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### Citation

Newton, Victoria (2017). Evaluation of the HEE North Central and East London & NIHR CLAHRC North Thames Clinical Nurse/Midwife/AHP (NMAHP) Academic Fellowship Scheme: Key Findings. NIHR CLAHRC North Thames.

### URL

<https://oro.open.ac.uk/54698/>

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## Evaluation of the HEE North Central and East London & NIHR CLAHRC North Thames Clinical Nurse/Midwife/ AHP (NMAHP) Academic Fellowship Scheme - Key Findings

***This Fellowship Scheme facilitates fellows to spend four days a week in a CLAHRC research department, as a secondment, to develop an application for doctoral or postdoctoral funding.***

### Successes

- The scheme **supported high quality applications for NIHR fellowships** - 4 out of 5 were shortlisted & 2 were successful, provided varied training, and opened up new opportunities for fellows.
- Fellows **raised research awareness** in their Trust and shared learning with clinical colleagues.
- The relationship between academic supervisor and clinical fellow resulted in **mutual learning** and has **improved communication and partnership working** between clinical and academic staff.
- Fellows used their research directly to **improve care for patients** e.g. through improvement evaluations.

### Challenges

- **Conflicting demands** for Trusts: promoting individual staff development through supporting a Fellow requires Trusts to find backfill/cover arrangements before releasing that member of staff from clinical duties.
- **Financial pressures** on Trusts who are required by the scheme to fund one day/week of the fellowship.
- For fellows, moving between and **balancing different roles** and identities was challenging.
- Fellows sometimes **worked longer hours to compensate** for being absent from their clinical role.
- Some fellows had limited time for research and academic activity after returning to practice, making it **difficult to transition back to the clinical setting** and maintain momentum in research.

### Recommendations

- **Build a closer working relationship** between HEE's local office, CLAHRC and the fellows' NHS Trust **through conversations at the start the fellowship** to clarify upfront about expectations of the fellowship and the fellows' role when they return to practice so that they can best contribute their knowledge, experience and leadership.
- **Strengthen communication between CLAHRC and local Trusts** around the immediate and midterm benefits clinical academic fellows can bring to the clinical department and widen awareness of the scheme.
- **Link the scheme in with, and start to carve out, a clearer academic pathway for NMAPHs** e.g. through a strong Clinical Academic Network for NMAPHs, and forming links with other schemes and pathways for healthcare professionals.

### How have we responded to these findings for 2016/17 and 2017/18 cohorts?

- Formalised a 'roles and responsibilities' document for fellows and supervisors to agree to and sign.
- Encouraged 'start-up' meetings with fellows' base Trusts to have early discussions about how fellows can put their learning into practice throughout the fellowship year.
- Maintained informal mentoring with past fellows to cultivate an Alumni cohort.
- Encouraged fellows to participate in wider CLAHRC capacity-building activities e.g. contributing to the development and delivery of short courses.

Read the full report here: <http://bit.ly/2z8UlgF> or visit the CLAHRC North Thames Academy webpage here: [https://clahrc-norththames.nihr.ac.uk/nihr-clahrc\\_north-thames-academy/](https://clahrc-norththames.nihr.ac.uk/nihr-clahrc_north-thames-academy/)