

Understanding Allied Health Professional Clinical Academic Roles

Samantha Burr

samantha.burr@solent.nhs.uk

Abstract

Clinical academic (CA) roles in medical professions are often supported by job descriptions and person specifications. The current published evidence on Allied Health Professional (AHP) CA roles suggests these descriptions are not available for non-medical roles (NIHR, 2020). Nationwide, AHP CAs and clinical managers report challenges and conflicts in communicating and fully understanding the nature and value of the AHP CA role (Trusson et al, 2019; Roddam et al, 2019; Carrick-Sen et al, 2019).

The CA propeller is a new, evidence-based tool designed to support CAs, managers and clinical colleagues in understanding and communicating the CA role. The next steps in this project include testing this tool with AHP CAs, managers and clinical colleagues in the Solent area and across the country.

Background

Burr and Harding [submitted] reviewed the current literature on AHP CA roles and proposed a generic role description and person specification based on the existing evidence in the published literature (e.g., AUKUH, 2016; Trusson et al, 2019; Roddam et al, 2019; Carrick-Sen et al, 2019; NIHR, 2020).

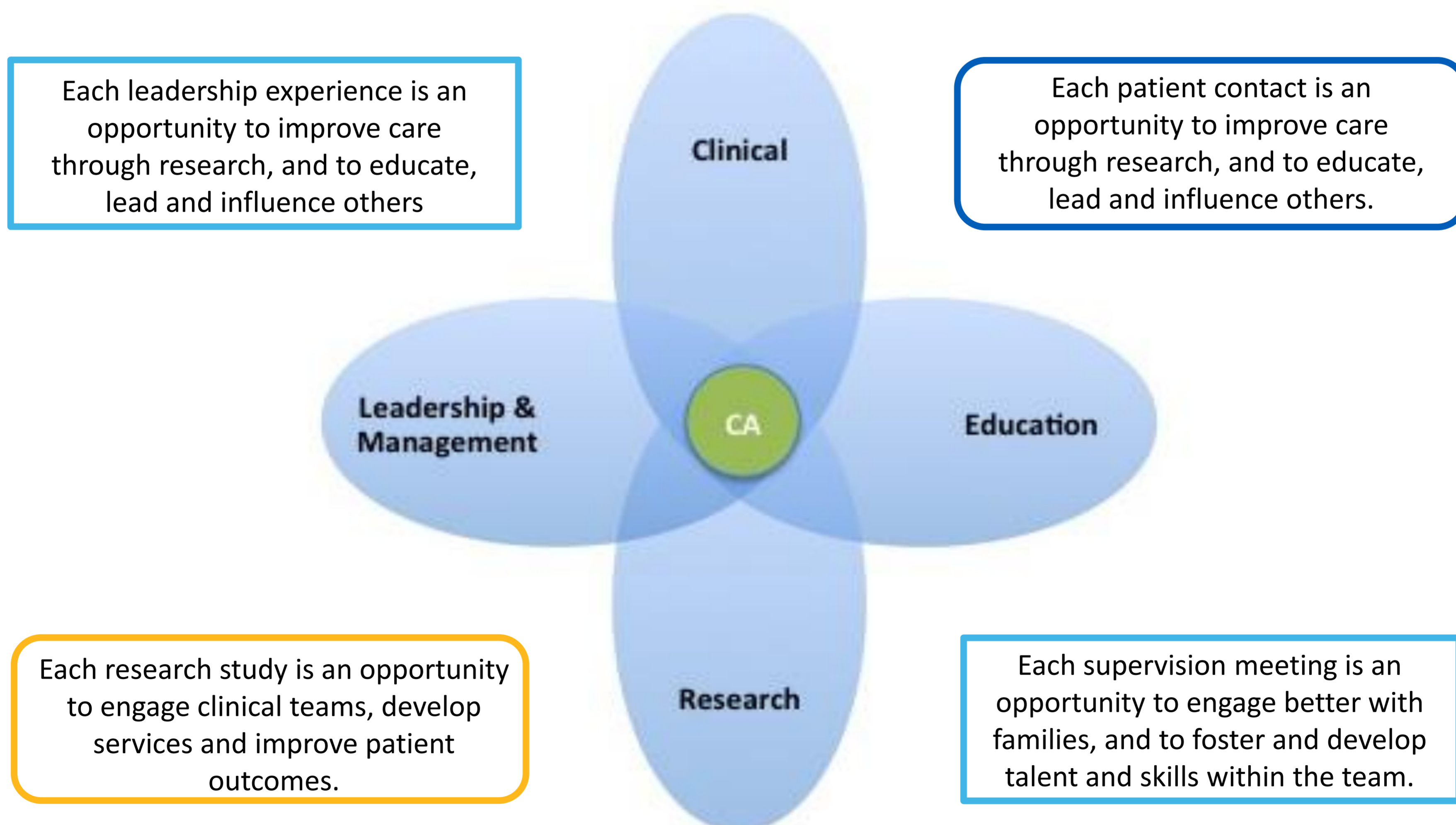
The CA 'propeller' concept was devised as a way of visualising the complex layers of the CA role within a given scenario or activity.

Findings

In the literature, many managers and CAs report that time management is a major challenge of what is often seen as a "dual role", with clinical work often dominating, leaving little time for research activities (NIHR, 2016; Andrew & Robb, 2011; Oldfield et al, 2015).

The CA 'propeller' image aims to illustrate how dynamic the CA role is, and how it has multiple levels of value and impact regardless of the main focus of an activity (i.e., clinical or research-based).

The Clinical Academic (CA) Propeller



Next Steps

This concept is in the early stages of development and needs to be tested with different AHP CA populations, as well as managers and clinical colleagues. This will allow us to explore its potential applications and efficacy as a tool for conceptualising, communicating and evidencing AHP CA activity and value within clinical services and healthcare organisations.

References

Andrew N, Robb Y. The duality of professional practice in nursing: academics for the 21st century. *Nurse Education Today*. 2011; 31(5):429-433; Association of UK University Hospitals (AUKUH) Clinical Academic Roles Development Group. Transforming healthcare through clinical academic roles in nursing, midwifery and allied health professions: A practical resource for healthcare provider organisations. 2016. Available from <https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2325/aunuh-transforming-healthcare.pdf>; Carrick-Sen D, Moore A, Davidson P, Gendong H, Jackson D. International Perspectives of Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals Clinical Academic Roles: Are We at Tipping Point? *International Journal of Practice-based Learning in Health and Social Care*. 2019; 7(2):1-15. Available from <https://publications.coventry.ac.uk/index.php/pblh/article/view/639/760>; Oldfield K, Turner C, Garnett E. A Cross-Funder Review of Early-Career Clinical Academics: Enablers and Barriers to Progression. IFF Research. 2015. Available from <https://mrc.ukri.org/documents/pdf/review-of-early-career-clinical-academics>; Roddam H, Cross L, Georgiou R, Gibson J, Jones S, Olive P, Smith G, Thomas L. Developing clinical academic researchers: insights from practitioners and managers in nursing, midwifery and allied health. *British Journal of Healthcare Management*. 2019; 25(9). Available from <http://clck.uclan.ac.uk/29409/1/29409%20Roddam%20H%20Developing%20clinical%20J%20Health%20Manag.pdf>; Trusson D, Rowley E, Bramley L. A mixed-methods study of challenges and benefits of clinical academic careers for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals. *BMJ Open*. 2019; 9(10). Available from <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/bmjopen/9/10/e030595.full.pdf>