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THE RESEARCHER IN RESIDENCE MODEL: GETTING EMBEDDED IN THE WELC INTEGRATED CARE PROGRAMME

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10.1136/bmjopen-2015-UCLSymposiumAbstracts.15

The Researcher in Residence model is a methodological innovation being developed by UCLPartners and Improvement Science London to help bring academic and practitioner communities more closely together to improve outcomes for patients and value for the health system. The model places the researcher as a key member of the delivery team rather than an external observer of change, and gives them a stake in the success, or otherwise, of the initiative. The expertise which the Researcher in Residence brings to the programme in which they are embedded is communicated to and negotiated with, rather than imposed on, the practitioners in the delivery team and other stakeholders.

The model is being applied in the Waltham Forest, East London and City (WELC) Integrated Care pioneer programme. The programme commissioned an embedded and process oriented local evaluation, which focuses less on whether the programme ‘works’ and more on how to use established research evidence to optimise the effectiveness of the implementation team. The WELC care collaborative has brought together commissioners, providers and local authorities covering the area served by Barts Health NHS Trust. The partners have come together to build a model of integrated care that looks at the whole person—their physical health, mental health and social care needs.

The overall aim of the WELC Integrated Care programme evaluation is to explore the processes by which integrated care is being implemented across WELC in order to enhance and improve the effectiveness of delivery of the programme objectives. The project has a strongly participative approach, underpinned by a critical realist ontology, an interpretive epistemology, and a Critical Discourse Analysis methodology.