

Academic career enablers, experience and aspirations of NMAHP clinicians in the North West

NHS R&D NW study commissioned by NHS-England on behalf of the NW Council of Deans of Health

Background NMAHP education and research that provides the evidence base for high quality care depends upon a sustainable ‘academic’ workforce; NMAHPs working in research and teaching and learning. However, there are concerns regarding the capacity of the academic workforce to meet current and future demands. This study was commissioned to inform a regional strategy to prepare, support and grow the NW NMAHP academic workforce.

Method A focus group with the NW Council of Deans of Health and a desktop literature review informed surveys targeted at NMAHPs and leaders supporting NMAHP workforce development, all of whom were invited to interview. Participants did not have to be involved in research or teaching.

174 NMAHPs completed the survey
39% nurses, **10%** midwives, **45%** AHPs including 35 physiotherapists, 15 OTs and 8 SLTs¹
40 NMAHPs were interviewed

¹ Percentage statistics are based on the number of responses to each question.

- 67%** hold/are undertaking a **higher degree**
- 90%** had **experience of research/research-related** activities and **98%** in **teaching & learning**
- 67%** had **teaching & learning** and **49%** had **research** in their **job descriptions**
- 36%** of **nurses & midwives** and **15%** of **AHPs** had **research-related job titles**
- 72%** spend **25% or less** of their time on **teaching & learning** and **47%** spend **25% or less** of their time on **research**
- 41%** of **nurses & midwives** and **6%** of **AHPs** reported spending **>75%** of their time on **research**
- 40%** rated their **research knowledge and skills** as “good” and **52%** provided the same rating for their **teaching & learning skills**

75% are interested in a **research career** and **65%** in a **teaching and learning career**

Combined roles – remaining clinical

46% identified a **more desirable range** of research and/or teaching **contracts/posts** as a key enabler and a lack of such posts as a barrier

71% are interested in a “**clinical and research**” role and...

67% in a “**clinical, research and teaching**” role

69% prefer to work in a **healthcare setting** or hold a **joint appointment** with an HEI

37% selected “**not wanting to change employers**” as a key barrier



You carry on and on that academic NIHR programme, you get to the top and then you've still got the drop off point at the top. Where do you go from there? [...] Where's the permanent role after that? [...] Something that will enable you to keep that clinical and academic experience. And I think it's creating those roles, isn't it?

Organisational support

Need for **protected time from HEI teaching and/or clinical workload** to undertake research and access training and development

Managerial support is often a barrier

Senior leadership commitment is required to build **HEI-NHS partnership working** to develop **joint strategies and workforce planning, long-term funding models and NMAHP clinical academic pay scales**



Finances

60% identified “**increased financial support and incentives**” as a key **enabler** and...

41% selected potential **financial penalties** as a major **barrier**

Need for increased **job security** and **salaries** commensurate with clinical roles

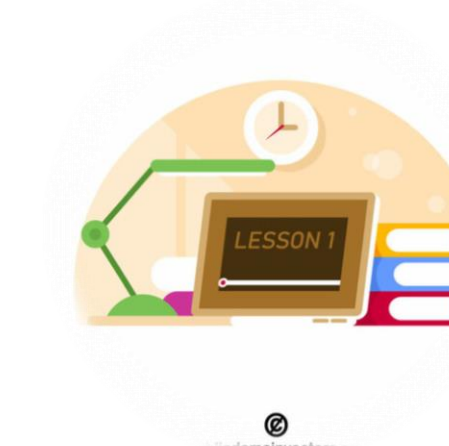
Pensions of concern in moving to an HEI

Need for more **funded training** and development



Training and development

Need for more **entry-level** and **informal** opportunities including greater exposure to academic careers at **pre-registration** level



Inequalities

There are **inequalities** within and between **organisations, regions and professions** in terms of the **availability and/or accessibility** of academic development and career opportunities

More work is required to understand barriers to pursuing an academic career amongst **under-represented groups**



Careers advice and guidance

45% had **not received any** research/teaching **careers advice** or guidance and...

56% did not know or are not sure where to seek this advice

More **visible role models, mentorship** and **peer support** is required, particularly given the **perseverance and resilience** needed to pursue an academic career.



I found myself trying to navigate my own career, not really knowing how I can make this happen [...] it's exhausting

It's pure luck, I've been really fortunate in my career that I've met various people along the way who have helped me, supported me or kind of done a bit of mentorship [...] If it hadn't been for those people that I've met, I would never have got the opportunities or known to look for the opportunities that I have since found because they're not easily accessible and not very visible

Career pathways

51% rated **research career pathways** very **unclear/unclear** compared to **42%** in teaching and learning

More **ECR roles** and **long-term career progression** is required.

Need for greater **flexibility** to move between **HEIs** and the **NHS**

