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Dr Falk/Guts UK Awards 2021

SPR TRAINEE AUDIT/QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AWARD WINNER Dr Tessa Cacciottolo



PROJECT:

Using age-appropriate information to support adolescents and young adults with liver disease as they transition from paediatric to adult services.

Dr Tessa Cacciottolo is a NIHR Clinical Lecturer at the University of Cambridge & Addenbrooke's Hospital. Her project will be carried out within the Department of Hepatology at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, starting on 01/09/21 for twelve months.

Dr Cacciottolo explains:

'I work with a number of children with genetic problems in the fields of obesity and liver disease and have seen at first hand the difficulties experienced by young patients in fully understanding their condition. Whilst we clinicians often spend a lot of time talking to patients and their families, our language can be too technical and not always easy to remember. Additionally, they may be scared to look things up on the internet because they are not sure whether or not to trust the information that is available online.'

'Therefore, providing good quality information, which is engaging, easy to understand, well organised and above all reliable, is important, and particularly so during transition from paediatric to adult services. During this time, young patients are encouraged to better understand their condition and learn to communicate for themselves. In order to support this process and encourage the development of independence, we aim to develop age-appropriate information via disease specific booklets, containing an outline of each condition and an introduction to the relevant members of the adult team. The booklets will be professionally produced in collaboration with Addenbrooke's Media Studio and available in both printed and digital formats. In addition, in order to accommodate recent social distancing measures, we will produce a short video to introduce the adult team and clinic environment to our young patients and their families.'

'It would be immensely satisfying for me to get this project off the ground, and I hope that it will serve as a springboard for me to further the patient engagement project in the future, with direct benefit for patients. Ultimately, we expect these tools to support an effective transition for this group of patients and to improve their long term health outcomes.'

Dr Cacciottolo's Supervisor. Consultant Hepatologist Dr Victoria Snowdon comments:

'Tessa Cacciottolo is a clinical lecturer in her final year of training subspecialising in Hepatology. She started doing the transition clinic 18 months ago as part of her clinical training and noted that patients who are used to the paediatric approach to clinical care did not have much information about what to expect when transitioning so she proposed the following project: to develop age-appropriate, visually appealing information leaflets and an education video to support adolescents with liver disease transition from paediatric to adult services.'

'Tessa is an excellent budding Hepatologist, she is keen to improve the provision of care for patients at all stages and this project is the start of it.'

Dr Cacciottolo states:

'This award is terrific as it recognises the need for, and value of, providing engaging and informative material to support patients with chronic disease to help themselves.'

'There are so many wonderful ideas in medicine that never come to fruition because of lack of financial and other support. This award allows our particular idea to become a reality, for which I am really grateful. I hope that it encourages other HCPs to 'think outside the box' of normal care as this is how we will improve patient experience.'



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