

## CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

### Patient Academy- A platform for collaborative working to improve Paediatric Child Health & to empower patients in the role of educators

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**Introduction:** The expertise of parents and patients is often under-valued. Collaborative working with patients/parents has given new meaning to patient-centred care. Involving healthcare users from the outset and engaging them in healthcare decision making and in the wider context of healthcare, promotes understanding of healthcare use and has the potential to facilitate more effective design and development of educational interventions to improve highlighted problems. We were keen to develop a platform whereby patients, parents and healthcare professionals could come together, to identify barriers to healthcare and to use co-design and co-production models to develop educational initiatives which could improve self-management, access to healthcare and other health outcomes.

**Practice Change:** The Patient Academy initiative was piloted in a busy central London teaching hospital. The first phase of the project was a scoping exercise to understand local services and pathways in our hospital setting. The next phase involved a large-scale collaborative event held at London Zoo. The aim was to bring together all those involved in looking after a child's health, to understand parental influences around healthcare decision-making, to define characteristics of a positive health encounter and to co-design educational strategies to improve the management of children with mild-moderate acute health problems. Approximately 25 parents and 35 healthcare professionals from a wide range of disciplines across primary and secondary care attended.

**Theory of change:** We hypothesised that the event would provide unique insights from various perspectives which it did. With this widened lens we were able to collaboratively create a guide for the most effective health encounter and to design sustainable interventions to empower patients/parents in the role of educators and to improve healthcare encounters. Five work-streams led by teams of parents and healthcare professionals have emerged, each focusing on a different educational intervention.

**Targeted population & Stakeholders:** Aligned to the national agenda of 'Early Years' the project was focused on improving a number of components of healthcare in 0-5 year olds. Stakeholders were extensive and included parents, patients, hospital paediatricians, nurses, GPs, health visitors, midwives, school nurses, mental health teams, public health, schools, pharmacists and behavioural insights specialists.

**Timeline:** A six-month time frame was dedicated to the scoping exercise, the launch collaborative event and initial formation of workstreams and collaborative design of educational interventions.

**Highlights/Sustainability/Transferability:** The greatest outcome from the Patient Academy has been the connections and relationships formed between patients, parents and various healthcare professionals and organisations. Five exciting workstreams have emerged including; 1) development of multi-disciplinary learning events, 2) a community based educational programme designed entirely by parents for parents and healthcare professionals. The other work-streams involve the 3) creation of a consultation tool, 4) a wardround tool and the 5) inception of a children and young person's advisory board. To ensure sustainability, interventions have been incorporated into existing networks of patients/parents and integrated into routine daily activities. The tools created could easily be adopted by other Paediatric departments but are equally transferrable to any adult medical discipline in the UK or abroad.

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**Keywords:** parents; educators; integrated; co-design; co-production

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