

A qualitative study of the knowledge-brokering role of middle-level managers in service innovation: managing the translation gap in patient safety for older persons' care

Graeme Currie,^{1*} Nicola Burgess,¹ Leroy White,²
Andy Lockett,¹ John Gladman³ and Justin Waring⁴

¹Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK

²Department of Management, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK

³Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK

⁴Business School, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK

*Corresponding author

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Plain English summary

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Plain English summary

This study examines the role of the hybrid middle-level manager (H-MLM), who combines clinical and managerial responsibilities, in brokering patient safety knowledge (PSK) for service improvement in elderly care, both within NHS hospital settings and across the wider health-care system.

The study has three phases. Firstly, we examine the brokering of PSK from external stakeholders, for example the Department of Health, National Patient Safety Agency, commissioners and professional institutes (e.g. British Geriatrics Society). We examine *how* PSK is brokered 'top down' from external stakeholders through clinical governance systems and to the front line of care; *who* brokers the knowledge; and *if/how* such knowledge informs service improvement in elderly care.

Secondly, we examine *how* PSK is brokered upwards and across occupational boundaries within the organisation. Again, we focus upon *who* brokers knowledge 'upwards' to more senior actors, such as senior managers and clinicians, and *how*; and *who* brokers knowledge 'across' to clinicians working throughout the hospital and those external to the hospital who provide care, and *how*.

Thirdly, we trace the brokerage of PSK following an incident of patient harm (or death) resulting from a hospital-based fall, medication error, and/or patient transition between places of care – all of which are common occurrences among elderly patients.

Ultimately, we seek a deep understanding of knowledge brokering by H-MLMs in and across health-care organisations. Following this, we make recommendations about *how* senior hospital managers may best support H-MLMs to broker PSK for service improvement in elderly care and beyond.

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Editorial contact: nihredit@southampton.ac.uk

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