

Speaker Biographies

Alex Davis

Q Programme Manager
The Health Foundation

Alex Davis is the Q Programme Manager, The Health Foundation with overall responsibility for the delivery of the Q activities programme, the Joining Q process and stakeholder and partnership management. Alex joins the Health Foundation from the College of Podiatry where she worked in partnership with the Office For Students and Health Education England to develop and manage a suite of programmes designed to increase awareness of the allied health professions and strengthen and diversify the delivery of degree programmes for the small and specialist disciplines covered by this initiative. Alex has previously worked for the BHF commissioning health promotion activities across the UK and has worked in local government supporting community engagement with national sporting events.

Dr Séamus O'Neill

Chief Executive
Academic Health Science Network for the North East and North Cumbria (AHSN NENC)

Séamus leads the AHSN NENC, one of 15 AHSNs across England. The AHSNs work across NHS Trusts, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Universities, Local Authorities and companies to improve both the health and wealth of their regions through innovation. The AHSN NENC team works closely with LEPs, UKTI, NICE, Pharma and Med Tech companies to broker relationships and establish joint projects.

Séamus is a Geneticist by training. He did his Degree and PhD at Queen's University Belfast and Clinical Scientist training in Northern Region Genetics Service. Following some postdoctoral work (NEJM, 1999 and J Clin Onc, 2001) Séamus has worked for 15 years in a variety of managerial roles at the interface between the health and academic sectors. He has an Executive MBA from Newcastle University (2007, with distinction) and is committed to creating and sustaining highly performing teams in complex multi-disciplinary environments.

The AHSNs are tasked with:

- Providing system-wide integration
- Promoting a culture of innovation within the Health Service
- Championing the adoption and dissemination of best practice
- Driving economic growth by mobilising the brightest and the best of the NHS in support of companies developing new products and services

Mr. Tony Roberts

Patient Safety Lead, Academic Health Science Network - North East and North Cumbria, (AHSN NENC),

Deputy Director (Clinical Effectiveness), South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Deputy Director, North East Quality Observatory Service (NEQOS)

All things patient safety!

Tony joined the AHSN NENC in June 2014 to help set up the Patient Safety Collaborative and has been the Patient Safety lead since that time. He is also a Deputy Director (Clinical Effectiveness) at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Deputy Director of the North East Quality Observatory Service (NEQOS).

Tony has been working on Quality Improvement since 1998 and is particularly interested in hospital mortality and the time-sensitive conditions, like heart attack, stroke, hip fracture, sepsis, community acquired pneumonia, acute kidney injury, venous thromboembolism and frailty that cause the

highest volumes of deaths in hospitals. The requirements placed on the NHS from March 2017 to learn from deaths in care are especially important and Tony was closely involved in setting up the first Medical Examiner service in the North East and North Cumbria.

His background is in NHS measurement, Health Services Research, Epidemiology and Statistical Process Control.

Annie Laverty

Chief Experience Officer

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Annie is Chief Experience Officer at Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. She has led on one of the most comprehensive patient experience programmes in the NHS.

A Health Foundation Generation Q fellow, Annie is committed to improving quality in the NHS. She has extensive experience of developing integration in healthcare and has recognised expertise in engaging patients and carers in service re-design and improvement. She began her career as a speech and language therapist, working in, and ultimately leading, Northumbria Healthcare's stroke team over a twenty-year period.

Dr Annette Richardson

Quality Improvement Programme Manager – Regional

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Annette has over twenty-five years of critical care nursing experience gained in a variety of critical care clinical specialities, both in the UK and USA.

Annette's quality improvement and patient safety experiences include: 2007-2011 worked for the NPSA as a strategy advisor on the national 'Matching Michigan' quality improvement ICU programme and as a consultant for the World Health Organisation World Alliance for Patient Safety first Global Challenge 'Safe Care is Clean Care', contributing to a number of patient safety strategies and solutions. As a critical care nurse consultant has implemented numerous quality improvement solutions and widely published the outcomes in peer review journals. From 2015 -2018 Annette undertook the role of Sign up to Safety Campaign Director for Newcastle Hospitals and in 2018 was awarded a PhD by publication for her research using mixed methods to 'Improve Quality in Critical Care'.

Other experiences and skills include; providing advice to the Department of Health on a number of national critical care developments such as the Advanced Critical Care Practitioners and Assistant Critical Care Practitioner education and competency frameworks. Currently Annette represents the British Association of Critical Care Nurses (BACCN) on the 'Infections in Critical Care Quality Improvement Programme' hosted by Health Protection England.

Julia Wood

NENC Maternal and Neonatal Health Safety Collaborative Lead

Academic Health Science Network for the North East and North Cumbria (AHSN NENC)

Julia has worked for the NHS since 1987. For the past 15 years she has focused on supporting health and social care organisations improve their services by using quality improvement methodologies, tools and techniques, with the purpose of improving the services they provide to patients.

Julia has had the opportunity to work with primary and secondary care, community, CCGs and social services, and has also been involved in the delivery of quality improvement programmes at a regional and national level.

Currently Julia is the Maternal and Neonatal Health Safety Collaborative Lead for the AHSN for North East and North Cumbria.

Throughout her career Julia has continued to develop her skills and expertise, and is a Lean Practitioner, educated to MBA level, and most recently completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Innovation and Improvement Science.

Dr Susy Cook

Associate Dean (International), School of Health & Social Care
University of Teesside

Susy gained BSc (Hons) Biochemistry and Biology from Keele University, from which she went on to train as a clinical biochemist gaining MmedSC at University of Birmingham and continued with her development gaining her Doctorate at Middlesex University in Evaluation for Improvement in Healthcare.

Susy has worked in a variety of settings including higher education and the NHS, serving the public as biochemist and researcher, improvement/organisational development lead, a manager and a director in the NHS.

She specialises in the development of strategic, team and individual level evaluation and improvement interventions designed to support the development of open and honest cultures that enable the delivery of safe, efficient and effective health care.

She has worked at all levels of the NHS, including Cancer Intelligence Unit and higher education undertaking research. Susy is a Q member with the Health Foundation and also a recognised Change Agent and Accredited Coach.

Susy joined Teesside University as Associate Dean (International) in June 2017, Susy has been developing strong working relationships within the University and with overseas agencies and universities to create beneficial partnerships and opportunities to help raise the profile of the School and University internationally. Susy continues to undertake research into Improvement and Evaluation in Healthcare and remains involved in Healthcare improvement through networking, partnerships and involvement in improvement activity across the region. Susy is also a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and continues to deliver teaching at home and abroad and most recently delivered a live Webinar with National University of Singapore in relation to human factor and digitalised healthcare.

Dr Cheryl Crocker

Patient Safety Director
AHSN Network

Cheryl is a registered nurse and teacher, having qualified in the 1980's at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham. Cheryl developed a career in Critical Care Nursing and worked as a Nurse consultant at the City Hospital, Nottingham, and was lead nurse for the Mid Trent Critical Care Network. She was a recognised author and conference speaker having co-written and edited a text book 'Nursing the Critically Ill'. Before this she was a health lecturer at the University of Nottingham. Cheryl was awarded a fellowship at the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement where she trained in patient safety at the Institute of Health Improvement, Harvard. Following this Cheryl has worked in senior roles for the East Midlands Ambulance Service and as Director of Quality and Nursing for three Clinical Commissioning Groups in the South of Nottinghamshire. Cheryl was previously the executive regional lead for the EMAHSN Patient Safety Collaborative from 2014-2019 and AHSN Network Chair for the Patient Safety Leads group until April 2019.

Dr Jennifer Townshend

Consultant Paediatrician
Great North Children's Hospital

Dr Townshend trained in the Northern region and completed a 1 year fellowship in Paediatric Respiratory Medicine in Vancouver, Canada in 2010. She currently works between General and Respiratory Paediatrics at the Great North Children's Hospital in Newcastle, and is one of 4 consultants responsible for the care of children with cystic fibrosis in the region. She has a special interest in paediatric asthma and in particular, has lead the development of innovative ways of improving care at a regional level.

Michelle Matchett RGN; RM BSc; SoM; PMA

Professional Midwifery Advocate
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

Michelle started her nursing career as a student nurse in 1995, progressing to a Qualified midwife in 2000 at North Tees General Hospital in the North East of England. After a couple of years she moved to Jersey in the Channel Islands where she continued her career in midwifery. It was there that Michelle completed her training to become a Supervisor of Midwives, and over the next 9 years she gained invaluable experience in Team Midwifery and as a Labour ward coordinator. On her return to the UK she was employed as a midwife at the RVI in the North of England. Michelle then returned to North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and is currently in post as a Lead Professional Midwifery Advocate. A big part of the role is supporting midwives to be advocates for women and to deliver safe and high quality maternity care. Michelle is an Improvement Lead for the Maternal and Neonatal Health Safety Collaborative and has developed quality improvement skills and guided teams through quality improvement projects within maternal and neonatal services.

Dr Elaine Gouk

Consultant and Clinical Director for Obstetrics and Gynaecology
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

I moved to the North East of England to undertake specialist postgraduate training in Obstetrics & Gynaecology. I have been a Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist at North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust since 1999 and have been Clinical Director for Obstetrics & Gynaecology since 2013. I have an interest in quality improvement and patient safety and have been the Trust Lead for the National Maternal and Neonatal Health Safety Collaborative since 2017.

Mr Jon Hanson

Consultant Colorectal Surgeon, The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Senior Education Tutor, Simulation Lead, HENEE
Chair of Faculty of Patient Safety

I have been a consultant colorectal surgeon at Newcastle upon Tyne NHS Trust for the last 15 years and have a long-standing interest in human factors and simulation. I am Chair of the Health Education England in the North East's Faculty of Patient Safety. I am currently coordinating a number of initiatives to promote patient safety regionally using simulation and human factors as a focus. I am a member of the Academic Health Science Network Patient Safety Collaborative steering group, that works to promote the safety agenda on a regional level and links nationally. I am one of the health foundations Q-initiative's founding cohort.

Nicola Martin

Clinical Lead Occupational Therapist
North Cumbria University Hospitals

Jennifer James

Clinical Lead Occupational Therapist
North Cumbria University Hospitals

Nicola and Jen have worked within the Trust for over 15 years and are passionate about patient care and the role of occupational therapy within the acute setting. Nicola currently leads in acute stroke/neuro rehab and Jen leads the acute service. Our project was supported by CLIC who assisted us in reviewing the service that we provide and implementing changes to our practice. The outcome of the project was that patients were seen by the Occupational Therapy service much sooner, length of stay was reduced, and quality therapy outcome measures improved.

Lisa Ward

Early Detection and Resuscitation Lead Nurse
County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust

Lisa trained at Teesside University and spent her early career in the Emergency Department. She now leads the Cardiac Arrest Prevention and Acute Intervention Teams and is passionate about her role within Co Durham and Darlington.

Dr Richard Hixson

Consultant Anaesthetist
County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust

Dr Richard Hixson FRCA FFICM, Consultant in Anaesthesia and Critical Care. Trust Lead for LocSSIPs, Learning from Excellence and the Acute Intervention Team. Passionate about robust decision making with respects to patient escalation pathways and good communication with relatives to ensure we always act in a patient's best interest.

Lucy Nicholson

Palliative Care Consultant
County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust

Lucy undertook her undergraduate medical training in London and has since been working her way ever further north. Her interest in palliative care was sparked when, as a surgical house officer, she observed the difference good palliative care can make. She completed specialist training in West Yorkshire and now works as a palliative medicine consultant in Darlington, covering both hospital and community.

Ruth James,

Safety Culture Collaborative Programme Lead
Academic Health Science Network for the North East and North Cumbria.

A biomedical scientist by background, Ruth has experience of a range of roles in the NHS with a focus on improving patient experience, outcomes and safety. Before joining the AHSN Ruth was executive director for quality in a large NHS provider organisation. Ruth has an MBA, is a qualified project manager and is a founding member of the Q initiative in the North East of England. Since joining the NENC ANSN Ruth has led the regional work on safety culture and co-authored the AHSNs improvement toolkit on culture and quality improvement. Ruth currently oversees the national Patient Safety Collaborative adoption and spread workstream and chairs the NENC Quality Improvement Network.