

PCRS-UK Affiliated Groups

With an increasing workload and fewer staff, it has never been more important to find ways of supporting each other through PCRS-UK affiliated groups



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The warning signs have been around for a long time, but the depth and scale of the environment in which primary care clinicians are working is now generally recognised as critical. A King's Fund report¹ found that, during 2010–15, the number of GP consultations increased by 15% but the GP workforce grew by only 4.75% and the practice nurse workforce rose by only 2.85%. Funding for primary care as a share of the general NHS budget fell every year, from 8.3% to 7.9%.

Beccy Baird, fellow at the King's Fund and lead author of the report, said: "Investment alone won't help the crisis in general practice. To avoid the service falling apart, practical support to do things differently is crucial and must be underpinned by an ongoing understanding of what is driving demand and activity."

The report warned that GP shortages are likely to get worse, as it found that only one in 10 GP trainees plan to work in general practice full time and GPs are increasingly retiring early, with 46% of GPs leaving the profession aged under 50. And in a report published in *Pulse*,² Dr Peter Swinyard, Chairman of the Family Doctor Association, warned of a 'demographic time bomb' among practice nurses: "GP practices are going to lose a shedload of practice nurses in their fifties over the next five years just due to natural retirement".

So, with an increasing workload and fewer staff, it has never been more important to find ways to support, encourage and motivate staff. We should never forget how rewarding it is to help people to feel better, and it still is an honour to play such an important role in the management of long-term conditions; we know if we do it right we can have a very real and beneficial impact on the lives of our patients. However, it is just as important that we look after and support our colleagues and peers, particularly in these challenging times.

The NHS Employers website (<http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/retain-and-improve>) emphasises that retaining the valuable members of the practice staff in whom the practice has invested is a key element to meeting the challenges surrounding workforce supply. Their website provides tools and information on events to support the workforce and reminds us that having engaged, healthy staff leads to increased productivity and an overall happier workforce.

Why run a local affiliated group?

- It develops your personal and professional skills
- It is an opportunity to share best practice with and learn from your peers and local practices
- It supports improved respiratory care in your area
- It helps to facilitate local education relevant to your clinical practice
- It helps colleagues to support each other and feel valued and helps decrease the feelings of isolation that can exist when working in primary care
- Support colleagues and peers to keep up to date with new policy and guidance
- Experience as a respiratory group leader enhances your career

How PCRS-UK can help

- Affiliation with PCRS-UK offers enhanced credibility to the group, access to the other group leads and free membership for group leaders.
- Our resource pack contains lots of useful materials to help you get your group started with guidance on running meetings: <https://www.pcrs-uk.org/resource-pack-to-help-you-get-started>
- We run an annual meeting for leaders of PCRS-UK affiliated groups.
- We offer buddy support from an experienced group leader.

Contact info@pcrs-uk.org to be put in touch with a group leader to learn more about running an affiliated group. If you have specific ideas on what would help you to develop, grow and/or retain a local affiliated group, do contact us so that we can share your ideas.

Being a part of a local group or network can help healthcare professionals to share problems, discuss tools and techniques to address issues, share best practice and, as importantly, help colleagues to feel

valued and understood. Beyond this, groups support professional and personal development.

In this year's programme of Affiliated Group activities we will be exploring ways in which PCRS-UK affiliated group members can better support each other, explore new ways of sharing best practice and managing long-term respiratory conditions through technology and other innovative programmes and to value each other more. We will also be looking at ways in which you can protect your groups and ensure their longer term survival beyond the enthusiasm of specific individuals.

In 2017 we are also looking to develop our web pages to help support our affiliated groups with information on tools and resources you can share locally with your groups and other ideas for sharing best practice.

Reference

1. Understanding pressures in general practice. The King's Fund. May 2016. <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/pressures-in-general-practice>
2. Madsen M. One in eight GP practice nurse positions is vacant. Pulse 17 June 2016. <http://www.pulsetoday.co.uk/your-practice/practice-topics/employment/one-in-eight-gp-practice-nurse-positions-is-vacant/20032083.article>

Are you a local group leader?

Want to set up your own local group or network?

Affiliated Group Leaders Workshop

28th September 2017
Telford International Centre

Interested? Come along to the next affiliated group leaders workshop to meet other leaders

Our annual workshop for those interested in setting up a new group and existing groups leaders offers fantastic opportunities to network with others who are keen to set up a group, learn from existing group leaders, and also includes several educational sessions to support your own professional development, which will be invaluable in helping to get a group together locally as well as in your day-to-day practice.

This year's workshop includes:-

- ✓ Sharing the workload of running a group
- ✓ Planning for the future of your group
- ✓ Recognising and managing stress
- ✓ Primary care – a vision for the future
- ✓ Managing stress through mindfulness

Visit the website for more information

<https://pcrs-uk.org/ag-leaders-events>

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