

Next Gen Nabs

Dr Sam Finnikin

What role(s) do you hold at the moment?

Currently, I'm a salaried GP for 5 sessions a week, I work as a senior clinical tutor at the University of Birmingham and I am a Fellow for Evidence and Values at the RCGP. I am also joint Hon-Sec for the Midland Faculty of the RCGP and I undertake research in my spare time,



What brings you the most joy at work?

Generally, it's seeing something I've said, done or written having an impact. Whether it be advice I have given a patient resulting in meaningful benefit, or a piece of research influencing policy; I just revel in the knowledge that, from time to time, something I do has a positive influence on the world.

What is your biggest challenge?

Turning my ideas into reality. I have no problem coming up with research ideas, or ways in which I could lead meaningful change in the system, but I struggle with converting these ideas into action. Some of this is due to lack of funding or time, and sometimes it's just not knowing where or how to start. But it's something I am working on....

What's the best leadership/career advice you've ever received?

That's a difficult one. I find it difficult to pick out single pieces of advice, they all go into the mix and get mulled over in due course. But I know a lot of people worry about imposter syndrome and I remember someone pointing out that if you're in a room, at a table, or involved in a discussion, whatever the forum, you are there for a reason. Someone has invited you to contribute. Someone else values what you have to say, so just say it. You may feel that your contributions are naïve or simple, but that's your own ideas come easily to you – others are likely to value your contributions more highly.

Who do you look up to?

So many people. Forced to choose, I'd pick David Haslam as the type of leader I'd like to be. His compassion and generosity are clear, and he's had a tremendous positive impact on healthcare in this country. When he speaks, he always says something worth listening to. I also admire the research, writing and advocacy of Victor Montori.

What would you like to achieve by the end of your career?

In the last year or two I've given up planning my career. I found that my plans were getting derailed too frequently and I was devoting too much emotional energy to them. I am now keeping an open mind and taking advantage of opportunities that come my way. So what I want to achieve by the end of my career seems an impossible question to answer; I don't know what I want to achieve in a years time! However, I would like to have played a part in leading the rebalancing of the medical model. Reducing the reliance on medicine and healthcare and putting patients back at the centre of everything we do.

What have you learned about yourself in lockdown?

I've gone through all sorts of emotions over the last few weeks. Initially, I was frustrated at not being able to do more. Not being able to lead research, contribute to service planning, bring about positive change. I watched colleagues achieve great things whilst I was struggling to balance my existing commitments let alone take on new responsibilities. But then I learnt to relax and recognize what's important and my own limitations. I'm not good at relaxing....yet.

What are you reading at the moment?and (no judgement) the last film you watched....

Honestly, I'm not reading anything at the moment. So I'm going to answer my own question. "What book have you read recently that shows everyone else that you're a thoughtful and intelligent human and you think everyone else should read?" That's easy: Thinking, Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman. It's not easy, but it's fascinating and relevant to anyone who wants to understand people better (including themselves). The last film I watched was Jojo Rabbit. I love the humour in Taika Waititi's films.

