

South West Respiratory Champions

Marieke Strange, Practice Nurse and Angela Wixey, Practice Respiratory Nurse



Introduction

In early 2022, trained respiratory healthcare practitioner nurses in general practice were invited to participate in the South West Primary Care Respiratory Champions Project funded by the South West Respiratory Network. The programme offered structured respiratory education, networking and leadership skills. The programme was delivered by the respiratory network clinical leadership team.

Participants were paid additional hours to attend virtual fortnightly training sessions and were provided with access to a network of nursing peers and allied experts in the field. They were asked to provide respiratory leadership within their PCN and to increase standards of the respiratory care patients received.

A significant attraction of the programme is that participants were encouraged to register based on their respiratory interest, knowledge and enthusiasm rather than their curriculum vitae and academic qualifications.

Project outputs and outcomes

This exciting new project attracted 48 champions from across the South West region with more than 45 nurses attending the meetings on a regular basis. Each meeting featured clinical updates and an opportunity to share and debate best practice based on personal experiences. The nature of the meetings was open and friendly; which facilitated and nurtured a group who continue to meet regularly beyond the programme completion through email and via a telephone support group (WhatsApp). Prior to the project taking place many of the participants felt isolated with nowhere to share ideas or seek advice/opinion. Since the programme the participants now feel that they have a robust network of contacts and champions with appropriate expertise with whom they can share information and reliably seek advice and support. They also feel more confident and respected in their PCN.

South West Respiratory Network

PRIMARY CARE RESPIRATORY CHAMPIONS PROJECT

Programme elements

STRUCTURED EDUCATION

Fortnightly MS Teams Meetings

Multidisciplinary speakers delivered a series of presentations on a broad range of topics including asthma, COPD, sleep apnoea, breathing pattern disorders and rarer respiratory conditions



COMMUNICATING & NETWORKING

Peer Support

Each meeting included time to share and debate current clinical practice and personal experiences of participants. An e-group also encouraged and facilitated get-togethers of the local cohort and promoted local meetings. Participants also joined a WhatsApp group to further support information sharing which continues to provide a robust tool to share and support each other post programme completion



ADDITIONAL LEARNING

Other learning platform access

Participants were provided with access to additional online tools and platforms to support and enhance learning. Additional learning also encompassed elements of leadership to further develop skills.



MEMBERSHIP OF PCRS

Ongoing development

Complimentary membership to PCRS for participants further enhanced learning and provided an opportunity for ongoing development and a mechanism to keep up to date with respiratory news

