their child. It was anticipated that the proposed research would allow professionals to gain a better understanding of the unique experiences of these families and enable them to offer more consistent, and evidence-based, advice and support.

Early Careers across Multi-agencies

Veronica Hill shares her experience of an opportunity she had to attend the Young Scotland thinker course run by the Institute of Contemporary Scotland.

This was a packed four day residential course which aims to promote the intellectual development of people in the early stages of their working career through argument, debate, guest speakers and more.

The main way this is achieved is through the writing and presenting of a paper on a subject of current interest or controversy. I presented a paper looking at end of life assistance, as did two other delegates. Delegates were drawn from a very mixed group: government organisations, social care enterprises, the voluntary

sector and much more. Our ages, jobs, experiences and opinions were extremely varied but it was fascinating to see how issues can be seen from so many different perspectives.

Following the course I was awarded the Dunblane medal for special contribution to the course (I ended up in Stranraer A and E on a Saturday night with one of the delegates!). The course really broadened my outlook on the issues affecting society today and encouraged me to consider them from perspectives

other than health. Interestingly, almost every issue was linked to health in one way or another.

I ended the course feeling challenged and inspired, but above all I was amazed to hear of the respect and value wider society places on the nursing profession. Many delegates shared their personal experiences with me and I felt exceedingly proud to be a small part of a very much valued profession.

*Veronica Hill
ECCF Fellow / Staff Nurse, NHS Fife*

Writing for Publication – Me?!

Gemma Bell, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde

That's exactly how I felt when it was mentioned to me by my tutor when registering for my first class of my Masters course. One step at a time I thought, I need to get through this masters first! Also what do I have to say that people want to hear about? This is how I continued to think even after my clinical coach suggested the same thing!

However my opinion has now completely changed after attending the ECCF masterclass called "Writing for Publication". This class made it seem a more attainable goal that you or I can achieve. I particularly enjoyed the workshop that got us to write down everything we knew about a topic within a few minutes. This made me think - "wait a minute I know stuff after all, maybe I could do this". Following what I personally felt to be an inspirational masterclass, especially after hearing from peers who have already published, I decided I was going to give this a go. Returning to the ward, I approached my clinical coach, ward manager and charge nurse who were all supportive of the idea.

At present I am in the process of carrying out a small piece of research with my clinical coach to hopefully co-publish. Sometimes I do wonder why I have decided to take this on as it is extra work, but I am sure it will all be worth it when that day comes that I see my name there in print!

Other articles published by ECCF fellows include:

Nancy Njoroge, NHS Lothian
Njoroge, N., and Paul, F., 2011. Reducing Ventilator Associated Pneumonia (VAP): The Importance of Oral Care in Ventilated Patients. *ICU Management*. 11(1), pp 10 - 14

Ruth Parkinson, NHS Tayside
Parkinson, R., 2009. Nurses' attitude towards people who are homeless. *Diversity in healthcare*. 6 (4) pp 227 - 240

Rachel Tong, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde
Tong, R., 2007 Preventing extravasation injuries in neonates. *Paediatric Nursing* 19(8): 22-25.

Graham Kane, NHS Ayrshire and Arran
Kane, G., 2011 Reach for the stars *Nursing Standard* 24(41) p 64

June Adamson

ECCF and Clinical Skills Facilitator, NHS Fife

My name is June Adamson, and I am based in NHS Fife. I was in Cohort 1, and have always had an interest in education. I chose an MSc in Practice Education as my Masters topic, and in 2010, was able to put it to use when a secondment was advertised for a Clinical Skills Facilitator for medical students. This post was to be run jointly by Edinburgh University Medical School and NHS Fife. What I was unaware of at the time, was that the post was completely new and untried in Fife.

Setting up a post from scratch has been a tremendous challenge, but there is also the satisfaction of having moulded it into something successful. The high point has definitely been the success of the 'on call' scheme. This is a multi-site callout system I conceived to help final year medical students access clinical skills by taking them to where skills

are needed, rather than waiting till they occur on the student's placement ward. I have managed to involve most of the wards over two hospitals, with participants including ward nurses, specialist nurses, dieticians, and medical staff. Acceptance and participation from these groups has grown over the past year, and feedback from students has been excellent.

Where will this post take me next? Who knows! As it is so new, it is difficult to know where the future of a role like this will lie, nor what my place within it will be. I certainly see it fostering new links between higher education institutions and the NHS, but because this role is not well established yet, it could go in several directions. I know I'll be in there somewhere, but exactly where that will remain to be seen.

Fellows support ePortfolio development

Veronica Hill and Martin Smith
ECCF Fellows

The fellows are often involved in national and local groups to assist in the development of nursing and midwifery. One example is our involvement in the user reference group for a new nursing and midwifery ePortfolio led by NHS Education for Scotland. We thought we should share some information about this exciting new tool and how we are informing its development.

The ePortfolio is designed as a career-long tool for nurses and midwives to use to support their long-term aims and goals. It is based on the same platform as eportfolio for medics, pharmacists and dentist, but tailored to the specific needs of nurses and midwives. Two of the benefits of the ePortfolio are that it will aid retention on the local mentor register within local boards and also contain evidence to support development at KSF reviews. The ePortfolio contains a variety of recording methods such as record of learning activities, reflective accounts, and support and supervision activity forms. It will contain areas where you can store written feedback from others, and a very helpful space to develop your own personal and professional profile.

Our involvement has been to review and test the site as it develops to make sure it will be useful to practitioners. We do feel it will be ideally suited to career planning for ECCF fellows as well as other nurses and midwives, and recommend its use when it is available later this year.

Fellows are ideally placed to support and contribute to local and national level initiatives as we are passionate about shaping healthcare policy and nursing practice to deliver excellent care, irrespective of the clinical environment.

Reflections of an Action Learning Facilitator

Ian Duncan, ALS Facilitator

Little did I know what I was embarking upon when I accepted the invitation to facilitate an ECCF Action Learning Set (ALS), a little over three years ago. In addition to the Cohort 1 Set, I also agreed to facilitate a Cohort 2 Set, and what an exciting and affirming journey it has proven to be. I have learned a lot in the process, and have been fortunate to have had the support of the ECCF Team, and my fellow ALS facilitators.

Reg Revans (1907-2003), is credited with developing Action Learning (AL). A research study he conducted, into the high turnover of newly qualified nurses, was amongst the early experiences that helped shape his ideas on AL. It seems entirely apposite then, that AL should be included as

an integral component of the ECCF programme.

Whilst AL is a powerful and effective experiential learning process, it is also demanding and challenging at a personal level for participants who are eloquently described by Revans as *'comrades in adversity - held together by a shared desire to find implementable solutions to their problems'*.

Most of the Fellows had no previous experience of AL, but I was impressed by how quickly they embraced the process, assimilated the principles and began to utilise the learning to address their own problems and dilemmas, and generate their own solutions and action plans.

The Fellows have indeed faced numerous adversities and challenges over the course of the programme - as may be expected, being rooted in their everyday practice and experiences. Whilst their resilience and enthusiasm has been evident from the outset, it has been a privilege to witness, and share their transformative journey.

Seeing Fellows emerge in the course of the programme as competent, autonomous practitioners able to demonstrate initiative, and contribute to change and development in their wider organisations, is very affirming. It also engenders great confidence in their ability to continue to impact positively on the Service for years to come.

The Banks of the Amazon river

Fiona Steel, ECCF NHS Lothian

In October 2010, myself and three of my colleagues from the renal unit at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary embarked on a trip of a lifetime to provide medical care to the tribes and villages living on the banks of the Amazon river in Peru. The trip was one of many which take place throughout the year organised by a Scottish charity called the *Vine Trust* who arrange teams of Peruvian doctors, health care volunteers from the UK, dentists and translators to embark one of their medical ships Amazon Hope 1 or 2 and sail down the river, stopping at the many isolated villages to address the healthcare needs of the local population.

The trip made myself and my colleagues realise how lucky we are in Scotland to have the education, facilities and technology in order

to provide the best nursing care possible to patients. On reflection, I felt that the trip strengthened my basic nursing skills such as non-verbal communication, making clinical assessment by physical examination without relying on technology and caring for patients in unpredictable environments. Additionally, I can now ask some basic medical questions in Spanish!

Surprisingly many of the presenting complaints of the 3500 people we treated were similar to those we care for on a daily basis at work such as hypertension, chronic pain, diabetes and asthma. We also provided ante and post natal care, contraception advice and assessed child development. There was some incidence of acute trauma as a result

of manual labour which involved cleaning and caring for wounds with a very limited supply and variety of dressings. In addition, we also helped with the government immunisation project, immunising school children against Hepatitis B. The charity also gave the children anti-parasite treatment and fluoride therapy in an attempt to improve the low levels of oral hygiene. Over the course of our time on board there were a number of incidences where individuals had to be taken as emergencies to a general hospital in the nearest city due to them being critically unwell and requiring potential life saving treatment. These patients would never have been referred without the intervention of the Vine Trust and the consequences for those people could well have been fatal.

For me this was a life changing and very humbling experience, a wonderful opportunity to appreciate my basic nursing skills whilst in a beautiful country and experience firsthand a different healthcare system. Would I do it again ... Yes!

More information on ECCF is available at

<http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/nursing/eccf/>

The editorial team would value feedback on this newsletter and any suggestions for future articles. They can be contacted through the project staff email address

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