

The neglected pillar: supporting Advanced Clinical Practitioners (ACP's) to develop the research pillar of practice

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Background:

Research should be the cornerstone of the ACP role and is fundamental in contributing to system change and evidence based practice but is often seen as the neglected pillar with the other pillars given precedence (1). The faculty aimed to address this by developing resources for ACP'S to share experiences, present research projects and to broaden their knowledge and skills within this pillar of practice by signposting to training opportunities

Method:

Scoping exercise sent out to all ACP's registered on the NW faculty for advanced practice database, responses highlighted;

- 83% felt their organisations had no clear vision for ACP research activities
- 50% had no job plan in relation to any of the 4 pillars of practice
- 14% had some confidence in research activities
- 100% wanted access to resources to develop the research pillar

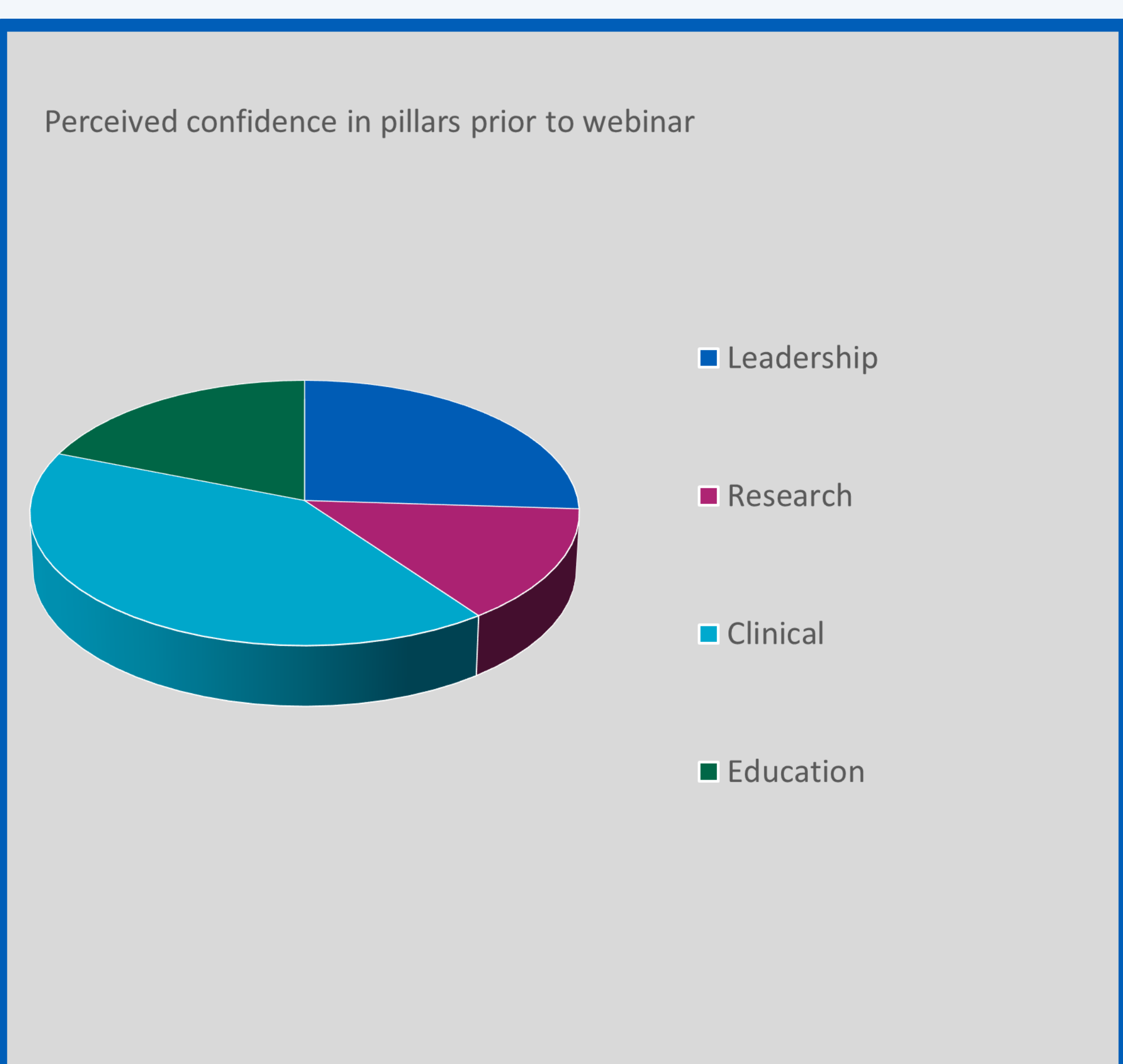
Resource developed:

In collaboration with stakeholders at NIHR NW research and workforce team the faculty delivered a webinar which attracted 84 ACP's from a multi-professional background. The webinar included signposting to training opportunities, funding pathways and examples of case studies of ACP's using research in clinical practice or working towards a clinical academic career pathway, the webinar can be viewed via this link:

https://youtu.be/09q5hQh_W2c

Highlights of this approach:

- Easily accessible and available to watch the recording
- Clear signposting to opportunities
- Case studies gave a 'real world' perspective



"Information provided was brilliant"

"It was so positive to hear from ACP's who are conducting research and their current experiences"

Findings:

Feedback was positive and there have been demonstrable benefits to participants on evaluation for example;

- 3 participants were successful in gaining research internships
- 1 was successful in becoming co-applicant on a national study
- All respondents to the evaluation indicated a request for access to similar resources for ACP's for example future webinars / workshops on writing for publication, audit and quality improvement projects

Discussion & next steps:

Within the NHS Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England(2) there is an expectation that ACP's demonstrate capabilities across the four pillars of practice, yet there remains significant variability on the ability of ACP's to work across each of the four pillars. The importance of this in contributing to the quality of care needs to be emphasised to organisations and employers, working collaboratively with stakeholders in the development of resources and support for ACP's to work across the four pillars.

References:

- Fothergill LJ, Al-Oraibi A, Houdmont J, et al. Nationwide evaluation of the advanced clinical practitioner role in England: A cross-sectional survey. *BMJ open* 2022;12:e055475. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2021-055475
- Health Education England. (2017). Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England.

