



# **Does healthcare conference attendance impact on practice/service/patient care?**

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**Aim:** The aim of this report is to demonstrate the impact of conference attendance on practice/service/patient care, and the value of networking post conference. The report was initiated by a discussion on twitter about the value of healthcare conferences and whether they were as some stated “just a jolly for doctors”.

Our evaluations which are completed when delegates leave the event at the end of the day demonstrated that 91% of HCUK delegates rated the event as excellent or good and 96% of our delegates would recommend the event to a colleague. However what we had no evidence of was whether attendance at the conference had any real impact on practice/service and patient care beyond attendance when delegates return to their organisation.

We sent a survey to all delegates who have attended our events in the last 2 years. We have had over 260 responses to this survey to date. The results are as follows which include both the free text comments and the percentages who answered the questions

**Findings:** 81% of those who responded to the survey said that attendance at a HCUK conference had impacted on their practice/service/patient care. Of the 19% who said it had not, 91% of those said that attendance had been useful in validating/confirming their current practice. In actual numbers only 3 people said that the conference had not had an impact or been useful in validating current practice.

We also asked whether the conference was useful for networking and whether the delegate had made contact with anyone from the event since the conference. 72% of delegates responded positively to this question.

All free text comments have been included in this report both positive and negative. There are some great examples here of how conference attendance has had an impact on practice, services and patient care.

## Audit of Impact of Conference Attendance beyond the conference – Free Text Comments

1a. Has your attendance at a HCUK conference impacted on your practice/service/patient care?

Yes 81%

No 19%

1b. IF NO, has attendance been useful in validating/confirming your current practice?

Yes 91%

No 9%

2. Was the conference useful for networking and have you made contact with anyone from the event since the conference?

Yes 72%

No 28%

## Audit of Impact of Conference Attendance beyond the conference – Free Text Comments

*“This was my first conference although I only was able to attend one day, it was enough to place the excitement back into me of why I wanted to go into Governance and Clinical Audit.”*

**Tracey Bond**, Clinical Governance Facilitator – Surgery, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

*“I have attended two conferences with yourselves. One on deteriorating patients that had a huge impact as we changed our service provision for unwell patients within the trust. The second was with Ron Daniels looking at the specifics of setting up a sepsis service. This was invaluable as my day job is utilising the lessons learnt from this course in order to set up a sepsis service. Would recommended your course they are innovative and well organised and pertinent to the NHS environment”*

**Andy Rooks**, Senior Charge Nurse, Clinical Lead for Acute Response Team and Sepsis, Gateshead Health NHS Trust

*“I found the conference very useful in that it did clarify how impact measures should be utilised and on networking with others I was able to source information on how others use impact measures with regards to evaluating learning in practice and the impact it has. I have since explored Department of Health Documents to highlight areas for further research into how we measure and ensure our staff are skilled to support service users and students in those identified areas in the hope that we can highlight any gaps for learning/skills development.”*

**Cassandra Hadfield**, Practice Education Facilitator, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust

*“I have used some of the evidence to teach student midwives/midwives in clinical practice, Conferences are always good for networking and in general Midwifery is a small close network and it is important to meet share and collaborate on ideas”*

**Michelle Knight** Lead Midwife, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

*"I have setup a syncope service as a result"*

**Helen Eftekhari**, Arrhythmia Nurse University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

*"I have enjoyed the Conferences that I have attended greatly and would attend more if able. It is always inspiring to see other people from other places and although you may not stay in contact, the ideas we all share are always valuable."*

**Vivienne Mcdonald** Ward Sister, Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust

*"Transfer of some nurse led activity into community venues. Confirmed direction of travel as a good/the right way to go. Good networking and information at the conference however my seconded post is complete. Consultant Oncologist and Lead Chemo nurse also attended."*

oncology/chemotherapy team at New Cross Hospital

*"It has improved the quality of the RCA s that I write and the quality of investigations. They are more focused. I knew I was on the right lines before but helped steer a better / more practical approach to the process. I have not been in contact with anyone else from the courses other than my work colleague who attended one of the courses with me. Our Trust has a set method of investigating serious incidents. This process was questioned as a result of my colleague and I attending the RCA master class and this has been fed back to the Divisional Governance manager who in turn has met with the Patient safety Team and are buying in the Masterclass for the Trust to help move us forward. I must say Kate Hill is an excellent educator. She is obviously passionate about her subject and this comes across in her sessions."*

**Charles Cowan** Health and Safety Co-ordinator

*"Having spoken to a number of attendees I have now implemented the medications safety thermometer in practice in our trust. Without the networking I would not have been able to see how other trust was using the data and implementing the collections"*

**Michelle Hiscock** Patient Safety Advisor RBCH

*"The attendance has impacted very positive on my personal practice, as a Professional Development Midwife. Following my attendance of the conference I have been inspired to implement the 6C's via a new multi-disciplinary Workshop: 'Care, Compassion and Communications Workshop' (CCC). This is now an annual mandatory training requirement for all staff in our division. This workshop is held twice monthly and is facilitated by the myself and our Consultant Midwife through interactive multidisciplinary group workshops focusing on real life scenarios taken from clinical practice settings and discussed through the values of the 6C's to help staff with effective communication skills, effective client and staff engagement and leadership skills that foster good care and good working relationships. We have had a very positive feedback about our CCC workshops from all grades of our multi-disciplinary team. "*

**Rukeya Miah** Acting Clinical Midwifery Manager/Professional Development  
Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

*"It was an excellent networking event, and I have been in touch with one service"*

**Dr Nicola Goeting**, Locality Manager, Dorset Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

*"It was very useful to hear from and meet other professionals who have implemented falls prevention and management models/pathways/solutions and data on the impact of these, rather than (as has been my experience with several conferences) the information being shared being highly conceptual. I had very informative conversations with a no. of experts in the field while at the conference and have since been in contact with some presenters who have been kind enough to share tools and further detailed evidence with me which I have used to inform development of our local pathways and services. All the speakers were very knowledgeable and approachable. An extremely valuable use of my time."*

**Samantha Tullett** Strategic Commissioning Manager East Sussex County Council (Adult Social Care) & Clinical Commissioning Groups

*"I have taken a number of ideas that were expressed and incorporated them into our current practice, I stole the post falls sticker in the patient notes from Portsmouth and we are in the process of implementing them into a couple of trial wards as we speak. I also took the idea of skin care post fall to our Tissue Viability lead who subsequently helped my adapt our post falls check list. I have also contacted our Community Trust who are responsible for Mental Health in order to negotiate ward based medication reviews from a Psychiatrist for patients with dementia following the dementia session. I have also initiated a discussion around increasing staffing into one of our falls clinics to develop MDT approaches to assessment.*

*Have I used contacts I made to network? No, but more because I get easily distracted with other ideas/tasks than because I didn't want to. I intend at some stage to contact the team from the Neuro dept as our Stroke ward struggles with a very challenging client group and would love some assistance"*

**Jo May** Falls Prevention Coordinator Hampshire Hospitals NHS Trust

*"I am reflecting more and documenting for my portfolio. I am encouraging others to reflect and document as well. I am privileged that at the start and end of a shift I can address multidisciplinary team and one to one as the day goes on. The format of the conference also made a positive impact on me, I try to emulate the aspects of clear introduction and outline the agenda so that everyone can participate"*

**Emma Nwabude** Senior Midwife Barts Health NHS Trust

### **Anonymous Quotes**

*"Great for networking - Implementation of paperless and electronic prescribing systems - people at different stages of process, I was able to gather advice and ideas and also offer advice. I have contacted a number of speakers for further information during our implementation process and have received returned e mails and calls from them which has been really useful to myself and the trust which I work for."*

Specialist Medicines Management Technician, NHS Trust

*"It was good knowledge. I think the volume of the information could be reduced"*

Doctor

*"I did find the twitter fact sheet very good and now started tweeting which has improved my networking!"*

End of Life Care Facilitator, NHS Trust

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*“Absolutely – I have now imparted the methodology onto approximately 100 Managers/Deputy Managers/Team Leaders who have greatly benefitted from learning the skills. Even though none have since done a serious incident investigation, they have utilised the skills in other areas – communication skills/general organisation and planning/statements/report writing.”*

Learning and Development Lead

*“I found the conference very informative and spoke to some other delegates who have since supported me via email with questions I had. All in all a very positive experience.”*

Mental Health Project Manager, NHS Trust

*“I have attended one event so far and I found it really useful, ‘Electronic Document Management in Healthcare: Delivering a paperless NHS’. It was really useful to feedback to the team. My team is working on Records Management for corporate records in our organisation so it was good to get a point of view of healthcare and promoting paperless practice and how we can reflect it in our corporate records. Corporate records being less complex than healthcare records. Packs were also given which was a good factor. I would advise next time to email the presentations to attendees so we can further disseminate the information to our team if that is feasible.”*

Records Management Officer, National Organisation

*“I have always been very encouraged and motivated by the conferences you put on but the only problem I think is the cost- it is very expensive venue. I have had to raise the money or pay myself.”*

Advanced Nurse Practitioner, NHS Trust

*“It has definitely motivated me to make a success with my clinic and taken back some very useful information”*

Advanced Nurse Practitioner, NHS Trust

*“Other people working in DOLS and AMHP Service now on email network”*

Practice Manager, Social Care

*“Barbara’s story from the conference has been shared across the Trust”*

Matron, General Surgery, NHS Trust

*“The keynote speakers were high quality and delivered key national messages. There was perhaps not enough time for networking within the event”*

Mental Health Lead, NHS Trust

*“Has influenced development of a smoke free strategy for our organisation in terms of ensuring buy in from the Trust board, public consultation and a long lead in process. The information from the speakers who had been through the process was really valuable. One of the speakers has agreed to do some joint working with our organisation and we have had fruitful contact since then”*

Deputy Director of Nursing, Mental Health NHS Trust

*“Attending the conference has impacted on my care in that I presented some of the content to my Nurses meeting regarding validation and have set up some ongoing training and development for the Nursing team to ensure that they are prepared for when validation commences. The conference was useful in networking with organisations who are providing data bases as a means of logging all staff*

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*development activities and which would form the basis of validation.”*

Treatment Team Leader, NHS Trust

*“I have only been to events that were paid for by another organisation. My organisation, is a patient owned and run organisation that cannot afford the opportunity cost of the conferences especially when, as patients and collaborators with academia, specialists, the NHS and suppliers, we often know the subject better than those talking. We conduct research, training and create sustainable Quality Improvement Projects within organisations and, therefore it is that experience, understanding and knowledge that validates performance rather than a conference that are often not at the cutting edge of innovation but a predictable norm where co-production is talked about but seldom implemented. Your conferences do allow networking and allowed further communication and the value was good for a free place. The specialist legal knowledge gained has been the most useful but our practice, and that we implement elsewhere, is created within those organisations using co-production. Organisation such as mine are often excluded by cost even though our contribution would be good and the knowledge derived useful. It is unfortunate that this happens but some organisations put the need for money above that of content gained and this has been suggested of many event organisers not just yours. I hope this helps and should you want to talk this through please make contact”*

Patient Led Organisation Member

*“I found the general talks invaluable and as a result completely updated the content of the training I give to clinicians on clinical audit, to make it more relevant and more up to date. In particular I could see where my role fitted in nationally, reinforcing that we are not working in isolation but towards a common goal. The master class I attended was unfortunately a waste of time. It was called “statistics” but instead was a recall of a rather badly planned audit. Generally, apart from the master class, I found my day was time very well spent and I came away focussed, energised and feeling very supported.”*

Audit Manager, NHS Trust

*“It was a well-run and well planned conference and the hand-out folder was very helpful thank you. The information is being compiled and will be helpful with physical healthcare plans”*

Dr KM London

*“Hasn’t impacted on service but do share information with the team and also project managers who we work with. I have a clinical background and attending conferences is useful to keep up dated. It is usually private companies but on occasion has managed to meet up with speakers and liaised with them with queries/ideas etc.”*

Clinical Informatics Manager, NHS Trust

*“The conference enabled me to interact, converse and learn best practice in the healthcare industry and other NHS organisations. This learning often influences decision making and planning. For example, at a recent conference I learnt about the big white wall service for IAPT and was able to share that learning with the Head of Business Development who was interested in following up and extending our services. Useful for networking and sharing key information with other colleagues. One supplier has made further contact however whilst I can share information we are*

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*not able to purchase systems without going through due process “*

IAPT Manager, NHS Trust

*“My attendance was very useful in increasing my and the organisations knowledge of PROMS in order to understand their potential use in measuring the quality of community services. It turned out to be more complex and ahead of where we are as an organisation and our commissioners are in their thinking. However, we will be building it into a project plan for delivering meaningful measures for clinical managers, the executive team and commissioners”*

Strategic Business Projects Lead, Commissioning organisation

*“I'm now more confident in my approach and more knowledgeable, lots of information was gained and contacts that I may require in the future”*

NHS Manager, NHS Trust

*“Useful to compare my local practice with other practice around the country, learn about new developments in other departments and discuss with my department how future practice in my own centre might be modified. Also informed a lecture I was giving at a national meeting on a related subject.”*

Consultant Radiologist NHS Trust

*“We are working towards CQUINN pressure ulcer in our Trust this year and the information from the conference has been very useful for us to review the service and our practice in relation to pressure ulcer, work is ongoing. We have invited a rep to our pressure ulcer steering group and will be liaising further for the Pressure ulcer day in November”*

Matron, NHS Trust

*“It has led us to think about ways to improve our service such as ways to assist easier access”*

Team Leader, NHS Trust

*I recently attended a Leadership course at MMB law school. Found it very useful and a reinforcement and reminder of a few important points. It has made me a better communicator and be more assertive but understanding in my dealings.*

Surgeon, NHS Trust

*“Daniel Boxer gave an excellent talk and he was asked to speak to us at a meeting subsequently. The lawyer from Capsticks was also excellent. It was the seven day imaging service study day.”*

Radiology Manager, NHS Trust

*“It is always difficult finding time to attend conferences. Also difficult is budget constraints. Even if you were to arrange free conferences, there are still travelling expenses. I think your aim is perfect, and I hope this is what people take away from the conference.”*

Nurse, NHS Trust

*“It did show me how other areas are working and where we need to move the service on. Very useful indeed”*

Anticoagulation Nurse, NHS Trust

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Impact of Conference Attendance August 2014

*“The conference more than matched my expectations – very well worth the time and cost. Excellent range of speakers covering vital areas, with time for discussion. Am actively sharing the learning from the conference with colleagues within my NHS Trust. Useful to finding out what is going on elsewhere in the country and other trusts working on similar areas. I haven’t made contact yet but intend to follow up with one or two of the speakers and invite them to speak at our trust/or arrange to visit with colleagues”*

Consultant Clinical Psychologist

*“Was good to refresh, refocus and motivate! I enjoyed talking to some of the delegates, but have made no contact since the conference “*

Rehab Manager, Community Services

*“I am constantly referring to the hard copy course notes provided on the day. However, many of the slides are so small that they are illegible. An electronic form of the course notes would be really helpful”*

*“Yes I have been able to take back certain things that have changed the way I work and ideas of how the EDM project can move forward. I have received a couple of emails regarding EDM solutions which have been forwarded onto relevant persons”.*

EDM Manager NHS Trust

*“The conference has proven to be useful in enabling me to think differently about the service delivery. Due to having to reconfigure the service and then develop the service I manage to ensure sustainability, high quality service delivery and good outcomes, undertaking additional work has been difficult. However that is not to say that opportunities are not arising now and will be explored further when time allows. The speaker was so inspiring I would love to listen to her again ”*

Matron, Community Services

*“Was good to meet other colleagues to share experiences and ideas, the sessions was well presented and practical. “*

Clinical Nurse Specialist, NHS Trust

*“I felt most fortunate to be invited and found the content of the day to be extremely relevant and helpful. In addition as a patient I felt privileged to have the opportunity to listen to diverse professionals speaking to their peers on their given subjects, which provided a valuable insight for me. I made some useful notes during the day and found statistics and clinical answers to some aspects of my own anticoagulation treatment about which I had so far wondered. For obvious reasons, it would not be possible for me to acquire, from my own GP or Consultant, the breadth of knowledge available to me on the day by being party to the speakers’ presentations. The written material provided was excellent as was the setting and I was well looked after throughout the day. ”*

*“I have since made contact with ACE (Anticoagulation Europe) and, as a result of the stands provided during the intervals, with Roche and I became aware of ACSMA and the Vascular Society. My attendance at the Conference coincided with my entry into the self-monitoring of my INR and, therefore, there was much information on this aspect that was very timely. I particularly appreciated having access to the Roche Patient Training Record check list against which to monitor my own*

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Impact of Conference Attendance August 2014

*clinic's training. The discussions highlighted for me my perception of the challenges facing the haematologists in my own NHS Trust alongside their judgements in making the best decisions for the management of their patients. Finally, the junior doctors' presentation was delivered with openness and was, therefore, most illuminating. I hope that my comments are helpful from the perspective of an interested anticoagulated patient".*

Patient

*"Main reason for answers is that I have no power whatsoever over IT decisions in my trust – e.g. when my trust routinely upgrade the computers in the clinic rooms, they don't even replace like for like – so I no longer have a DVD drive on the machine and cannot view patients X-rays or videos they bring to show me...makes me look a compete \*\*\* in front of my patients..there is so much IT out there that could be useful, but there is no way I will ever got to use it in my job – which is sooooo depressing. If anything the conference made me even more frustrated...to see what is possible...but a dream that can never be realised in my trust with the current way things work."*

Doctor, NHS Trust

*"I found that the conference validated that our current practices for our trust were working. It was however, useful to hear and speak with others regarding working practices from other areas."*

Anticoagulation Nurse, NHS Trust

*"Have more knowledge on aspects outside of my normal practice which helps when I am teaching "*

Learning and development tutor NHS Trust

*"Good update on national trends and confirms everyone has the same issues, some good ideas initiated elsewhere which prompt thoughtfulness"*

Clinical Audit Manager, NHS Trust

*"Indirectly as we do summarise the conference to other colleagues who can't attend and discuss ways to make changes in our practice"*

Clinical Audit Facilitator, NHS Trust

*"We are looking at more streamlined pathways for patients through ED "*

EDM Project Manager, NHS Trust

*"We have designed and are presently updating a ward round sticker based on what we saw at the conference."*

Ward Manager, NHS Trust

*"With a colleague, I attended Adult Safeguarding Investigations & Serious Case Reviews, at Hallam Conference Centre, London, on 23/05/2014. To be frank, for a conference for safeguarding professionals, the first session was well delivered and interesting but not about adult safeguarding per se, and the second was pitched at an astonishingly basic level, suitable for a group who knew nothing about the subject. Further it was titled Thresholds, and issue for all LA teams and multi-*

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Impact of Conference Attendance August 2014

*agency working, and yet these were only really mentioned in passing. The 3<sup>rd</sup> presentation was excellent but only represented one model for investigations, the fourth was really an advert for the SCIE model for case reviews of which we are all aware, and the fifth was an interesting discussion. In all, including conference fees and travel costs we paid nearly £1000, and effectively consumed two 16 hour working days. Frankly the experience wasn't worth it, and I would suggest that the conference industry, including yourselves, try harder to assess their audience and deliver cutting edge and research based information, for which it is worth travelling and committing precious time."*  
Safeguarding Manager (Have replied and offered compensation)

*"I very much enjoy attending the conferences and networking"*  
Social Services

*"I would like to add that it was a very useful and informative conference. I learnt so much on the day and the speakers gave some very good presentations."*  
Council

*"It gave me the push to review practice and make improvements but also inform others of new initiatives."*  
Senior Nurse for Governance, Hospice

*"I have attended 2 conferences on Caldicott which have been very useful as I have recently been appointed Caldicott Guardian for my organisation. These have both been extremely well led and informative. My only criticism is that the cost is very high compared to other study days I attend and this has prevented me attending your other conferences"*  
Caldicott Guardian, Hospice

*"Yes it was a very helpful conference on job planning. It has helped me with my job planning negotiations with my trust. It was very useful for networking."*  
Doctor, NHS Trust

*"It was useful to talk to other colleagues to discuss their experiences of audit but I have not made contact with anyone since the event. However, I have put in to practice some of the ideas learnt on the course"*  
Consultant, NHS Trust