

# Practitioner health and preventing burnout

With Dr Petra Sambale

## Background

- 1 in 5 practices in Scotland has a vacancy (2015 primary care workforce survey)
- 50% of vacancies for more than 6 months
- 1 in 3 GPs in Scotland are over 50 years old; proportionally more in Deep End practices; early retirement
- Many GP training posts unfilled; Shortage of locums
- Low morale, high stress PLUS Increased medical and social complexity
- Current situation is unsustainable

There were group discussions exploring why we burn out, signs to look for, and successful strategies adopted by practices. We also covered:

- Collective leadership (high quality, compassionate and continually improving care, with everyone taking responsibility for the success of the whole)
- Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing in new teams

## Resilience

The ability to recover/bounce back from setbacks/illness ('Bend and Recover').

Resilience can be a learnt set of skills, attitudes and behaviours:

- Pragmatic Optimism
- Openness and flexibility
- Being comfortable with who you are
- Self-awareness and self-affirmation

## Approaches

- Taking control: focus on positives, be proactive, identify the most important things
- Resilient people know that things have a habit of working out
- Stress management: distraction (sleep, exercise, holidays) and resolution (break down into smaller chunks, make lists)
- Lifelong learning – asking for help – dealing with conflict

## Resources

- The Resilient Practice Workshop - a CPD connect/NES event
- Financial support - [www.cameronfund.org.uk](http://www.cameronfund.org.uk)
- <http://www.healthyworkinglives.com/working-health-services-scotland/about.aspx>
- Doctors' Support Network - <http://www.dsn.org.uk/professional-support>
- Book that Petra recommended reading 'Sapiens: a brief history of humankind'