

Data reveals more managers boost hospital performance

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Ian Kirkpatrick, Professor of Healthcare Improvement & Implementation Science, will reveal how data shows hospitals in England need more managers not less to improve performance at Acute & General Medicine 2016.

The fifth annual conference is being held at London ExCel and is expected to see up to 4,000 doctors attend over Tuesday and Wednesday.

Professor Kirkpatrick is due to talk on management and governance in acute hospital care, while Eivor Oborn, Professor of Healthcare Management, will be speaking at the event on digital health.

A study by a team of researchers led by Professor Kirkpatrick looked into the effect of management on hospital performance over six years.

"The reality is there are not enough managers in the English NHS. They make up less than three per cent of the workforce compared to seven per cent as a whole in the economy; in the acute hospital sector in England it is less than two per cent," said Professor Kirkpatrick.

"By pulling together [data](#) from all hospitals in England and using a regression analysis, which accounts for factors like hospital size, location, early year performance and a host of other potential causes, we found a higher proportion of managers has a positive impact on patient satisfaction, efficiency rates and a significant number of other outcomes.

"Plus, those effects are increased when managers are paid more and when there is less manager turnover."

Such findings highlight the important contributions managers have made in the NHS, despite recent media and public concerns about rising bureaucracy.

Professor Oborn will be revealing how moving data out of filing cabinets and onto a well-run IT system can have a far-reaching impact for healthcare organisations.

"Healthcare organisations need to rethink the role of [information](#) and data," said Professor Oborn, who co-lead the £10 million Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. "Traditionally clinicians become knowledgeable through randomised controlled trials, that is what they have been taught, but you can't do that for everything, especially if you are using real-time data.

"It is another way of learning, especially if hospitals and healthcare organisations integrate information and data into services to think strategically. The role of information and data can be used to legitimise services; just by displaying the data it can provide legitimacy and show the potential of an organisation."

Professor Oborn will reveal how [real-time data](#) from outside the organisation can also be used, such as [social media](#). There are healthcare organisations developing systems that can monitor social media and so prepare for a rise in cases of flu or add it to a patient's notes so their conditions can be monitored via their posts.

She will also talk about how digitising data can help attract top talent to a hospital or healthcare organisation.

"We have looked at healthcare organisations that have found it easier to recruit excellent clinicians because of the quality of their digital information," said Professor Oborn, who teaches Management of Change on the Executive MBA. "Clinicians want to do research and if an organisation has good information capabilities, so you can look things up and query a searchable database, that makes them a more attractive proposition.

"It shows the organisation is forward thinking and shows their information can be used for more than just patient care, but also for research to improve outcomes and services."

Another example of digital data helping organisations is when it comes to auditing from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and dealing with influential agencies.

"Having information and data available in a digital format enables organisations to have better dialogues with Clinical Commissioners," said Professor Oborn. "They believe them more when it comes quickly from an IT system, so digitising feedback enables organisations to have better negotiations than it would be done on paper - even if it is the same data.

"It also helps them when dealing with the CQC. It shows they are fit for purpose and legitimate if they can quickly find information on their IT system rather than in a filing cabinet."

Provided by University of Warwick

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