**Carolyn Tarrant, Department of Health Sciences (01.06.22)**

I’m Carolyn Tarrant, I’m Professor of Health Services Research in the Department of Health Sciences, and I work in the George Davies Centre.

So I’m a Social Scientist – I’m a psychologist by background, I’ve worked a long time in Health Services research. I’ve got a lot of expertise in implementation science and qualitative methods, so that’s kind of where I come from, and the work that I do generally is work in collaboration with people who bring different sorts of expertise. I’ll work on projects that will usually have clinicians, you know, either, say doctors or microbiologists as part of the team. I think the term ‘interdisciplinarity’ is interesting, and I sometimes wonder if that describes what I do.

I’ve done quite a bit of work around antibiotic overuse, that’s my particular area of interest. On one of the projects I worked on, we had myself as qualitative social scientist; we had a decision scientist, with a kind of very experimental psychology background; we had a microbiologist, bringing that kind of clinical expertise, and then someone from economics with expertise in modelling. We had to do quite a lot of work at the start of the project to understand what the problem was that we were trying to tackle from a clinical position, and also what the different ways of thinking about the problem that we would each bring, and sort of explaining the sorts of theories that we might work with and the sort of language we might use, so that we could all understand each other.

One of the things that I asked the team to do was to each recommend a couple of pieces of reading that would, say, explain the clinical problem to a lay audience, that would explain the particular theoretical approach that we wanted to use, and I put that together in a pack to share with everybody, so we almost had a reference that we could all look at to try and understand each other. We spent a lot of time in meetings talking about each of our different perspectives and how that could help us think about the problem, and that felt really good; and I think that the outputs that we had on that project would not have been possible without all those people in the room, so if just the microbiologist had been thinking about antibiotic overuse, or just the person with the decision science background, we could never have come up with the outputs that we’ve come up with.

In working in an interdisciplinary way, I think it is actually important to know who you are and what discipline you sit within, and to bring that really quite explicitly, because I think everyone makes the best contribution when it’s really clear who they are and what they bring.

So my favourite place is the area behind the Rattray, so the sort of walk from Charles Wilson down to the Bennett building. So I was actually a student, I did my undergraduate degree at Leicester, and the campus has changed quite a lot over the past X-many years! But that area’s changed less than most, and it’s always had a kind of quite tucked away, peaceful feel to it, and it’s got lovely trees, and it’s very sort of quiet and serene, and I do love to walk along there, and I find it really quite grounding.