

Internship case study

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Background

I am an art psychotherapist, working at Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust & John Taylor Hospice.



Why did I apply for this award?

I applied for this award because I had always wanted to develop an academic and research aspect to my clinical work. I had begun to develop a research idea, but felt I needed some foundation knowledge about undertaking research within the NHS to build upon the academic experience I had gained. Although I had undertaken research projects at postgraduate level, I hadn't undertaken clinical research before. I intend to apply for PhD study, and felt the Clinical Academic Internship Programme would give me the chance to develop the skills and knowledge I need.

How did the award benefit my clinical practice?

My clinical practice has developed as a result of completing the CAIP* in that I have a much greater understanding of how research skills can support my clinical work – for example, I have the skills I need to complete reviews of published literature to support service developments, or pilot new clinical interventions. I am able to write case studies and project proposals with a solid foundation in ethical practice.

* CAIP is the local internship scheme within the ICA Programme in the West Midlands

How did the award benefit patients?

Patients have benefitted in several ways – the topic of my research has implications for clinical practice which can be made with an evidence base to support them. The research I began, I have developed subsequently in my Masters studies, and which I hope to continue into doctoral study in September. I think I am a more confident practitioner as a result of completing clinical academic training, and I have a greater understanding of how clinical academic research supports changes in clinical practice with direct patient benefit. I have also developed skills in patient and public involvement which are transferable and improve the way patients are involved in clinical services, not just in research studies.

How did the award benefit my organisation?

I have taken research skills – literature review skills, methodology knowledge and engagement skills – back in to my organisation, which can contribute to the wider work of my team and the Trust as a whole.

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

Completing the CAIP allowed me to develop a successful research proposal for Masters study and I have just completed a Masters in Clinical Research under the HEE/NIHR ICA programme at Coventry University. I have developed a PhD research proposal and application which I hope to commence in September. This will allow me to continue to develop the clinical academic aspect of my clinical practice.