

# BAMM's Influence *in Italy*

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About seventeen years ago, a determined paediatrician decided to make quality improvement in British health care management a permanent reality. Together with an enthusiastic group of doctors, she assumed that the continuous development of management and leadership skills would be the key to making change happen. Since then, BAMM has worked to generate "inspired, skilled, creative and energised leaders, every day". The focus of this article is the unknown side of the BAMM story, based on its influencing effects overseas.

Again, once upon a time, but not so far away, a determined clinical hygienist decided that time had come to make the quality improvement of health care management an effective reality in the Italian context too. Together with forty doctors representing the different regional needs of the country, Professor Walter Ricciardi launched SIMM, Società Italiana Medici Managers. The same story, the same values, the same determination and enthusiasm, the same mission as BAMM: promoting managerial culture and medical leadership in the health care context. SIMM in fact focuses on the development of medical management, which is possible only by integrating clinical and managerial skills of doctors.

BAMM's sister organisation has been carefully endorsed by British colleagues who have helped establish training programmes tailored to clinicians' needs. In November 2006, BAMM's Chief Executive, Jenny Simpson, and her team came to Rome to show us how to run a Skills Factory. It was a great experience for both organisations: even if you use the same recipe, when ingredients change, the output will inevitably differ! It is almost like the organisational variability: the same treatment or drug on different patients can have differing results. BAMM's training techniques made people feel inspired and collided with the established academic and formal culture of Italian professionals. The delegates were really determined to make change happen, give freedom to their creativity and get the best from that unique experience.

The final result was something that you can not see in the picture above. A new path of mutual exchange in expertise and knowledge was established between the two professional groups. An output totally aligned with the shared mission of improving professional development to better the quality of health care. Now the Italian association has started the hard challenge of spreading the word. Adhering to BAMM's Fit to Lead

Standards, SIMM delivers Level One Skills Factories all over the country. Three pilot Skills Factories were delivered in 2007 to test the strength of the content and four more are planned by the end of the year.

As for me, I'm the youngest member of SIMM staff that still counts a small number of part time employees thinking full time about SIMM's development. I've watched SIMM grow up since its birth. Actually we are growing together with a "fresh eye," as someone from BAMM said. SIMM is full of enthusiasm and hope for a better future in health care.

BAMM has welcomed me and is teaching me how to be flexible, starting from simple daily activities in the office. The most interesting aspect has certainly been attending BAMM events to gain an idea of British clinicians needs and attitudes towards change. How do professionals deal with driving transformations? Do they look at medical revalidation as a threat or a challenge? What doubts do they have? What are their feelings towards the European Working Time Directive? In addition, what about junior doctors, the growth in patient choice and public expectations, the forthcoming additional responsibilities for clinicians and their involvement in management and appraisal, the continuous progress of medicine and so on. All these problems seem to be quite common to Western health care, in particular to Beveridgian health care models like Italy's and the UK's. Italy in fact has slowly followed the NHS reform path, establishing the Italian NHS (Sistema Sanitario Nazionale, SSN) 30 years later than UK. The main similarities came in the early '90s when health care expenditures reached overwhelming levels and Thatcher's internal market model spread across England. The international policy transfer process influenced reforms too: The government launched a set of measures to bring competition into health care in order to contain costs and promote efficiency. Almost the same thing happened in Italy. This is evident of how health care policies can represent an effective tool for improving health services; learning from mistakes and moving forwards towards best practice.

As for Italy and Great Britain, they share not only common roots but also a similar future perspective as to medical management developments. BAMM and SIMM cooperation is evidence of this. The daily issues dealing with the impact of the financial systems surrounding HRGs, the pressure of retaining universal coverage with lack of resources, waiting lists, the new attitude towards cooperation versus dealing with difficult colleagues and finally the shared path of Clinical Governance, just to name a few, can be solved on a common ground between nations. Changes and

improvements will be easier if clinicians are involved as facilitators and leaders. That's the mission of BAMM and SIMM, providing tailored training to compliment clinician's skills.

The attention of the main stakeholders in the health care sector has been significantly raised by SIMM's first National Conference in April 2008. The event was very successful thanks to the participation of several eminent British speakers. This was a unique opportunity to share common problems, looking at the different angles of the system, politicians, clinicians and patients, and how they affect NHS performance. Along the same lines, the various perspectives of protagonists of BAMM's Summer School, which aimed at defining the essence of leadership and supporting the people in a position to make that a reality.

At the moment great pressure is on the NHS and this is another chance to look at how BAMM can really support the changes coming. I've been really committed to researching BAMM's Fit to Lead (F2L) Programme and trying to adapt its tools to the Italian context. This takes great effort if you think of the range of factors which have to be redefined to guarantee the efficacy of the standards and of the whole training process. Now looking at F2L, revalidation is a unique opportunity to understand the keys to BAMM's success in action. When I arrived, the BAMM team warned me about the changes brought about in the summer. Indeed, I did not know where to start in understanding what was happening. The relevant context of BAMM publications has really helped me in seeing the importance of the research and the changes that are taking place.

On the strength of what BAMM has done and continues to do daily, SIMM wishes to become an organisation capable of supporting and influencing the Italian health care policy making process and supporting Clinical Governance in becoming an effective reality.

In conclusion, as Dr. Leonardo La Pietra wrote in SIMM's Journal, we wish managers and doctors to:

- gain better health care and research outcomes;
- gain better processes and procedures for patients and institutions;
- be the protagonist in the strategic and policy making process at micro, meso and macro level.

*"The new world can come out only from the mind of visionaries, brave and passionate men,"* Simon Bolivar

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