

Angela Polanco - Midwife/ PhD student



I entered the midwifery profession in 2008 with a passion to make sure that women and babies were treated with dignity and respect and have the most positive and safest outcomes. I worked as a clinical midwife for 10 years and through this time I became involved in public and patient involvement and saw how important it is to make sure that the research in maternity services is based on what the patients and their families need. This fuelled my interest in learning more about research and I applied to become a research midwife in 2015.

I thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the research midwife team and was able to see first-hand how research can improve outcomes for women and their families. I was able to implement a new training package for annual training days to improve research awareness and also was awarded a grant to establish a public and patient research involvement group for maternity (PIPR – Patients in Pregnancy Research), the first of its kind in the UK.

I was successful at applying for the INCA Bronze programme ran by UHCW NHS Trust and Coventry University. This introduced me to what a clinical academic was, a background to designing and planning your own research. I applied to the Health Education England/National Institute for Health Research 'Masters by Research' programme and was thrilled to be awarded this on a part-time basis in 2016. My topic of interest was cancer survivorship and pregnancy outcomes. After completing my masters in 2018, I applied to Coventry University for a PhD studentship and was honoured to be awarded one of only three places to start in January 2019. I still work clinically one day a week and I hope to complete my PhD in January 2021, and then apply for a research fellowship to help drive forward the midwifery research agenda

As a clinical academic researcher, you have the opportunity to not only influence the outcome of the one woman and family in your direct care, but also influence and promote the outcomes of thousands of women and babies with well-designed, patient-centred and evidence-based research.

