

Supporting and encouraging the next generation of perioperative practitioners – A privilege and a passion

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I have been fortunate to work in and around the perioperative setting all my career and also to have had opportunities to support the Association of Perioperative Practice and to work at Bournemouth University now as a Visiting Professor; a role that provided opportunity to meet and work alongside learners from a number of disciplines. I am therefore delighted to be writing this editorial as Guest Editor for this month's edition and focus on the theme of education and learning.

In a career coming up some 40 years now, I have remained singularly impressed by the learners I have come into contact with including student operating department practitioners and nurses as well as registered staff in their efforts to learn, gain knowledge and develop their clinical competence. Their individual journeys have enabled them to grow in confidence to deliver on the subscribed regulatory standards of their respective professions and gain an appreciation of the clinical standards required in the perioperative setting for safe, effective care to ensure good outcomes for patients and a positive perioperative experience.

For me it has always been a privilege to work alongside students, a sentiment expressed by the majority of my peers, but I have also and far too often observed colleagues, who have been less than supportive, at times dismissive and at others simply cruel and unkind. Basically they are bullies by any other name, colleagues who have lost their sense of compassion, care and appreciation of humanism. Students are the future of our perioperative workforce. If bullied or ignored those students are unlikely to apply for a registered position to practice, if the culture is negative and there is a failure to call such behaviour out and performance manage it.

We read every day of the need for a positive culture in the NHS and of the harmful impacts for patients when the culture is negative, however one small group of graduates of Bournemouth University, all recently employed at Royal Bournemouth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is truly inspirational. In this edition, Suzanne Gorman, Tessa Cox, Rebecca Sandford Hart, Lewis Marais, Scott Wallis, Julie Ryan and Michelle Handbury describe their journey of enquiry, quality

improvement and of their commitment to support the 'Theatre Cap Challenge' (<https://www.psnetwork.org/theatrecapchallenge-wheres-the-evidence/>) in order to optimise perioperative interventions that assure great care.

Their messages speak to the ambitions of the WHO Global Campaign (2008) 'Safe Surgery Saves Lives' and to the Don Berwick-led Advisory Committee response following the report of the Inquiry into Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust led by Sir Robert Francis QC. The report of Berwick and colleagues starts with a quote:

Place the quality of patient care, especially patient safety, above all other aims. Engage, empower, and hear patients and carers at all times. Foster wholeheartedly the growth and development of all staff, including their ability and support to improve the processes in which they work. Embrace transparency unequivocally and everywhere, in the service of accountability, trust, and the growth of knowledge. (Department of Health Report 2013.)

This paper and the other articles within this edition speak to this important message and I commend it to those seeking to improve education, systems and processes in perioperative settings.

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