

Internship case study

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Background

I am a Senior Biomedical Scientist and Lecturer in Biomedical Science at University Hospitals of North Midlands and Staffordshire University

Why did I apply for this award?

As an experienced biomedical scientist I was aware that as workload demand was increasing there must be more efficient ways in which we could utilise staff expertise, resources and clinical links to improve our service to patients and clinicians. Whilst we used a range of quality management tools to develop our service there was little time to proactively investigate problems and scientifically test solutions. I thought that if this was my experience locally then this was likely to be the case in pathology laboratories across the country and I considered the patient benefits that could be achieved with collaboration and a more academic approach to testing solutions and disseminating results.

Although I had kept up to date with the evidence-base for my profession throughout my career, since my postgraduate training I had always considered conducting 'research' as the domain of consultants and academics and, in truth, I felt I lacked the confidence and skill to develop a meaningful project. In applying for the Internship I hoped to refresh some of my research skills and develop an understanding of how they could be applied within the wider NHS research landscape.

How did the award benefit patients?

It is early days, but I hope that my research (and the research developed within the biomedical scientist workforce) will add value to the analytical work that we currently undertake – this could include providing clinicians with more targeted information, the generation of more efficient testing panels or a faster turn-around time for laboratory results for example.



How did the award benefit my organisation?

Since the Internship I actually left my organisation to take a full time academic lectureship but used the opportunities and themes developed on the programme to work closely with the Trust to develop courses and programmes to support staff developing research interests.

We hope that this will not only develop the evidence-base for our profession but will also provide a stimulating and innovative environment to recruit and retain staff.

What has it allowed me to achieve in my research career?

I have used the skills and contacts gained within the Internship programme to start to build a network of biomedical scientists across the region with an interest in developing and collaborating on research projects. Together with the NIHR Clinical Research Network: West Midlands I have organised a symposium to identify the benefits and barriers of biomedical scientist-led research and have published two articles discussing these issues.

Hopefully this will be the beginning of a wider project to unlock the research potential of pathology laboratories and biomedical scientists.