

Background

The UK Department of Health - via National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) initiatives - has been encouraging Nurses, Midwives (N&M) and Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) to engage in quality healthcare research.

N&M research in the clinical setting has lagged behind research from academia. NIHR funding has resulted in the recent proliferation of N&M post-graduate courses in clinical research to build research capacity of clinical N&M talent.

This two-day, hospital-based course offers a first step to those Cambridge University Hospitals Foundation Trust (CUHFT) Nurses & Midwives interested in the concepts of clinical research, but who are not yet ready to undertake a postgraduate degree or to take on a research-based role.

Aim of the course

To provide an introduction to the essential skills and issues relating to the scientific, safe and ethical conduct of clinical research.

To encourage local clinical staff to engage actively with research.

Target groups

A: Local (Trust) Nurses & Midwives with no prior experience in research, who would like to gain an overview of what is involved in conducting research.

B: Nurses & Midwives who have started work in a Clinical Research Team and who could use this course to gain a comprehensive awareness of the varied issues that arise when involved in the conduct of clinical research.



Course Contents - Day 1

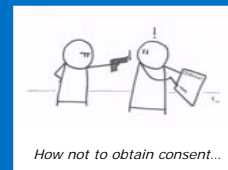
- 1 Welcome & introduction to non-medical research in the Trust
- 2 The research question – the research process
- 3 Overview of methods and issues in quantitative research
- 4 Overview of methods and issues in qualitative research
- 5 Clinical Trials – special issues
- 6 Literature search skills - a hands-on database session
- 7 Writing a literature review
- 8 Research protocol - workshop

Course Contents - Day 2

- 1 Research ethics – Good Clinical Practice (GCP) in research
- 2 Research Ethics Committees - why have them?
- 3 Data protection and patient confidentiality in research
- 4 Research governance
- 5 Obtaining consent from research volunteers – special issues
- 6 Light-hearted introduction to statistics in research
- 7 Pathways for Nurses & Midwives to become involved in research



Like the idea of doing research?



How not to obtain consent...

Originally designed in 2003 by the RCN East of England Research Society, course funding proved problematic and the course stopped in 2006 despite on-going interest. Assisted by the Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Facility, Cambridge, in 2008 the Cambridge University Hospitals Foundation Trust's N,M & AHP research steering committee adopted the course framework with a view of running it free of charge. The previous course concept was reviewed, objectives refined, components determined and a suitable faculty identified and invited. Each course is delivered by a broad faculty of 12-14 local research professionals (clinical, academic, R&D). The course has been running half yearly since October 2008. The average attendance is 21 (with 19 of these being nurses).

Evaluation quotes

"Excellent course that I would recommend to any nurse considering working in or is initiating their own research".

"Quite a varied programme. Each lecture had very useful points".

"Enjoyed it. It helped put research into perspective/context".

Results from the course

- Some attendees went on to attend undergraduate research modules.
- One attendee due to start Masters degree course in clinical research
- One attendee went on to design his own nursing research study
- Attendees reported increased confidence and understanding when working with research teams.

Looking ahead

After each course the programme is reviewed and readjusted to meet the learning needs of the prospective participants.

The framework for this course is generic to healthcare professionals and as such transferable to many settings. It has already informed the creation of a similar course for medical trainees in the Region.

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