In this interview, we speak to Noelle O’Neill, a Senior Public Health Scientist for NHS Highland and Scientific Advisor within NHS Highland’s Clinical Advisory Group (CAG).

Noelle explains how she uses BMJ Best Practice to review the latest evidence and literature around public health and healthcare interventions.

“Naturally evidence forms a key part of any decision-making process regardless of whether it’s from a public health or an individual patient perspective.”

“With respect to CAG work, I take a practical, pragmatic approach to evaluating evidence as on occasion cases referred to CAG need to be considered urgently. This means that while a decision needs to be reached in a considered and measured way, it also needs to be done rapidly. Seeking to collate, summarise and then convey to colleagues what the latest evidence is within tight timescales is indeed a challenge within my CAG’s scientific advisory role. However, it is a challenge that I enjoy greatly given the depth and breadth of topics and evidence that I am called upon to consider.

Being able to respond in a timely way necessitates having to access clinically-focused resources that summarise the latest evidence on a particular treatment, condition or technology. Quite simply, it means having access to BMJ Best Practice.

BMJ Best Practice is invaluable in getting and disseminating solid information fast. That’s why, within my CAG role, when reviewing clinical evidence, I use BMJ Best Practice.”

Noelle O’Neill
Senior Public Health Scientist, NHS Highland
I’ve used BMJ Best Practice for many topics over the years. The quality of evidence is excellent. How the evidence is displayed, how it’s presented and how you can find information on particular topics by specialty is exceptionally clear.

From a public health perspective, the COVID-19 pandemic has created additional challenges to our work. Information is constantly changing making it even more demanding to keep up-to-date with relevant and accurate evidence. Once again this is where BMJ Best Practice helps to overcome these challenges. Knowing it is accurate, trusted, and kept up-to-date gives you confidence in reviewing and reporting the evidence.

Having access to clinical decision support tools such as BMJ Best Practice is not just valuable for gathering evidence to support decision-making in public health but also in clinical settings to benefit patient care. When I liaise with clinicians to consider clinically-focused topics and conditions, BMJ Best Practice brings together all the relevant and up-to-date evidence with which to inform the development and delivery of front-line clinical services.

I consider having access to BMJ Best Practice as essential and would certainly recommend it to both my public health and clinically-focused colleagues.

We are fortunate that we have excellent support from specialist librarians at the Highland Health Sciences Library. BMJ Best Practice complements this support by providing an invaluable overview of the current evidence on a wide range of clinical topics in a clear, comprehensive, rapid and reliable way.”

Noelle O’Neill
Senior Public Health Scientist, NHS Highland

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About BMJ Best Practice

Ranked one of the best clinical decision support tools for health professionals worldwide*, BMJ Best Practice provides step-by-step guidance on diagnosis, prognosis, treatment and prevention.

Available to all NHS healthcare professionals in Scotland, courtesy of NHS Education for Scotland.

Simply visit the Knowledge Network – knowledge.scot.nhs.uk

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