Report

Digital Technologies in Primary Care Special Interest Group Networking event

Mon 7ᵗʰ October 2019, The Stanley Building, London

Chair: Dr Helen Atherton

Welcome

After initially welcoming guests Dr Helen Atherton explained more about the Special Interest Group (SIG), how delegates can become members of the Digital Technologies in Primary Care network and the importance of research in academic primary care.

Networking Bingo

Delegates participated in a 'networking bingo' session, involving talking to as many other people in the room as possible. The aim was to find people that represent as many of the bingo squares as possible. This included things like 'someone who is a GP', 'someone that you could potentially collaborate with', and 'someone with an unusual hobby'.

The session saw delegates enjoying many brief but interesting conversations, in something that resembled an academic speed dating session! Many email addresses were exchanged, and some exciting collaborations have been discussed.

Perspectives on research

To get a visual indicator on delegates' perceptions of academic research, they were asked to stand on in a line depending on how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement that "academic research is too slow". While standing on the line, delegates were then asked to exchange their opinions on academic research. Overall, delegates found that academic research was indeed very slow amongst others due to the lengths of peer reviewing and grant applications. This interactive session was repeated after a presentation by Dr Helen Atherton on "Research on Academic Primary Care" in which she explained how academic research is conducted, why academic research is important and what the challenges of academic research are. Repeating the interactive session allowed delegates to reflect on whether their opinion on academic research had shifted. Delegates also brainstormed on the values of academic research and stated that the robustness, transparency and independence of academic of research were highly valuable.

Keynote presentation

Dr Rebecca Rosen from the Nuffield Trust presented this year's keynote at the networking event. Rebecca gave an interesting insight in to policy analysis and policy process within digital health. As well as how Nuffield Trusts organisation can differ in its approach to research compared to other forms such as academic research, which sparked a good debate during question time afterwards around the importance of different organisations that focus on academic digital technologies research in primary care.
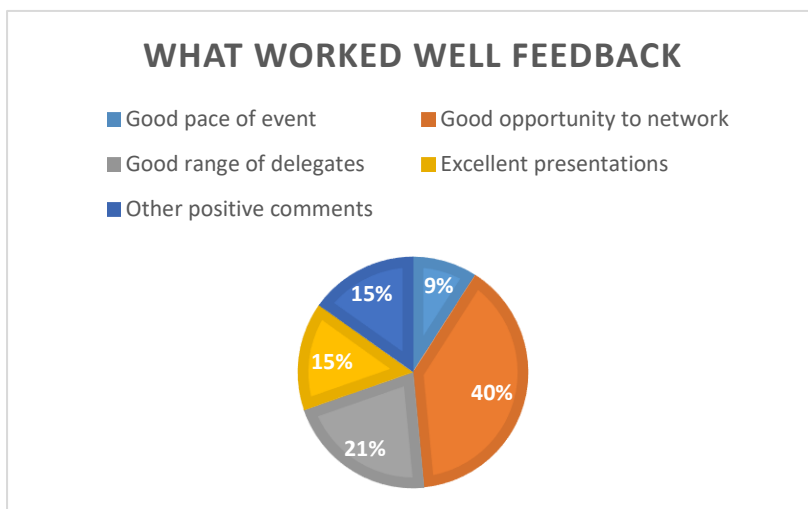
Dr Minal Bakhai

An informal talk was given by Dr Minal Bakhai around her work as a GP and the importance of digital innovation moving forward, in particular the need for a central repository of NHS based evaluations of digital services in primary care. Minal is trying to develop this alongside NICE and looking for academic support and input. This was followed by a lively discussion between delegates and Minal.
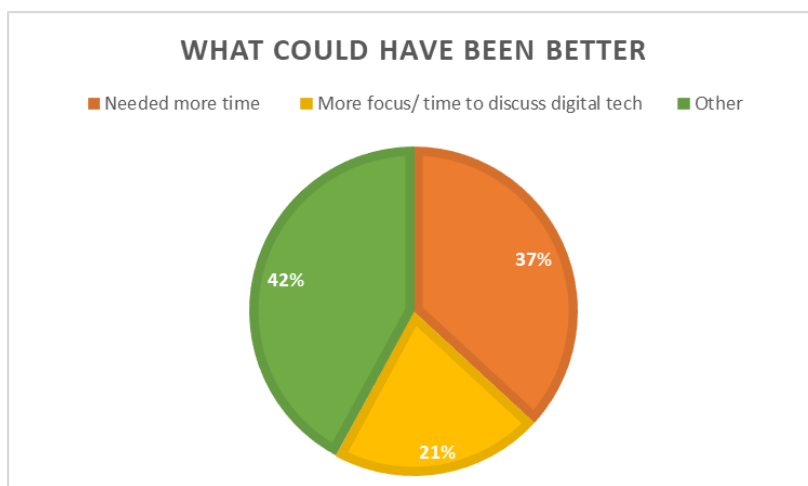
Evaluation

Before the event ended we felt it was important that delegates had the chance to feedback their experiences of the day. Within their delegate packs two symbols were given out, one was a tick symbol for delegates to add anything they thought worked well at the event and the other was a thought bubble symbol to add anything that could have been better. Delegates were then asked to add there symbols to the red post-box so that the information given could be used anonymously for evaluation purposes. This will help the team to gather feedback for future events and take on board the valuable information received from the exercise. Summary of the feedback, and some of the quotes given from the afternoon's event can be viewed below:

Feedback from the event:

WHAT WORKED WELL FEEDBACK

- Good pace of event
- Good opportunity to network
- Good range of delegates
- Excellent presentations
- Other positive comments

9% / 40% / 21% / 15% / 15%

Other positive comments include comments about refreshments, and the organisation of the event.

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER

- Needed more time
- More focus/ time to discuss digital tech
- Other

37% / 21% / 42%

Other comments include comments about refreshments, and problems with IT

Quotes from the networking event:

"Great opportunity to meet others working in the same field"

"Fab day. Loved the networking bingo."

"Great meeting lots of new people doing interesting work"