

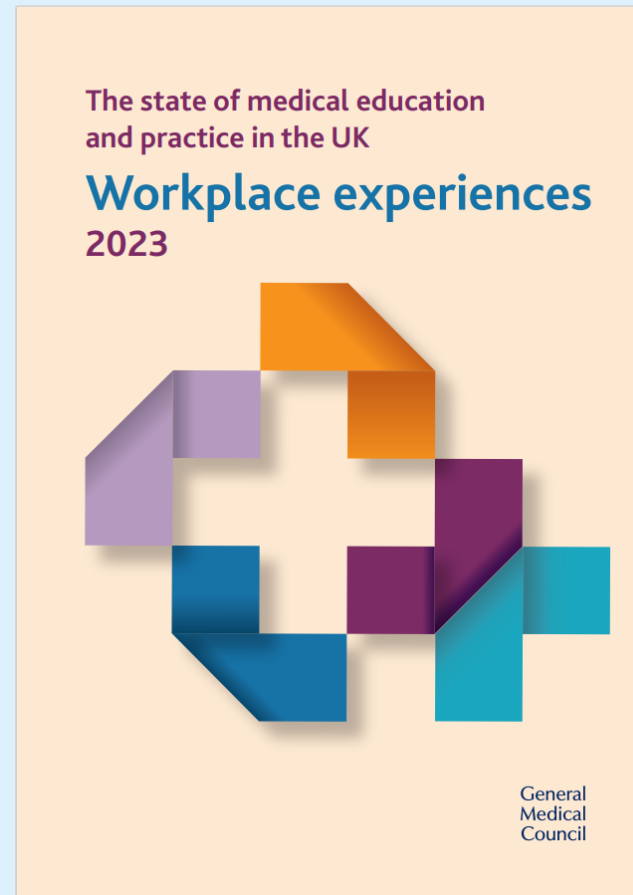
Teamworking: Understanding barriers and enablers to supportive teams in UK health systems

NHS Employers – The power of the team: Harnessing collaboration, diversity and challenge

14 May 2024

General
Medical
Council

The state of medical
education and
practice in the UK -
GMC (gmc-uk.org)



Context – GMC’s ‘The state of medical education and practice report series exploring workplace experiences

- Barometer survey, annual quantitative study to track doctors’ workplace experiences – particular focus
- Looking at who supports doctors at all stages and levels in their day-to-day work:
 - peers, senior clinicians, non clinical managers
- Acting outside role, frequency of this and what types of roles do doctors move in and out of eg more senior, less senior, who
- Experiences of recent joiners to the medical workforce, both UK and non UK graduates
- Autonomy, how do doctors perceive and experience this, what enables it

Importance of belonging in work environments

Our commissioned work published in 2019 *Caring for doctors, Caring for patients*.

It outlined the need for doctors to experience three factors in their workplace to protect their wellbeing:

- A** **Autonomy/control** – the need to have control over our work lives, and to act consistently with our work and life values.
- B** **Belonging** – the need to be connected to, cared for, and caring of others around us in the workplace and to feel valued, respected and supported.
- C** **Competence** – the need to experience effectiveness and deliver valued outcomes, such as high-quality care.

Caring for doctors
Caring for patients

How to transform UK healthcare environments to support doctors and medical students to care for patients

Professor Michael West and Dame Denise Coia

Scoping for Teamworking research



Barometer and wider data, identified team work as area of interest to better understanding how doctors work together and across wider teams

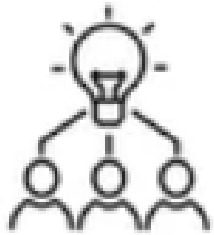


Working with Hull York Medical School to explore these questions insights on the complexities, challenges, and enablers in fostering effective teamwork within healthcare



Aim to help inform future GMC workstreams and influence in improving teamwork

Summary of research objectives



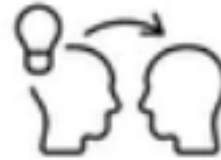
Identify the different **types of teams** doctors are involved in, and the **critical elements of effective team working**



Explore **what contributes to good practice**, and how effective doctor-focused teamworking can **enable safe patient care**



Understand the **roles of team members at all levels**, including **doctors' roles in multidisciplinary teams**



Examine **how new team members are inducted and supported**, with a focus on **MAPs** and those who are **new to practice/working in the UK**



Explore **factors that can lead to team breakdown**, and what **effective interventions** and approaches can address these breakdowns

Teamworking:

Understanding barriers and enablers to supportive teams in UK health systems

NHS employers

Dr Paul Crampton & Dr Amelia Kehoe (co-PIs)

Dr Amaya Ellawala, Dr Dilmini Karunaratne, Prof Paul Tiffin (CIs)



Outline



Brief overview of study

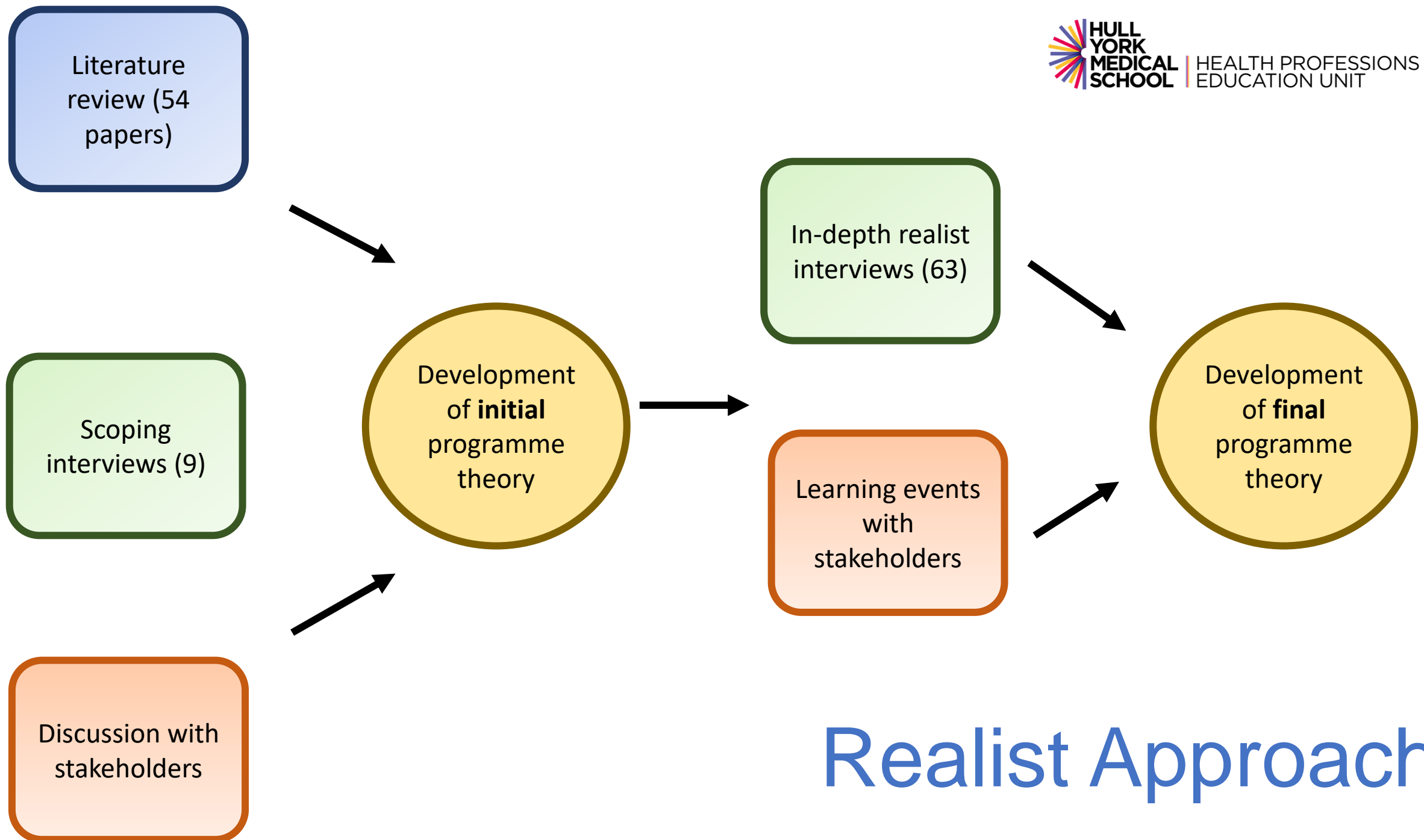
Enablers to effective teamwork

Barriers to effective teamwork

Key issues and implications

Research aim

1. To explore how doctors work together and across wider teams, in order to identify what factors contribute to effective team working and the elements that make it more challenging



Realist Approach



Enablers of effective teamworking

ORGANISATIONAL

- Stability of organisation and structure
- Effective/structured protocols and administration support
- Modern healthcare practice
- Effective role of stakeholders and support from institutional level

TEAM - WORKPLACE/ ENVIRONMENT

- Close physical proximity, familiarity and use of technology
- Positive culture and support
- Regular defined meetings with time and structure/environment to build team
- Successful clinical emergencies/urgent care environments



CONTEXTS

INDIVIDUAL

- Longevity of career and continuity
- Doctor temperaments and styles of working match working environment

TEAM - TEAMWORK AND MAKEUP OF TEAM

- Effective communication
- Understanding, supportive & approachable leaders/role models
- Flattened hierarchy & mutual respect
- Ongoing monitoring & feedback
- Clearly defined roles & awareness/understanding of team needs and values
- Inclusivity & awareness of EDI issues

MECHANISMS

Mutual understanding Collegiality Professional development Empathy Resilience

Efficiency Engagement Shared values Respect for expertise Positive work culture

Learning enabled Passion Psychological safety Trust Belonging Flexibility

Ability to speak out Good working relationships Team competence Feeling valued

Good practice reinforced Understanding of roles Joint decision making Reflection enabled

OUTCOMES



Better patient outcomes


Enhanced staff satisfaction


Increased recruitment/retention


Good policies/procedures


Enhanced wellbeing


Innovation


High productivity


Conflict resolution


Less FtP issues


Team diversity

Key enablers

1. Ensuring the time and structures are in place to allow teams to meet regularly
2. Positive and supportive culture
3. Effective communication
4. Leaders who are understanding and approachable
5. Clearly defined roles and respect for all team members
6. Continuity and experience of those in newer roles



1. Ensuring time and structures are in place to allow teams to meet regularly

*“Cause it's small, that's **stable**...we know our **roles**. We know each other well.” (Interview 25, Consultant Oncology)*



2. Positive and supportive culture

*“I think wards where things work really, **really well**...it's often about engineering a bit of **downtime into the day**.. “it's alright, let's all go and have a coffee and a cookie somewhere” (Scoping interview 7)*

3. *Effective communication*

*“Communication skills are **vital** for effective **team working**. Wherever I’ve started working there was always a good **induction**...what to expect and where to go if there any difficulty or problem” (Interview 4, FY2 GP)*



4. *Leaders who are understanding and approachable*

*“When I was working **in A&E**...they also had this **thing about them**...it’s also important for them to bring up and rise and **train the next generation**.” (Interview 33, Private Consultant Pharmaceuticals)*

5. Clearly defined roles and respect for all team members

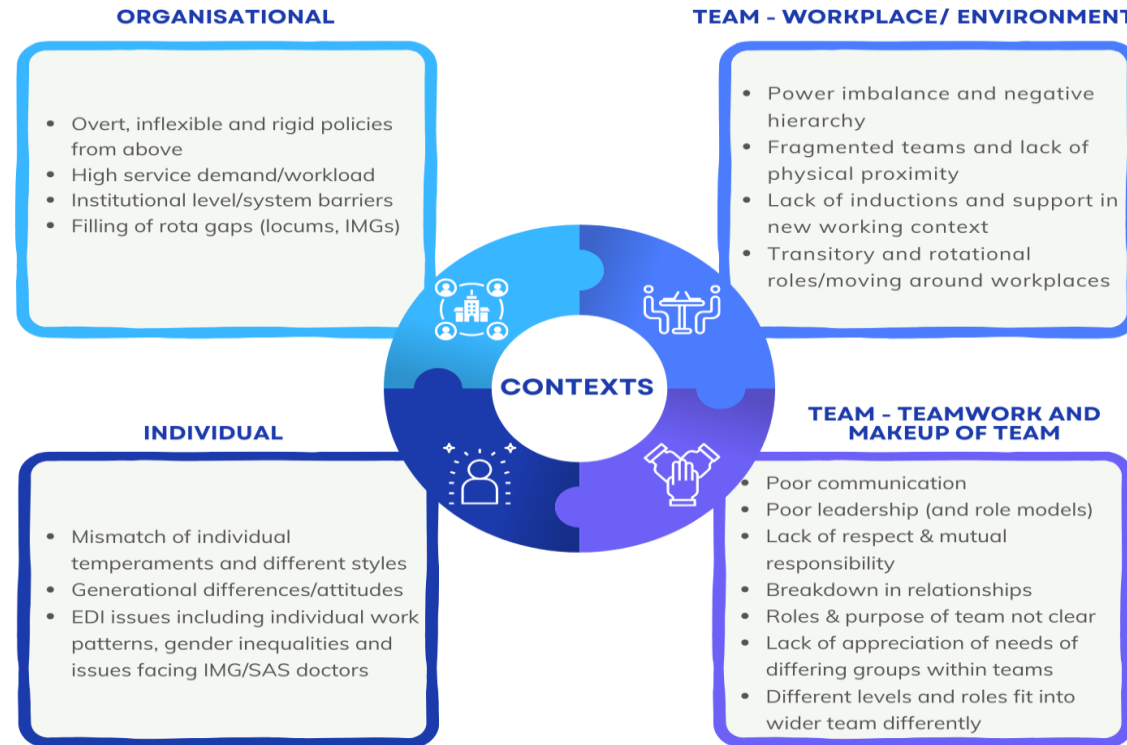
*“SAS doctors are a big sort of **work horse of the team** and if we lost our SAS doctor on a rota, we’d be in trouble. So we **rely** on that tier a lot.” (Interview 42, Consultant Emergency Medicine)*

6. Continuity and experience of those in newer roles

*“I have a really **good working relationship** with them [team members] and I find I really enjoy communicating with them. I get a lot of **respect** from them...I’ve got a decade of experience (Interview 17, Operating Departments Manager)*



Barriers to effective teamworking



MECHANISMS

Lack of belonging	Values not shared	Wasted resources	Frustration	Lack of trust	Inefficiency
Increased stress	Anxiety	Incompetence	Misunderstanding of roles	Poor reflection	
Feeling undervalued	Overworked	Inability to speak up	Lack of investment	Inefficient management	
Poor decision making	Lack of clear vision	Fear of failure	Lack of professional identity	Instability	
Disempowerment	Imposter syndrome	Lack of engagement	Unfamiliar culture for IMGs		



Key barriers

1. High service demands and work pressures
2. Power imbalances and negative hierarchy
3. Lack of inductions and support for those new to teams and organisations
4. Poor communication and leadership
5. Lack of appreciation and understanding of the needs of differing groups within teams
6. Equality Diversity and Inclusion issues



1. *High service demands and work pressures*

*“You feel kind of like a **slave to the system** ...*

*...you’ve got to do everything you possibly can as fast as you possibly can to get **through** the workload.”*

(Interview 10, GP partner)



2. *Power imbalances and negative hierarchy*

*“It does worry me sometimes because there have been occasions where there’s been **members of staff** that haven’t been able to **speak up** to a consultant surgeon...*

... that’s where errors have occurred and that always makes me panicky. ”

(Interview 17, Operating Departments Manager)



*“What we deal with on a day-to-day basis is the little **mini micro** teams that work (Interview 52, Consultant Surgery)*

3. Lack of inductions and support for those new to teams and organisations

*“I feel even in the UK **different areas** have different slangs that mean to them, so it took a while for me to **navigate** that and try to understand that communication **difference**” (Interview 13, GP trainee)*

4. Poor communication

*“Quite often even in our teams we **don’t communicate** with each other which is quite bad...we have all of these **loose notes** and we don’t put them in order either, we never know what is **actually happening** to a patient if they’ve been there for a really long time...” (Interview 11, FY2 in Surgery)*

5. Lack of appreciation and understanding of the needs of differing groups within teams

*“Because of the **reintroduction** of the specialist post, they [SAS doctors] are feeling a bit better... they are being **respected** in a way that initially they felt **everything** was **lost**. (Interview 39, SAS doctor)*

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion issues

*“I have been in **situations** where I’ve gone to get my colleague who has **a beard and is a man** and looks much older than me to help me ...it is amazing how much **gravitas** you get..” (Interview 5, FY2 ICU)*

Key issues relevant to professional practice

Inability to speak up

*Established / emerging
roles*

Interprofessional working

*Referrals / communication
across and within teams*



Interventions suggested by participants



Where next for teamwork?

1. Teamwork in a changing workforce
2. Collecting and analysing data to link teamwork to patient outcomes
3. Focused studies are needed to further understand the domains of action for specific groups



Thank you for listening!

Report link:

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/teamworking--understanding-barriers-and-enablers-to-supportive-teams-in-uk-health-systems-106637377.pdf>