

## IN PRACTICE

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# ENHANCING ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PERFORMANCE IN NHS INPATIENT AND OUTPATIENT SETTINGS: A COMPREHENSIVE ROLLOUT OF SIMULATION-BASED TRAINING

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**Introduction:** Within NHS organisations, administrative staff play a crucial yet often overlooked role in communication and upholding organisational values. Over 500,000 of 1.2 million NHS staff, work in the vital range of fields that support clinical care [1]. These staff receive 0.01% of the NHS training budget, yet they have a significant interface with patients, the public and colleagues [1]. Building upon previous success, this study aims to expand the rollout of simulation-based training to include administrative staff in both inpatient and outpatient settings.

**Methods:** The expanded rollout utilised a hybrid approach, offering face-to-face workshops and live online sessions to reach administrative staff across inpatient and outpatient settings, over a large geographical spread. Fully briefed actors enhanced the simulation scenarios, which focused on communication domains crucial for administrative tasks. Building on previous experience of participant reluctance, an emphasis was placed on collaborative co-design with the participant groups. Demonstration, immersion, and feedback through 3.5 hours of simulation involved simulated patients/relatives/colleagues (actors). The scenarios focused on four domains of telephone, email, letter and face-to-face communication. Emphasis on giving (and receiving) positive feedback was a vital thread.

**Results:** A 'pre and post' evaluation method is used to assess increase in knowledge and confidence.

Before the workshop 42% of respondents expressed no, limited, or neutral knowledge about the importance of being able to change their communication style to suit the situation. After the workshop, 100% of respondents expressed good or excellent knowledge.

Before the workshop 61% of respondents expressed no, limited, or neutral knowledge about how to use de-escalation techniques with patients and relatives. After the workshop, 97% of respondents expressed good or excellent knowledge of this area.

A total of 340 administrators have attended the 14 development workshops, with one facilitator and four actors per workshop.

**Discussion:** The expanded rollout of this simulation-based improvement initiative represents a transformative approach to addressing the training needs of administrative staff across inpatient and outpatient settings. By incorporating crucial elements such as co-design, simulation-based learning, and alignment with organisational values, the initiative enhances administrative performance [2,3]. The utilisation of actors and a hybrid delivery model ensures scalability and effectiveness in reaching a wider cohort of administrative staff. This scalable and replicable approach has the potential to benefit a wide range of NHS organisations, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with organisational goals.

**Ethics statement:** Authors confirm that all relevant ethical standards for research conduct and dissemination have been met. The submitting author confirms that relevant ethical approval was granted, if applicable.

## REFERENCES

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