

## Member profile for QNI Community Nursing Research Forum



**Name:** Adam Peel

**Job title:** Community Research Nurse and Honorary Senior Research Associate

**Employing organisation:** Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust and University of East Anglia

**Country of residence:** UK

### How would you describe your current role and research interests?

I'm currently employed as a community research nurse in a post funded by the National Institute of Health and Care Research. My remit is to support research in wider care and community settings (outside the NHS). The majority of my work is facilitating research with care homes – bringing care home staff, residents and their families together with research and researchers; ensuring that this often-underserved community have access to high quality research opportunities. My own personal research interests lie with long term conditions, respiratory conditions, and self-management. I am currently looking at indwelling pleural catheters: patient experience, infection, and self-management.

### How did you first get involved in doing clinical research / your own research?

I had always been interested in research, joining a journal club and entering research prize competitions as an undergraduate nurse. However, nursing was not my first career and in my previous degree I felt I had somewhat let myself down with my final year dissertation. I was determined to do a better job in my nurse training and so completed a systematic review which was subsequently published. My enjoyment of this process led onto my applying for PhD opportunities and securing a doctoral research post at Norwich Medical School and the Asthma UK Centre for Applied Research.

### What difference has your research training and experience made to your career / clinical practice / academic practice?

I have a young child and I sometimes feel like him at work with lots of what's and why's - why are we doing it like this? What don't we know and why don't we know it? I think this questioning approach and the application of critical thinking are a result of my interest in research and the training I've received. Working alongside researchers who are looking at the evidence for practice and different/better ways of doing things helps me to look for positive change in both my own practice and the wider NHS, and importantly, to believe that it can be instigated. In terms of my career, my research activity has opened doors and offered opportunities for networking that I would not have otherwise had, in turn leading to new opportunities and collaborations.

### What has been your favourite research experience so far?

So many great experiences! The stakeholder engagement and PPI activity I have undertaken for a recent project has been hugely rewarding and enjoyable; similarly it's a great feeling to see research results published that I have in some way contributed to – for example through participant recruitment or data collection. Clicking submit on a journal submission is always very satisfying, and I love undertaking a systematic review; watching a vast sprawl of individual research being connected up into a coherent whole with a focussed outcome. However, I think my favourite thing about research is the collaboration; working and learning alongside some fantastic and inspiring colleagues from a range of professional backgrounds.

### **How did you develop your research career?**

My undergraduate supervisor worked with me as a post-graduate to help prepare my dissertation for journal publication (those working in academia are very happy to support this sort of work, largely because they are a nice bunch of people but also because they will gain a potential future research collaborator by supporting you!). I used several MOOCs (massive open online courses) to help develop my skills and knowledge in systematic reviews and meta-analysis. Working on and publishing this paper gave me the confidence and experience to pursue a research career and eventually to apply for a funded PhD. I continued to work as a nurse throughout my PhD which not only acted as a very useful pressure release from the rigours of a PhD and developing my clinical skills but also allowed me to maintain useful contacts which have led to post-doctoral collaborations.

### **What are your top tips for anyone wanting to become a clinical academic or more research active?**

- Play the long game. Take your time to build your clinical knowledge and specialism, this will be your foundation; search for the right opportunities / funding and the right project. It might take longer but you will get to your dream destination rather than just a little bit further down the road.
- If looking to get involved in research delivery, reach out to your trusts research team who will almost certainly be looking for a research 'champion' or 'link nurse'. Use this opportunity to build relationships with research delivery staff and research active clinicians within your specialism.
- If looking to undertake your own research, get onto distribution lists for funding opportunities, sign up to newsletters, check out your local university, and check out the resources on this website. Often you may become aware of an opportunity with insufficient notice to develop a project from scratch, so work with more experienced staff to develop the bones of a project in order to be ready when the funding opportunity comes along. Those working in research/academia love to share their knowledge and will be keen to 'pay it forward' so don't be afraid to ask – and importantly accept – their help and support.

### **Where can we access your recent work?**

- Peel, A. Sinha, A. Fowler, S. et al (2020) Volatile organic compounds associated with diagnosis and disease characteristics in asthma – a systematic review. *Respiratory Medicine*. doi: 10.1016/j.rmed.2020.105984.
- Peel, AM. Crossman-Barnes, CJ. Tang, J. et al (2017) Biomarkers in Adult Asthma: a Systematic Review of 8-Isoprostane in Exhaled Breath Condensate *J. Breath Res*. doi: 10.1088/1752-7163/aa5a8a

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