



# Mentoring Programme Booklet

## For health and social care researchers

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## Purpose of this handbook

This booklet is designed as a resource for mentees, mentors and others involved in the Applied Research Collaboration Kent, Surrey and Sussex (ARC KSS) Mentorship Programme. It gives information about the Programme and what it offers, explains how mentoring within the Programme works and offers useful guidance about getting the most from the Programme - as well as suggestions for further information and resources which may be helpful. The booklet also explains more about mentoring and how it can enable aspiring applied researchers to build a rewarding career that combines clinical or practitioner leadership with research and to enable them to maximize their best contribution to health and social care. The case studies and quotes within the booklet are examples from real mentees and mentors within the programme. and illuminate their experience of mentoring and help to illustrate how mentoring has worked for them.

## Useful Contact Details

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## Professor Sally Kendall, Chair ARC KSS Academy Mentoring Lead



The ARC KSS Mentorship Programme was initiated in Spring 2021. I see this opportunity for academic, clinical and social care researchers across the ARC to both become mentors and receive mentorship as a critical component in the journey of becoming a leader in the field of clinical and social care academic research. The history of being both an academic and a clinical/social care leader in the health and social care professions has not been an easy road to take, but we hope that with the support of ARC KSS NIHR Academy we can support those of you who want to build a research career or just want to make a difference to practice through research. Mentorship enables clinical/social care academics to navigate those pathways with someone who trod the road before, who brings experience, wisdom and insight. The mentor also brings the ability to listen, ask the right questions and challenge the mentee to consider all the options on the career and leadership road enabling them to make choices and decisions that will help them to reach their potential.

The purpose of the ARC KSS mentorship programme is to provide the framework for high quality mentorship that will support mentees and provide training and resources for the mentors so that they can provide the best possible experience. We take pride in our training programme, events, webinars and resources and aim to enable you to become the best mentor you can be, and to receive great mentorship. Our highly experienced team includes internationally known advisors and consultants in mentorship and we are thankful to all those who contribute so readily to the programme.



# Programme

## Background to the programme

The primary aim of the ARC KSS Mentorship Programme is the development of a supportive and inclusive research environment and culture for academics, clinicians, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, allied health professionals, social care and social work professionals who are involved in pursuing an applied research career trajectory. In order to achieve this aim the ARC KSS Mentorship Programme has been developed for launch in Spring 2021. It aims to develop an increased number of applied researchers across health and social care settings capable of operating at the highest level and becoming the academic leaders of the future, as well as role modelling the contribution research can make to enhancing quality evidence-based care and the patient/client experience.

## Our vision for the next four years:

Is to grow the Community of Mentors and ensure that skilled mentorship will be embedded and sustained across the applied health and social care researchers and their local research teams. We will work closely with HEE and NIHR networks to maximise the investment to date and build on the intelligence already created to harness experience and build the model for the future.

Our mentorship programme is designed to have a positive impact on the career aspirations and development to enhance quality and quantity of applied research and leadership. The programme is funded by NIHR ARC KSS and is developed and delivered with our health and social care partner organisations concerned with promoting excellence in health and social care research and practice.

## Aims and content

The overall aim of the programme is to provide high quality mentorship to support the next generation of health and social care academic leaders.



### **The programme offers:**

- A community of mentors who are nationally and internationally recognised leaders in the field of health and social care research who have demonstrated sustained success in linking research and practice.
- Individual mentoring support for researchers across the career pathway spectrum.
- Group and peer support for researchers
- Face-to-face and on-line mentorship training and preparation
- A programme of webinars and forums hosted by world leading experts in mentoring to commence in Autumn 2021
- Outreach activities including an Annual ARC KSS Research Week and links with regional and professional networks
- An alumni programme that will enable mentors and mentees to stay in touch, contribute their experience and continue to access on-line resources.

## How the ARC KSS Academy operates

A management team, Organisation and Research CApacity Group (ORCA), comprised of representatives from ARC KSS partner organisations, holds responsibility for achieving the aims of the programme and ensures that the programme is designed and organised in a way that effectively meets the needs of mentees and mentors and the ARC KSS programme.

The mentorship programme is managed, on a day-to-day basis, by Dani Evans, the ARC KSS Research Co-ordinator.

Leadership and training are provided by Professor Sally Kendall, University of Kent, and Laura Davidson-Dean, Mentoring and Coaching Consultant.

Together they take responsibility for recruitment to, and day-to-day running of the programme, with Laura working with mentees and mentors to ensure effective support and development.



Laura Davidson-Dean



Dani Evans

# Recruitment of Mentees and Mentor Matching

## Recruitment of Mentees

Individual mentorship is available for all researchers within ARC KSS member organisations. Visit the ARC KSS website for a [list of ARC KSS member organisations](#). If you are unsure if your organisation is an ARC KSS member, please contact us on [ARCKSSacademy@kent.ac.uk](mailto:ARCKSSacademy@kent.ac.uk).

## Mentor matching

Once a mentee submits an application for mentorship and this is approved by the programme team you will be provisionally matched with a mentor who is registered within the ARC KSS Mentorship scheme.

If you are thinking of joining the programme as a mentee, it is important to consider what you would like to gain from this mentoring relationship and what it will offer you that is different to, or complements, mentoring or supervisor support you already receive. It may make sense to choose a mentor from a different professional background to your own, maybe from a different organisation to your own or someone who has skills or experience that would not be otherwise available to you - for example expertise in specific research methodologies, track record of grant capture or a significant international profile. Guidance notes for mentees are shown in Box 1.

### Box 1: Choosing a mentor

#### As a mentee you may find it helpful to:

- Think honestly about your own future career plans and aspirations.
- Identify areas where support, guidance or experience, additional to that you currently receive, could help you move forward.
- Consider the issues a mentor could help you with in your research career.
- Browse the [ARC KSS website](#) to see if the goals of the ARC KSS, what we do, the Mentorship scheme, researcher support and the ARC KSS research programme seems to offer what you are looking for.
- Contact the [ARC KSS Academy Facilitator](#) if you wish to talk through your ideas

You will then receive a matching email from our mentorship system along with your proposed mentor, explaining that you are provisionally matched as a mentoring pair under the ARC KSS Mentoring Programme. Mentee and proposed mentor are invited to make contact - either face-to-face, by telephone or online - and discuss how they might work together. It is the responsibility of the mentee to initiate this initial contact

### **Confidential mentoring proforma**

We recognise that it is important that mentee and mentors both feel able to work well together and that the quality of the relationship is dependent on a number of factors including professional background, personality, previous experiences and aspirations for the future.

We therefore invite mentees and proposed mentors to each complete a confidential mentoring proforma following the initial contact, confirming they are happy to work together. This is completed through an [online form on the ARC KSS Collaboration Hub](#).

### **Approval of mentoring pairs**

Once mentees and proposed mentors confirm they are both happy to proceed, they are approved as a mentoring pair and the mentoring relationship commences.

Please note: within the ARC KSS Mentorship Programme it is primarily the responsibility of the mentee to initiate the initial contact with their mentor. Thereafter contacts will be negotiated, although it is expected that the mentee will take a lead with these arrangements. Nevertheless, it is expected that mentors will be responsive to the reasonable needs and requests of their mentees and be available for mutually agreed sessions.

The first meeting is crucial and can set the tone for the future mentoring relationship. Box 2 provides some guidance for this meeting. The success of mentoring is linked to the quality of the relationship so it is important to take time to talk about your expectations, hopes and how you will judge the value of mentorship. Be realistic about what you want and can offer - both as a mentee and mentor.

#### **Box 2: Initial**

The first meeting, preferably face-to-face or virtual, should include a discussion of what each of you, mentee and mentor, want to get from the mentoring relationship and how you will work together.

#### **Some issues it may be useful to discuss are:**

- Confidentiality (of conversations and written records)
- The focus of the mentoring
- What the mentee hopes to gain
- How success will be measured
- Time commitments, for example, duration and frequency of meetings or telephone contacts
- Location of meetings, for example, face-to-face, online or skype
- Recording meetings – mentee, mentor
- How you will work together. For example will you have regular meetings or a more flexible arrangement? Will you agree a focus in advance of meetings or talk about issues as they arise? Will goals be set at the outset or will they emerge over time?

## Working Together

### The focus of ARC KSS Mentoring Programme

Researchers are usually well supported by their research supervisors and, within their sphere of practice, by clinical/practice leads and managers. However, our mentees tell us that they find it extremely helpful to work with a senior researcher or clinical/practice leaders who are outside their usual networks. Such a person can provide insights, experience and wisdom that would not otherwise be available to them and be a real resource to help them develop their career and make their best contribution to practice.

Usually conversations with mentors are about broader issues than those discussed at research supervision sessions. For example they may focus on what the mentee wishes to achieve through their research leadership, how they can build a more ambitious research profile or how to network more strategically and effectively. Because the mentor is not a supervisor or manager, he or she will have no vested interest in any particular outcome or decision and so is able to provide an objective sounding board. They may also use their own experience to share insights and stimulate thinking. Where appropriate, mentoring conversations, within the ARC KSS Mentorship Programme, are confidential so the mentee can talk without worrying that the issues discussed will be made known to others. This objectivity and confidentiality helps create a safe and supportive space where mentees can explore their aspirations, share their concerns and develop their professional goals. However, we acknowledge that not all relationships go as planned so it is good mentorship practice to plan together for a 'graceful exit' after three meetings if the mentor/mentee pair is not working as expected.

Mentors will be some of the most successful health and social care researchers and leaders working in the region. It may seem, at first, rather daunting to discuss your own professional experiences and ambitions with such a person. However, all the mentors working within the ARC KSS Mentorship Programme have chosen to join the programme because they are highly committed to enabling the applied research leaders of the future to grow and develop. They are all volunteers and understand the difficulties you face in building an applied research career. Many of them had to find their own way through the complexities of building such a career, when there was less support available than there is today. They thoroughly enjoy the role of mentor and tell us that they find the experience rewarding and also professionally worthwhile - as it strengthens their insights and links to clinical careers and patient care.

#### **What mentors say about the role:**

*"Mentoring my clinical lecturer mentee has been one of the most enjoyable aspects of my role. To have seen the progress she has made over the last year, particularly with her NHS role, has been hugely rewarding"*

*"Mentoring within the NIHR programme has been very helpful because I often think I can give advice or help or support within my own profession, but this programme has really broadened my thoughts and made me realise that a lot of these skills are generic, transferable. You don't have to be the same profession as the person you are mentoring"*

*"Seeing my mentee develop in her clinical academic career is extremely rewarding"*

*"That feeling that you've been able to help someone else move their clinical academic career forward. That was something I was really looking forward to and have really enjoyed"*

**Make the most of your mentor, therefore, and don't be afraid to ask them for their help and guidance – they are keen to support you!**

# What will a mentor do?

## Mentors seek to help others achieve their potential.....

- By being demonstrably enthusiastic and capable of developing the potential of others
- By sharing their own experience and wisdom with an individual mentee

## What do our mentors offer?

Our mentors offer individual support and guidance to ARC KSS applied health and social care researchers to help them plan and manage their own professional goals, learning and development in order to build a successful career that embraces clinical excellence and academic rigour.

## ARC KSS mentors will typically:

- Listen and ask questions
- Stimulate thinking
- Support, encourage and challenge
- Signpost - where appropriate - opportunities, information resources and networking opportunities
- Act as inspirational role models

## ARC KSS Mentors do not:

- Collaborate on research or grant applications
- Supervise your individual research project or thesis

# Getting the most from the Mentorship Programme

## Mentees

Think about your overall goals and aims yet be aware that goals often change as the mentoring progresses and as you develop. It may be helpful to have one or two broad goals and allow other issues to emerge over time.

- Come to each session prepared to talk about issues that are of concern to you, whether they are about clinical practice, research or your wider plans and goals.
- Spend some time before each session thinking about what you would like it to cover and what you would like to get from it. Make a note for yourself - and perhaps email your mentor in advance so they have a chance to think about these matters.
- Following each session, keep a record of the issues discussed, any insights gained or decisions reached and any actions you have decided to undertake.
- Between sessions reflect on the mentoring experience and how it is working for you - Make notes on your reflections. These may be for yourself - or you may also choose to share some of your observations with your mentor.
- Unless there is a good reason not to, take the actions you decided upon in discussion with your mentor.

## Mentors

You may find it useful to keep in mind a model of mentoring as a framework to support your mentee. The ARC KSS scheme mentor preparation programme uses the Alred and Garvey (2010) Three Stage Model - Exploration; New understanding; Action - as a useful guide to the overall process and to individual sessions.

- Use open questions to help your mentee think things through for themselves
- Be cautious about giving advice - the mentees situation may be different from your own or those you are familiar with
- Occasionally, however, it can be useful to share your own experiences and insights - you have been chosen by your mentee because of your experience
- Keep a brief record of key issues discussed and actions agreed so that you can help your mentee keep on track with their ambitions, or choose more appealing alternatives
- Reflect on the mentoring relationship between sessions and particularly your own role as a mentor - what strategies work well, which ones less so.
- Mentors are sometimes uncertain about how helpful they are for their mentees – so ask for feedback
- If you think the mentoring relationship could be improved discuss this with your mentee



## Hear what mentees say about Mentorship programmes

### What mentees may have to gain from Mentorship:

*Renewed confidence, Re-focused direction and understanding the bigger picture and navigating the broader system to truly achieve patient benefit for many.*

*I feel motivated and empowered to get on with things. Helps me 'look up' more and see the bigger picture. I also get reassurance and find other ways of achieving the same goal.*

*My mentor has experience of dealing with the challenges that I am currently facing. Without my mentor I would not readily have contact with anyone in a similar position to me.*

*My mentor tries to understand my situation and offer different solutions that I would not have considered myself.*

*It's helped to give me confidence around communication, confidence in negotiating and bridging the gap towards becoming more of a leader.*

*I've learned to be strategic about building my career and also I've learned to be reflexive and how to have a general plan but then take opportunities and build them into the general plan.*

*The quality of the relationship is good. There is trust and there's a positive interpersonal relationship. It's open, it's honest, it's flexible and therefore it's all the things I need it to be really.*

*I have found my mentor to be excellent in all aspects. I was already aware of her expertise but now fully appreciate how her own experiences mirrors mine and her wealth of experience has been really appreciated.*

*In my mentor, I have a pragmatic, objective, reliable sounding board without a hidden agenda, which is proving invaluable to my personal development.*



# Programme evaluation

It is vital that the quality and impact of the programme is evaluated so we can learn what works well about the programme, how it is helping applied researchers to develop their research careers and improve care, and how we can improve the scheme to more effectively meet the needs of participants.

We have chosen Kirkpatrick's (2006) Framework as a model to guide the evaluation. The framework comprises 4 levels of evaluation where:

**Level 1** = Evaluation of Reaction e.g. response to training, facilitators, learning resources

**Level 2** = Evaluation of Learning e.g. changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes

**Level 3** = Evaluation of Behaviour e.g. changes in practice

**Level 4** = Evaluation of Results e.g. measurable outcomes such as publications and grants awarded.

Evaluation of the programme involves formal assessment, using quantitative and qualitative methods, at key points: baseline, end of year 1, end of year 2, end of year 3. All mentors and mentees will be asked to participate in the annual on-line survey. Those who choose to become mentors and mentees will also be invited to participate in qualitative interviews to explore their experience of the mentorship programme and its contribution to professional growth, career progression, productivity and impact

As well as providing evidence of the impact of the mentorship programme, the evaluation will also help us to understand the factors that influence the quality of mentoring and contribute to building a dynamic and effective national mentorship scheme for health and social care research.

In order to minimise bias and promote rigour, the evaluation is managed by Dr Melanie Rees-Roberts who is independent of the mentoring team.

Ethical approval for the evaluation has been obtained from the Research Ethics Committee for the School for Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research at the University of Kent.

In order to ensure the quality of the evaluation, and the mentorship programme, all participants are asked to take part in the annual evaluation and telephone interviews. Please may we ask, therefore, that you respond promptly to requests for assistance with the evaluation.

We may use extracts from questionnaires and interview in reports and publications associated with the programme. When we do so these will normally be anonymised, so that it is impossible to identify a particular individual or institution. However, occasionally it is helpful to refer to real people and places, for example when describing specific case studies, If we wish to refer to an identified individual in this way we will always obtain written permission from that person before doing so.

If you need more information, or have any queries about the evaluation, you can contact Dr Melanie Rees-Roberts, [m.rees-roberts@kent.ac.uk](mailto:m.rees-roberts@kent.ac.uk) who will be very happy to help you.

We are always very happy to receive feedback about the programme, so if you have any other comments, or suggestions, please contact Dani Evans, ARC KSS Research Co-ordinator, [ARCKSSAcademy@kent.ac.uk](mailto:ARCKSSAcademy@kent.ac.uk)

## Useful Mentorship Resources

### Books

- Alred, G. & Garvey, B. (2010) Mentoring Pocketbook, (3rd Edition.) Management Pocketbooks Ltd: Hants
- Brockbank, A. & McGill, I. (2012) Facilitating Reflective Learning through Mentoring and Coaching. 2nd edition London: Kogan Page.
- Clutterbuck D A, Kochan F, Lunsford L G, Dominguez N and Haddock-Millar J (2017) The Sage Handbook of Mentoring. London. Sage
- Connor, M & Pokora, J. (2012) Coaching and Mentoring at Work. 2nd edition. London: Open University Press
- Clutterbuck, D. (2004) Everyone Needs a Mentor: Fostering talent in your organisation. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development: London.
- Garvey R Stokes P & Megginson D (2014) Coaching and Mentoring: Theory and Practice. London. Sage
- Lancer N, Clutterbuck D and Megginson D (2016) Techniques for Coaching and Mentoring. 2nd Edition London. Routledge.
- Megginson, D & Clutterbuck, D. (2009) Further Techniques for Coaching and Mentoring. Elsevier Ltd.: Oxford.
- Parsloe, E. & Leedham, M. (2009) Coaching and Mentoring: practical Conversations to Improve Learning. Kogan Page: London.
- Star. J. (2014) The Mentoring Manual: Your Step by Step Guide to Being a Better Mentor Pearson. Harlow

### Journals

- International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring. <http://ijebcm.brookes.ac.uk>
- Nurse Researcher article <http://journals.rcni.com/doi/abs/10.7748/nr.22.2.23.e1288>

### Websites

- European Mentoring and Coaching Council: <http://www.emccouncil.org>
- Academy of Medical sciences <https://acmedsci.ac.uk/>
- Clinical Academic Careers
- National Institute for Health Research <http://www.nihr.ac.uk>
- NHS Improving Quality Improvement and Clinical Leadership [https://www.google.co.uk/?gws\\_rd=ssl#q=nhs+improving+quality&\\*>](https://www.google.co.uk/?gws_rd=ssl#q=nhs+improving+quality&*>)
- The Association of United Kingdom University Hospitals: <http://www.aukuh.org.uk/> Useful Resources

## **ARC KSS Mentorship Programme Management Team**

Chair - Professor Sally Kendall, Professor of Community Nursing and Public Health, Centre for Health Services Studies, University of Kent

Evaluation lead Dr Melanie Rees-Roberts – ARC KSS Research Programme Manager and Research Fellow, University of Kent

ARC KSS, Beth Flowers - Academy Manager, University of Kent

ARC KSS, Dani Evans – Research Co-ordinator, University of Kent