

# Trailblazer Fellowship

## Final Report 2025–2026

Developing Leadership • Tackling Health Inequalities • Improving Diabetes & Metabolic Care

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When I joined the Trailblazer Fellowship, I was a newly qualified GP at Arbury Medical Centre in Nuneaton, having previously worked in hospital medicine across several specialties, including Diabetes and Endocrinology. Working in an area of socio-economic deprivation, I quickly recognised that delivering high-quality healthcare involved far more than diagnosing and treating disease. I wanted to better understand the wider factors influencing health and develop the skills to improve outcomes for my local population. Looking back, the Trailblazer Fellowship has exceeded my expectations. It has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career, shaping both my clinical practice and my perspective on reducing health inequalities through primary care.

The fellowship has provided much more than protected learning time. It has encouraged me to consider the wider social determinants of health and appreciate how poverty, trauma, housing, education, health literacy and access to healthcare influence patients' wellbeing. This has fundamentally changed the way I consult, encouraging a more holistic, compassionate and person-centred approach while reinforcing that improving health outcomes requires collaboration across healthcare and community services.

One of the most valuable aspects of the programme was the national educational programme delivered by Fair Health. Sessions on Health Inequalities, Trauma-Informed Care, Persistent Pain, Homeless Health, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, Women's Health and Politics, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Health, Refugee and Migrant Health, together with the National Trailblazer Conference, challenged my thinking and broadened my understanding of the barriers faced by vulnerable communities. These sessions have had a lasting impact on my practice, helping me better understand patients' lived experiences and reinforcing the importance of equity, advocacy and compassionate care.

A key part of my fellowship involved working alongside Professor Vinod Patel and Dr Sarfaraz Nawaz, discussing complex diabetes cases and exploring how specialist expertise could be integrated more effectively into primary care. These multidisciplinary discussions strengthened collaboration between primary and secondary care and directly influenced service development within my practice. One of the most rewarding outcomes has been helping establish a weekly Diabetes and Metabolic Medicine multidisciplinary clinic, launching in August 2026. Delivered alongside our Diabetes Specialist Nurse and in liaison with Consultant Diabetologists at George Eliot Hospital, the clinic will provide integrated, evidence-based care for patients with complex diabetes and metabolic disease closer to home.

The fellowship has also supported our practice in joining the Glucose Optimisation Service, enabling eligible patients to access Continuous Glucose Monitoring through primary care. Being involved in developing these services has strengthened my confidence in quality improvement, multidisciplinary working and service development while demonstrating how innovation within primary care can improve patient outcomes.

The study bursary has been invaluable in supporting my Postgraduate Certificate in Metabolic Medicine. The programme has complemented the fellowship by strengthening my knowledge of diabetes, obesity, hypertension and cardiovascular disease, while improving my ability to apply current evidence to everyday clinical practice. It has increased my confidence in managing complex metabolic conditions and reinforced my ambition to continue developing specialist services within primary care.

Another unexpected area of interest has been sustainable healthcare. Through discussions around Greener Practice, I have become increasingly aware of the relationship between environmental sustainability, population health and health inequalities. This has inspired me to explore how sustainability can be incorporated into future quality improvement initiatives within general practice.

Personally, the fellowship has been a genuine eye-opener. It has helped me understand that meaningful improvements in healthcare come not only from clinical knowledge but from listening to patients, understanding their circumstances and working collaboratively across professional boundaries. It has increased my confidence to contribute to service development, quality improvement and integrated models of care while building valuable relationships with colleagues across Coventry and Warwickshire.

Looking ahead, I intend to build on everything I have learnt during the fellowship. My immediate priorities are to establish and evaluate our Diabetes and Metabolic Medicine Clinic, continue strengthening collaboration with secondary care colleagues, complete my Postgraduate Certificate in Metabolic Medicine and contribute to projects that reduce health inequalities. I also hope to develop work around sustainable healthcare and continue supporting innovation within primary care. The fellowship has broadened my career aspirations and shown me that GPs can play a key role not only in caring for individual patients but also in shaping services that improve health across entire communities.

I would wholeheartedly recommend the Trailblazer Fellowship to other newly qualified GPs, particularly those working in areas of deprivation. The combination of protected learning time, excellent educational opportunities, mentorship, networking and study bursary support provides an exceptional opportunity for both personal and professional development. Most importantly, it empowers clinicians to improve care for patients while contributing to meaningful change within their local healthcare system.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to **NHS England**, the **Coventry and Warwickshire Training Hub**, **Fair Health**, **Sarah Hall**, **Professor Vinod Patel**, **Dr Sarfaraz Nawaz**, my colleagues at **Arbury Medical Centre**, and everyone involved in delivering the Trailblazer Fellowship. Their guidance, encouragement and support have made this an exceptional experience. The fellowship has strengthened my clinical knowledge, broadened my perspective and reinforced my commitment to delivering compassionate, evidence-based and equitable care. I look forward to building on these experiences to continue improving diabetes and metabolic care while helping reduce health inequalities for the communities we serve.