



Imperial College
Academic Health
Science Centre
Improving Patient Care



Prof Bryony Dean Franklin

Executive Lead Pharmacist (Research) and Professor of Medication Safety

RESEARCH: MEDICATION SAFETY - INCREASING SAFETY IN THE USE OF MEDICATION IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

How did you get into research?

I had to do a research project for a Master's degree that I did in my twenties – while initially rather daunted by the idea, I ended up doing a study comparing the safety of medication administration in a UK and a US hospital, really enjoyed it, and wanted to do more!

What do you enjoy about research?

Lots! I find it satisfying finding answers to questions that we have in clinical practice, and seeing changes being made to practice as a result. I also enjoy collaborating with other researchers, healthcare professionals, patients and carers, and indeed anyone who shares my enthusiasm for patient safety.

What was the most difficult aspect of doing your PhD?

There were two main challenges. First, I found it challenging to adjust from a very responsive role as a critical care pharmacist, where my time horizon was typically the next half hour, to a PhD with a comparatively unstructured time horizon of three years. Second, it was the first time that I did something for which the answers weren't already 'known', and so I had to really work on developing my own problem-solving and research skills.

What difference has your research training and experience made to your career?

I suspect I've ended up in more senior roles – I am sure I have also had a more interesting career than I would have otherwise. I really like having a role where I can combine research, education and clinical practice, and find that they each feed into and support each other.

How has research changed your clinical practice?

I find I am much more likely to ask "what evidence is there?" when making decisions about how we practice and what systems we use for prescribing, dispensing, administering and monitoring medication.

What has made a difference to progressing your research career?

Researching an area that few people were looking at, at that time, which meant I developed relatively unique expertise. But also collaborations with fantastic colleagues, patients, and carers, who brought complementary expertise and often challenged me to look at things in a different way - and encouragement from some great mentors.

Where do you see your clinical academic career going over the next five years?

Hopefully continuing to do high quality patient safety research, translating the findings into practice, and encouraging others to do likewise. I am also now Editor-in-Chief at the journal *BMJ Quality and Safety* and so I will be enjoying reading and reviewing a much wider range of papers than those within my immediate area. ◆

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Produced by the Clinical Academic Training Office (MAY 2020).