

## CAHPR South West

### Small Grants Scheme

**Laura Cook**



#### **Which conference/study day did you attend?**

With the support of funding from CAHPR South West, I was able to attend the British Aphasiology Society (BAS) International Conference at the National Hospital for Neurology & Neurosurgery in September 2023. I am a music therapist and lead the Bath Aphasia Choir and specialise in working with people with aphasia (communication difficulties after stroke or brain injury), and at the conference I presented a pre-recorded video of the choir singing a song they had written about their experiences of having aphasia and interviews with some of the choir members.

#### **What were the benefits of attending?**

BAS conferences tend to be primarily attended by Speech and Language Therapists, and I have presented at previous BAS events where there has been a huge interest in music therapy and aphasia choirs. The funding allowed me to attend the event in person, and network with interdisciplinary colleagues and researchers during the breaks. I spoke with an SLT from the University of East Anglia who was considering setting up an aphasia choir run by SLT students and was delighted to see that this choir will be starting next year!

#### **What did you learn and how will you use that learning?**

I was very interested in the results presented by Professor Marion Brady of a meta-analysis looking at the predictors of recovery from aphasia using data from individual participants, which added to the growing amount of evidence for high intensity therapy to optimise language recovery. I will use this to plan therapeutic input and schedules with individuals with aphasia more efficiently. There were also some fascinating findings into the biggest challenges for people with aphasia from focus groups facilitated by Australian researchers at Communication Connect. I hope to develop further research into how music therapy and aphasia choirs can meet these needs in future.

## **Kathryn Bamforth**

### **Which conference/study day did you attend?**

02/11/23: Learning from Experiences: humanising care by listening to patients and staff symposium

(Point of Care Foundation)

### **What were the benefit of attending?**

I met people from a range of healthcare backgrounds: professional, administrative, patient, to understand how we use experience in healthcare and learn about the power of story-telling.

My PhD project uses experience-based co-design to understand how staff and patients perceive healthcare professional psychological wellbeing at work and develop models to support wellbeing. Have completed the interviews, I am creating a summary catalyst film which will be used in the forthcoming co-design events. This course has supported me to think about how I support staff to share their experiences and stories in the next phase of my data collection.

### **What did you learn and how will you use that learning?**

I learnt about the interpretivist nature of story-telling. Unlike patient safety and clinical effectiveness, experience is less quantifiable and ontologically opposed to a prevailing positivist paradigm. During the Schwartz Round, I reflected on our stressful working environments (particularly post-COVID) and how my co-design groups will be a unique opportunity to give staff time to reflect.

**Rebecca Fox**

**Which conference/study day did you attend?**

12<sup>th</sup> October 2023

The National Association of Educators in Practice (NAEP) conference 2023 in Birmingham

**What were the benefit of attending?**

I attended to present my developing experience as a researcher embedded within the Therapy Department at a small district general hospital geographically isolated from academic centres. Much of my role is about strategically influencing and supporting the education of the Therapy workforce, building the research skills and capabilities. Often at conferences you are 'preaching to the converted', presenting your work to audiences that have similar interests – this time I was bringing a concept that was important to the themes and purpose of the conference but had a slightly different focus than some core presentations. It was a great opportunity to get feedback on my work from another perspective. Fair to say I was nervous but it was well received.

Being a researcher educator based in the NHS it was a great opportunity to interact with and consider the priorities and pressures for educators based in academia and the intersection and working practices between healthcare providers and educators. Speakers covered topics including innovation in learning in healthcare practice and anti-discrimination strategies for practice education. A standout for me was the student founder of Future Frontline – a community interest company founded during the pandemic to support and empower healthcare students in their transition to professionals, comfortable and confident learning and working in a multidisciplinary environment.

**What did you learn and how will you use that learning?**

I left the conference invigorated with a renewed sense of purpose and resolve in the relevance of my work (and spent the journey home drafting the first paper to come from this work!). The need to bring the purpose of education more to the fore in the clinical environment was a theme across the conference which I felt reflected and aligned with the current conversations about the need for research to hold a central

space in the clinical world. I feel there needs to be resolve for these agendas to work hand in hand and ensure they don't compete for the precious resources. With my eyes opened to this, I can do what I can in my small part.

## **Sharon Huish**

### **Which conference/study day did you attend?**

European Renal Association Conference in Stockholm

### **What were the benefit of attending?**

It was my first experience of this conference and first of presenting a focused oral presentation. It was the biggest conference I've attended to date and therefore was daunting but also a really great experience to embrace and learn from. I used the conference as an opportunity to network with national and international research leaders (I contacted people beforehand to arrange meetings); these were people I wouldn't usually have the opportunity to meet up with in person to discuss my research ideas. This has helped to established new collaborations which I have included in my NIHR fellowship application. I have also been invited to be part of a literature review for a paper through someone I met at the conference

### **What did you learn and how will you use that learning?**

I attended some excellent talks presenting latest evidence around diet in kidney disease and also renal bone disorders (my interest areas). I have lined up dates to feedback to dietitians locally and am also planning a national webinar through the renal nutrition group.

**Liz Eddy**

**Which conference/study day did you attend?**

British Association of Music Therapy Conference: Leicester 18 May 2024  
'About All of Us, For All of Us, By All of Us'

**What were the benefits of attending?**

- To gain a greater awareness of music therapy practice around the UK
- Understand the current agenda of BAMT as an organization
- To talk informally with other music therapists

**What did you learn and how will you use that learning?**

Unfortunately, the submissions I was involved in were not accepted and feedback suggested more focus on the awareness of power dynamics in therapy was required. Throughout the conference day I had this in mind and considered how the presentations I saw addressed issues of power. One compelling presentation about music therapy on the Neonatal Unit was co-presented by the therapist and family who worked together. Each talked about their experiences of the work. I don't think I will ever forget how much more impact the telling of the story of this work had because of the multiple perspectives shared. Since then I have tried some work on the Neonatal Unit with this as a basis of my approach.