

The 10-year impact of a ward-level quality improvement intervention in acute hospitals: a multiple methods study

Sophie Sarre,¹ Jill Maben,² Peter Griffiths,³
Rosemary Chable⁴ and Glenn Robert^{1*}

¹Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care,
King's College London, London, UK

²School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of
Surrey, Guildford, UK

³Health Sciences, University of Southampton, Southampton, UK

⁴Training, Development & Workforce, University Hospital Southampton NHS
Foundation Trust, Southampton, UK

*Corresponding author glenn.robert@kcl.ac.uk

Declared competing interests of authors: Glenn Robert reports that he was a member of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Health Services and Delivery Research (HSDR) programme researcher-led panel from 2013 to 2017. Jill Maben reports that she was a member of the NIHR HSDR programme researcher-led panel from 2013 to 2016.

Published August 2019

DOI: 10.3310/hsdr07280

Plain English summary

10-year impact of a ward-level quality improvement intervention

Health Services and Delivery Research 2019; Vol. 7: No. 28

DOI: 10.3310/hsdr07280

NIHR Journals Library www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk

Plain English summary

This study investigated a programme called 'Productive Ward: Releasing Time to Care'[™] (PW), which aimed to help nurses make their hospital wards run more efficiently and give them more time for patient care. PW was first tried in the NHS in 2007. The majority of trusts chose to adopt it, many supported by a share of the £50M made available.

The study tried to find out whether or not the programme and the way in which it was implemented led to lasting improvements. This was done by conducting surveys of directors of nursing and hospital leads for PW; carrying out telephone interviews with former PW leads; and, in six acute hospitals, interviewing staff and looking at what goes on in wards.

Overall, the impact of PW was reported as positive, although some elements had been more useful than others. Hospitals had very few 'hard data' (figures before and after doing PW) to prove impacts, but interviewees said that PW had improved things for staff and patients.

Although the majority of hospitals in the survey had stopped using the full programme, nearly all reported that at least some elements of PW were still being used. It had also influenced quality improvement strategies in nearly half of the hospitals in the survey.

There was no available evidence of a sustained increase in the time nurses spend on direct patient care or improvements in the experiences of staff and/or patients, but PW has had a lasting impact on ward layout (including storage and equipment) and on some ward practices. To a lesser degree, it was still helping ward staff to think about working productively. The findings from the study will help managers, doctors and nurses to sustain the benefits they reap from using PW or other improvement programmes like it.

Health Services and Delivery Research

ISSN 2050-4349 (Print)

ISSN 2050-4357 (Online)

This journal is a member of and subscribes to the principles of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) (www.publicationethics.org/).

Editorial contact: journals.library@nihr.ac.uk

The full HS&DR archive is freely available to view online at www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/hsdr. Print-on-demand copies can be purchased from the report pages of the NIHR Journals Library website: www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk

Criteria for inclusion in the *Health Services and Delivery Research* journal

Reports are published in *Health Services and Delivery Research* (HS&DR) if (1) they have resulted from work for the HS&DR programme or programmes which preceded the HS&DR programme, and (2) they are of a sufficiently high scientific quality as assessed by the reviewers and editors.

HS&DR programme

The Health Services and Delivery Research (HS&DR) programme, part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), was established to fund a broad range of research. It combines the strengths and contributions of two previous NIHR research programmes: the Health Services Research (HSR) programme and the Service Delivery and Organisation (SDO) programme, which were merged in January 2012.

The HS&DR programme aims to produce rigorous and relevant evidence on the quality, access and organisation of health services including costs and outcomes, as well as research on implementation. The programme will enhance the strategic focus on research that matters to the NHS and is keen to support ambitious evaluative research to improve health services.

For more information about the HS&DR programme please visit the website: <http://www.nets.nihr.ac.uk/programmes/hsdr>

This report

The research reported in this issue of the journal was funded by the HS&DR programme or one of its preceding programmes as project number 13/157/44. The contractual start date was in January 2016. The final report began editorial review in August 2018 and was accepted for publication in November 2018. The authors have been wholly responsible for all data collection, analysis and interpretation, and for writing up their work. The HS&DR editors and production house have tried to ensure the accuracy of the authors' report and would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive comments on the final report document. However, they do not accept liability for damages or losses arising from material published in this report.

This report presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). The views and opinions expressed by authors in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the HS&DR programme or the Department of Health and Social Care. If there are verbatim quotations included in this publication the views and opinions expressed by the interviewees are those of the interviewees and do not necessarily reflect those of the authors, those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the HS&DR programme or the Department of Health and Social Care.

© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2019. This work was produced by Sarre *et al.* under the terms of a commissioning contract issued by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. This issue may be freely reproduced for the purposes of private research and study and extracts (or indeed, the full report) may be included in professional journals provided that suitable acknowledgement is made and the reproduction is not associated with any form of advertising. Applications for commercial reproduction should be addressed to: NIHR Journals Library, National Institute for Health Research, Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre, Alpha House, University of Southampton Science Park, Southampton SO16 7NS, UK.

Published by the NIHR Journals Library (www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk), produced by Prepress Projects Ltd, Perth, Scotland (www.prepress-projects.co.uk).

NIHR Journals Library Editor-in-Chief

Professor Ken Stein Professor of Public Health, University of Exeter Medical School, UK

NIHR Journals Library Editors

Professor John Powell Chair of HTA and EME Editorial Board and Editor-in-Chief of HTA and EME journals. Consultant Clinical Adviser, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), UK, and Honorary Professor, University of Manchester, and Senior Clinical Researcher and Associate Professor, Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford, UK

Professor Andrée Le May Chair of NIHR Journals Library Editorial Group (HS&DR, PGfAR, PHR journals) and Editor-in-Chief of HS&DR, PGfAR, PHR journals

Professor Matthias Beck Professor of Management, Cork University Business School, Department of Management and Marketing, University College Cork, Ireland

Dr Tessa Crilly Director, Crystal Blue Consulting Ltd, UK

Dr Eugenia Cronin Senior Scientific Advisor, Wessex Institute, UK

Dr Peter Davidson Consultant Advisor, Wessex Institute, University of Southampton, UK

Ms Tara Lamont Director, NIHR Dissemination Centre, UK

Dr Catriona McDaid Senior Research Fellow, York Trials Unit, Department of Health Sciences, University of York, UK

Professor William McGuire Professor of Child Health, Hull York Medical School, University of York, UK

Professor Geoffrey Meads Professor of Wellbeing Research, University of Winchester, UK

Professor John Norrie Chair in Medical Statistics, University of Edinburgh, UK

Professor James Raftery Professor of Health Technology Assessment, Wessex Institute, Faculty of Medicine, University of Southampton, UK

Dr Rob Riemsma Reviews Manager, Kleijnen Systematic Reviews Ltd, UK

Professor Helen Roberts Professor of Child Health Research, UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health, UK

Professor Jonathan Ross Professor of Sexual Health and HIV, University Hospital Birmingham, UK

Professor Helen Snooks Professor of Health Services Research, Institute of Life Science, College of Medicine, Swansea University, UK

Professor Ken Stein Professor of Public Health, University of Exeter Medical School, UK

Professor Jim Thornton Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Nottingham, UK

Professor Martin Underwood Warwick Clinical Trials Unit, Warwick Medical School, University of Warwick, UK

Please visit the website for a list of editors: www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/about/editors

Editorial contact: journals.library@nihr.ac.uk