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## CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

### **A new approach to parental education during the COVID19 pandemic**

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Serena Braccio<sup>1</sup>, Arpana Soni, Phoebe Rutherford, Mando Watson

1: Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, United Kingdom

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#### ***Introduction***

The COVID19 pandemic raised concerns from parents about its impact on children's health. During the first lockdown in the United Kingdom, there was a significant reduction in face-to-face patient contact with healthcare professionals. This was due to a suspension of non-critical health services and a drop in paediatric attendances in Emergency Departments, as parents were worried about exposing their children to clinical environments.

#### ***Short description of practice change implemented***

Our paediatric integrated care team based in a tertiary hospital in London approached local parents and community centres to organise online child health workshops.

#### ***Aim and theory of change***

The aims of this project were to:

- support parents and carers in gaining knowledge and confidence to care for children and young people during the pandemic
- reassure and reduce anxiety related to child health concerns
- be responsive to our community and their health needs
- make innovative use of video-conference technology and group teaching methods
- make best use of professionals' time

#### ***Targeted population and stakeholders***

The project was aimed at parents and young people and involved Community and Maternity Champions, who organise groups of local volunteers to promote health and wellbeing in North West London in community and children's centres.

#### ***Timeline***

Webinars were organised between May and December 2020.

#### ***Highlights***

In May 2020 two webinars were planned with two Community Champion managers to help answer questions from families. The Champions promoted the sessions to the families and collected their questions in advance in order to respond directly to the needs of the community. Paediatric junior doctors provided specialist expertise at the webinars. The format was flexible, co-designing the

sessions with the Champions. Following this, other community centres expressed interest and 6 more webinars were organised.

### ***Transferability***

Initially webinars were focused on COVID19. However, requests from community hosts and local families led to including other topics such as mental health, asthma and common childhood illnesses. The success of this programme will likely lead to implementation of similar programmes, even after the end of the pandemic.

### ***Sustainability***

This will require selection and training of more junior doctors to implement the workforce, which needs to happen each year at the time junior doctors rotate through their training posts.

### ***Conclusions***

From May to December 2020, 8 webinars were organised with 5 Community Centres, 2 youth groups and one secondary school, with a total of 72 attendees. After each webinar, written resources were shared with the audience by the community hosts. Data were captured during the webinars, such as teaching material used, duration, session breakdown, size and type of audience. Different approaches were tested for patient/parent feedback.

### ***Discussion***

COVID19 has opened up innovative ways to collaborate and have conversations on health-related topics and share expertise. Peer to peer learning during the sessions was an important way to improve confidence in child health services and self-care.

### ***Lessons learnt***

The formal and informal feedback received confirmed that the webinars addressed concerns and that the attendees and community hosts found the sessions useful and reassuring