

Innovating cancer care: insights from a cancer and primary care community of practice in improving patient experience across settings and contexts

Cole T^{1*}, Dyer S^{2*}, Green B³, Augustine U⁴, Dickinson F⁵, Costello C⁶, Hill A⁷, Kelly S⁸

* Joint first authors 1. University College London Hospitals NHS Trust (UCLH), 2. Royal Free NHS Foundation Trust 3. Patient partner, 4. Kings College NHS Foundation Trust, 5. SE London Cancer Alliance, & Guys and St Thomas NHS Trust, 7. Sutton Primary Care Networks, 8. Barts Health NHS Trust, 9. NHS England (London region) **Correspondence: Sandra.dyer1@nhs.net**

Introduction

The need to improve cancer patient experience in primary care and community settings¹ and address the education needs of General Practice Nursing (GPNs)² community nursing³ and the Allied Health Professional (AHP) workforce are the key drivers of this project.

A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a common concern, a set of problems, or an interest in a topic⁴. In this case, its focus relates to improving cancer patient experience across the contexts, with a particular emphasis on personalised care and the facilitation of workforce learning opportunities. This London wide cancer CoP emerged from a cancer educational project and strategic primary care cancer nursing programme, in the context of a large and complex health system. The CoP was founded and funded through a cross organisational collaboration (Figure 2). This abstract presents key findings from the cancer CoP evaluation from February 2023 to March 2024, showcasing its impact, benefits, and plans for future innovation.

Figure 1. Video resources

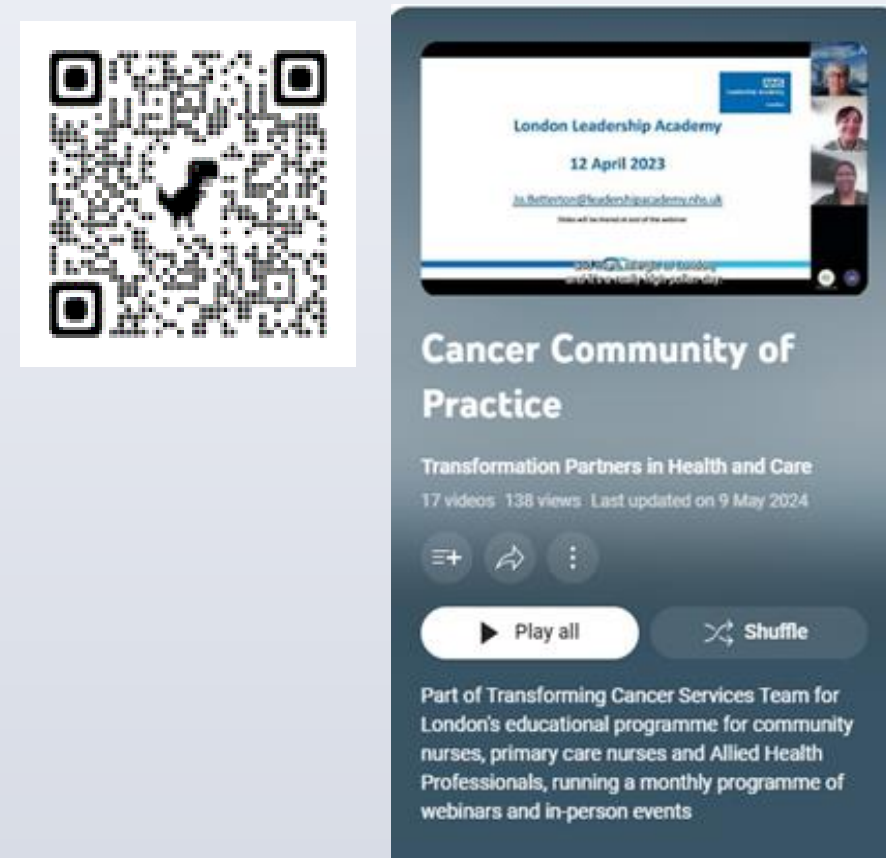
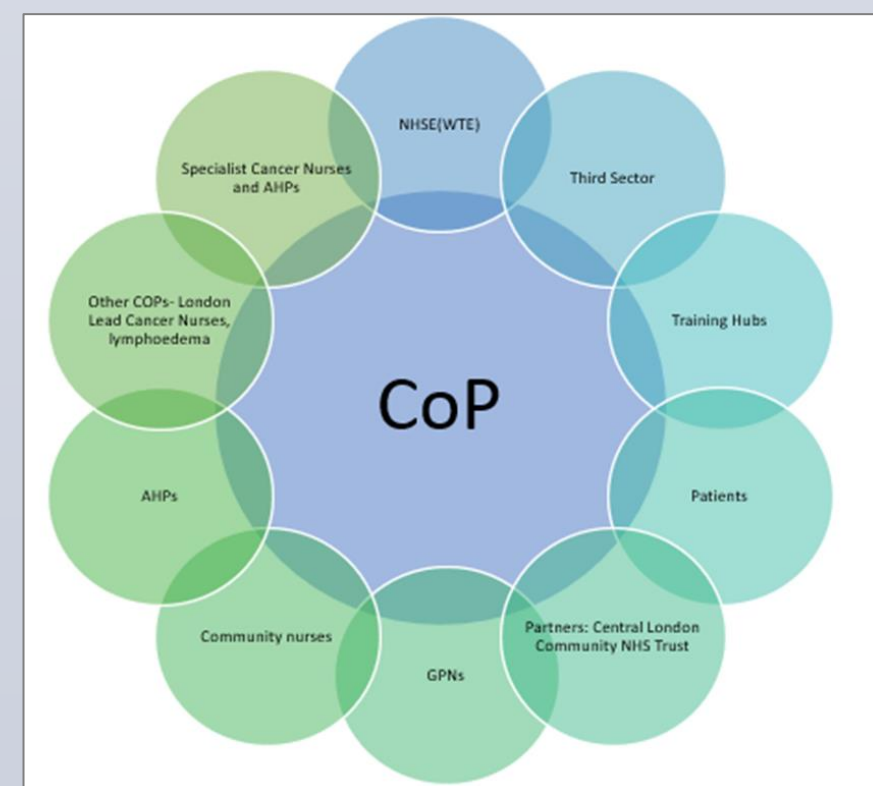


Figure 2. Organisational collaborations- key to success and sustainability



Methods

A steering group was established with patient partners, primary care and community nurses, Allied Health Professionals (AHPs), and key cancer specialists. Funding was secured for 2023-24 activities via the National Health Service in England's education budget and was supported by collaborative working to share resources.

A logic model (Figure 3) was used to plan the project, identifying short, medium and long-term goals, and to map resources and activity to those goals.

Engagement and discussion activities were conducted face to face and online. The success of an initial face-to-face launch, led to the development of educational and networking events, webinars and interactive videos (Figure 1).

Steering group and CoP members co-designed and delivered the content for the webinars and shared their work at the face-to-face events. Quality improvement projects or work conducted by the CoP members which included patient experience was shared at the face-to-face workshops. Use of innovative liberating structure methods⁵ supported group discussion and creativity. Cross professional boundary spanning group work in Cancer Alliance groupings provided opportunity for ongoing relationships and projects.

Analysis was undertaken of CoP participation and levels of engagement over 9 months. Data was collected relating to demographics of CoP participants in relation to job role, organisational and geographical coverage and sector representation. Post-event feedback completion has been encouraged throughout the delivery of events.

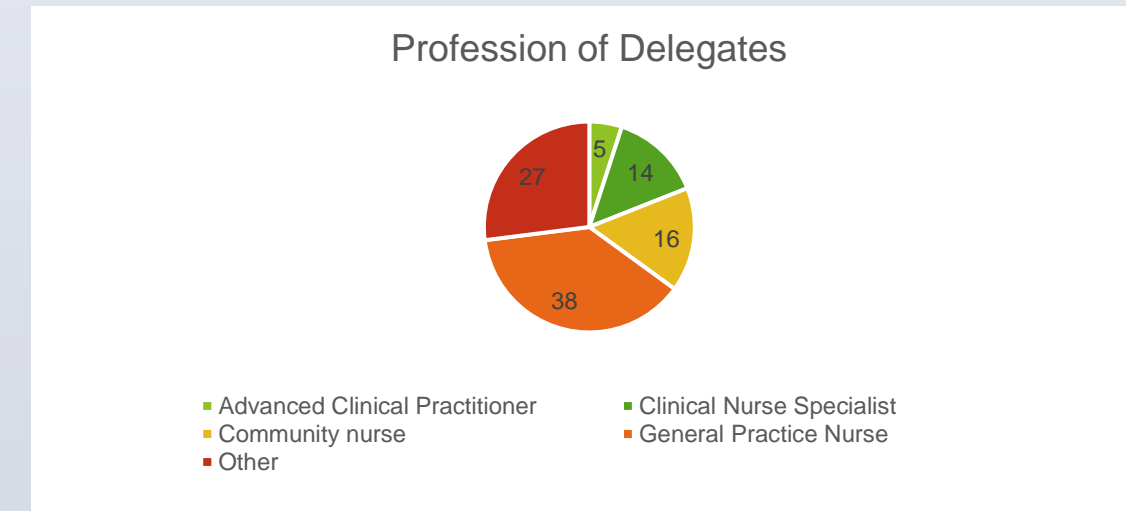


Figure 4. Profession of delegates

Results

Cancer CoP engagement has grown significantly in 2023/24:

- Between 30 – 40 CoP members attend in-person events
- Average 119 registrations at webinars
- In March 2024 there were 266 CoP members
- A range of professions and settings in both membership and steering group (Figures 4 and 6)

Numerical scale rating (0-5) and qualitative reporting was undertaken with 4.63/5 being the average rating for events. Dedicated commitment was expressed by participants to implement learnings within their professional practice. Qualitative feedback regarding how the CoP has supported clinical practice and professional development provided, themes identified are illustrated in Figure 6.

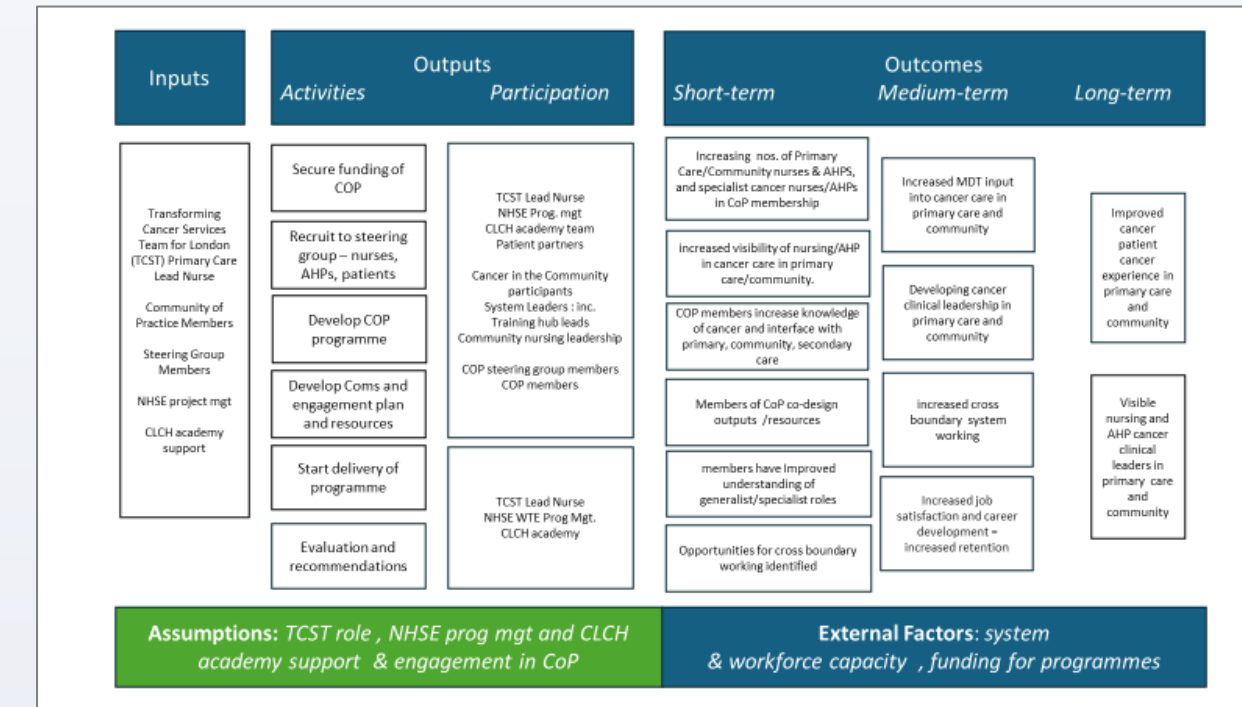


Figure 3. Logic model to map our activities and resources to short, medium and long term goals

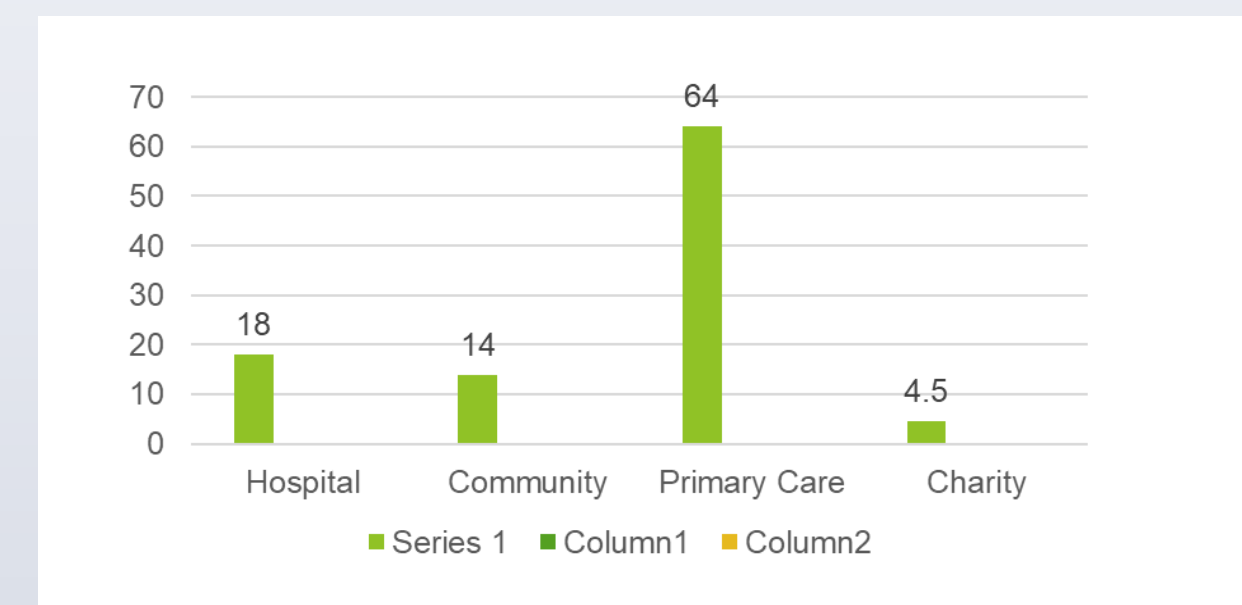


Figure 5. Workplace setting of delegates

Supporting innovation

"Day full of innovation- enjoyed the networking. Now the ideas are flooding in"

Interactive and safe environment

"Great effort to run an interactive morning. I think people felt able to participate without the scariness of public speaking"

Connecting professionals and building community

"I was captivated with the content of the day and the passion of everyone wanting to make a difference for patients"

Changing Practice (self and others)

"I have seen examples of how colleagues have taken behaviours from webinars/events and actioned them in their own work."

Figure 6: Thematic analysis of the survey data



Figure 7. A Cancer Community of Practice interactive session

Conclusion and discussion

The cancer CoP has successfully met its short term goals. A challenging funding environment drives a real focus on sustainability of the intervention. Building towards a business as usual approach is likely to be helpful.

Proposed outputs for the coming year are the development of cross sector shadowing opportunities, joint working amongst interdisciplinary healthcare professionals, and gaining insight into specific cancer patient experience issues for further focussed improvement initiatives.

This abstract provides a snapshot of the cancer CoP journey, showcasing its commitment to innovation and collaborative excellence in cancer care through multi-professional collaborative working.



To join the CoP mailing list scan the QR code:

References

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