

# So you want to be an ADEPT Fellow?

Grainne Donaghy<sup>1</sup> Rachael Hutton<sup>1</sup> Keith Gardiner<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dr Grainne Donaghy, ADEPT Clinical Leadership Fellow, BHSCT, ST4 General Adult Psychiatry <sup>2</sup>Dr Rachael Hutton, ADEPT Clinical Leadership Fellow, HSCB, ST5 Urology  
<sup>3</sup>Professor Keith Gardiner, Postgraduate Dean

Correspondence to: Dr Rachael Hutton  
E-mail: rachael.hutton@hscni.net

Accepted: 24th December 2015  
Provenance: invited article

Do you see yourself as a current or future Clinical Leader? Would you relish the opportunity to take a year out of programme to focus on learning, developing new skills and reflecting on your leadership experiences so far?

## INTRODUCTION

There is increasing emphasis on engaging clinical staff in leadership and developing leadership and quality improvement (QI) skills for all doctors. Research demonstrates the link between engaging clinical staff to develop leadership capability and better outcomes and care for patients. Leadership is 'the art of motivating a group of people to achieve a common goal'.<sup>1</sup> Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) has launched, in partnership with other Health and Social Care bodies, a novel scheme for trainees: the ADEPT (Achieve, Develop, Explore Programme for Trainees) scheme.

## ADEPT

The ADEPT scheme enables senior trainees in Northern Ireland to develop the organisational and leadership skills necessary to undertake future roles as clinical leaders. Trainees work on projects in an apprenticeship model with senior leaders in DHSSPS and HSC for one year.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of ADEPT is to give trainees a better understanding of how the health and social care system in Northern Ireland works. By working with leaders and managers to understand their strategic visions of health and social care in the region, and the factors that influence this strategy, they can identify, develop and explore the effective leadership and management styles that achieve results.

ADEPT also enables trainees to appreciate first-hand the relationship between clinical practice and service management. By thinking differently using reflective practice, gaining practical leadership and management experience, and leading on a number of QI projects, Fellows have the opportunity to work with senior colleagues facing similar challenges. This creates rich learning opportunities in which

influencing and negotiating skills in a multi-professional environment can be sharpened.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Alongside their supervised role in host organisations, the Fellows participate in a Leadership Development Programme through the HSC Leadership Centre. Coaching and mentoring sessions, host organisation insight visits, and completion and presentation of a QI project complement the attainment of a Level 7 Certificate from the Institute of Leadership and Management. ADEPT is unique in this regard, as other leadership programmes for trainees across the UK do not currently offer the opportunity to complete a formal qualification as part of their programme.

## ADEPT 2015/6

There are currently eight specialist trainees in this first year of ADEPT. Each Clinical Leadership Fellow is attached to one or, in some cases, two host organisations. For 2015/6 this included three of the Health and Social Care Trusts (Belfast, Southern and South Eastern), NIMDTA, The Board Liaison Group/eHealth and Care Team, GMC/RQIA, HSC Leadership Centre/ HSC Safety Forum and The Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety. Each Fellow has at least one project they are leading on, as well as contributing to a number of other ongoing developments.

## BENEFITS

Fellows have been able to develop both their personal and professional skills during project work, and have gained a much deeper understanding of the health and social care system as a whole. We have been encouraged and enabled to build professional networks to draw on the skills and expertise of others. Host organisations have maintained an open door policy, enabling insights into the complexities that senior clinical leaders face on a daily basis. We have had numerous educational opportunities, with access to visiting health and social care leaders from across the United Kingdom with tailored seminars from the General Medical Council (GMC), Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management (FMLM) and Government Leads.

## CONCLUSION

Trainees on the front line are well placed to display leadership by identifying problems and implementing solutions<sup>3</sup>. The Keogh Review<sup>4</sup> states that doctors in postgraduate training 'must not just be seen as the clinical leaders of tomorrow, but clinical leaders of today'. Clinicians are 'potentially our most powerful agents for change.'<sup>4</sup>

ADEPT affords a fantastic opportunity for trainees to take a year out of programme to grow skills that will remain with them throughout the rest of their training and beyond. Any trainee that is interested should give it a go – what have you got to lose?

If you would like further information from current ADEPT Fellows, please contact rachael.hutton@hscni.net (ADEPT

Fellow, Board Liaison Group and eHealth and Care Team) or drgdonaghy@hotmail.com (ADEPT Fellow, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust). For details on how to apply please see the NIMDTA website (<http://www.nimdtg.gov.uk/adept/>).

#### REFERENCES

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