

## **RCoA Research, Education & Travel Grants 2015**

**Award:** The Stanley Rowbotham Fund

**Applicant:** Dr Samantha Jayaweera

**Project Title:** Improving surgical safety at The Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, Blantyre, Malawi

### **Project Description:**

I am planning on undertaking a 6 month voluntary placement in the anaesthetics department at the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital (QECH), Blantyre, Malawi.

### Personal development:

I am hoping to develop relevant skills that I can bring back to my practice in the NHS. In particular, these would include the flexibility to work within an existing healthcare system in a low resource setting, adapting to living and working within a new culture, working within a team of staff with different cultural and educational backgrounds and developing the skills to help drive quality improvement in a low resource healthcare system.

### Organisational gain:

The organisational gain for the QECH is improved patient safety during surgery and the reflection of this in patient outcomes. The WHO checklist and pre-list meeting will bring clarity of expected challenges, staff roles and available resources. This is particularly important in a lower resource health system as staff will be required to conduct a broader range of procedures than might be the case in the NHS. I am keen to promote the use of audit and quality improvement amongst staff at the QECH so they may continue to assess and improve their practice.

### NIAA vision:

This project will further the fulfilment of the NIAA vision of the translation of research findings into clinical practice and the continuing professional education of staff. The WHO checklist and meeting are well validated measures and have been proven to benefit patient safety. The project will enable the dissemination of this evidence based intervention to the QECH and promote audit and quality improvement practices.

### Evidence of planned dissemination:

Whilst the use of the WHO checklist has been studied in an Ethiopian Hospital (Bashford et al, Patient Safety in Surgery 2014), the evidence base for its use in low resource healthcare systems remains limited. I would like to expand the knowledge base of this subject through poster presentations and journal publications on my return to the UK.

### Methodology

1. Assess current practice and available staff with a stakeholder analysis
2. Assessment and implementation of WHO checklist and pre procedure meeting with 1 team to overcome practical obstacles

### 3. Escalate practice throughout hospital

I will conduct pre and post staff surveys of the effectiveness of the checklist and also audit surgical complications/errors before and after the introduction.

#### Aim

The aim of the project is to improve patient safety during surgery at the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Malawi.

#### Objective

The objective of the project is to introduce the WHO checklist and pre procedure meetings for surgical procedures.

#### Timescale

6 months

I will observe the current practice for 1 month, pilot the programme for 1 month and escalate the use of the checklist for 4 months.