

Locala Health Visitor secures prestigious place on a National Institute of Health & Care Research (NIHR) Senior Research Leader programme.

Sarah Lawley is a Children's Nurse and Health Visitor by profession who has worked for Locala for over 13 years. Sarah is a Queens Nurse and the 0-19 Research Lead for Locala covering both Calderdale and Kirklees areas. In recent years Sarah has completed a research champion training, delivered by the 0-19 Research Network (Yorkshire & Humber) as part of a National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Research Delivery Network (RDN) funded 2-year research capacity building project. Following this initial training, Sarah set up and now facilitates a research & innovation group (RIG) for the 0-19 service where Health Visiting and School Nursing team colleagues can learn more about research engagement and evidence-based practice. Sarah has completed NIHR Principal Investigator training and has undertaken the role the principal investigator for two NIHR portfolio research studies that she has embedded into the 0-19 Service. The successful work of Sarah & her collaborators at the 0-19 Research Network resulted in them winning the Nursing Times Public Health Nursing Award in 2024 and being finalists in the Nursing Times Clinical Research award category. Sarah continues to collaborate with the Yorkshire & Humber 0-19 Research Network, helping to source speakers and facilitate the quarterly network meetings.

Sarah represents Locala in several forums and research groups across the region and has recently spoken and presented her work at several key research and nursing events including the Institute of Health Visiting Leadership Conference, Yorkshire & Humber 0-19 Research Network forums, and Health Visiting & Community Practitioner conferences.

In 2024, Sarah was the sole nurse in Locala to be selected for a Chief of Nursing & AHP fellowship programme, the first of its kind to be delivered by Locala. Within this fellowship programme, Sarah designed and undertook a service evaluation of the health visiting services throughout the Calderdale and Kirklees areas, which sought to give a voice to parents and carers to help understand their views and needs when in receipt of the health visiting service.

Now, being one of only 24 nurses in England given a place this year on the prestigious Senior Research Leader (SRL) programme, Sarah will be given two days a week over the next three years to develop and build research opportunities for nurses in Locala to be involved in – as well as sharing research related career development opportunities and supporting nursing colleagues to develop their own research skills. All with the aim of enhancing colleague job satisfaction and improving patient care and experience. More information about the NIHR Senior Research Leader Programme and this year's successful applicants can be found here: [Senior Research Leader Programme for nurses and midwives | NIHR](#)

Look out for opportunities to get involved coming soon!