

Enabling research activity

Building a research culture within an organisation enables it to demonstrate clinical and cost effectiveness, encourages innovation, empowers staff to review their practice and use current evidence to deliver good patient outcomes and deliver high quality care. This handy top ten tips will help you to *enable research activity* within the clinical workplace.

Tip 1 – Make links

Know who your useful partners / collaborators might be in supporting research activity in your organisation; these might be other research active professionals in your organisation, NHS trusts, academic institutions or charities for example. Identify individuals and start conversations. Look nationally and not just locally. It is very likely others will also be very keen to talk and share ideas.

Tip 2 – Research promotion

Identify an individual to become a research promoter. They don't necessarily have to be actively engaged in undertaking research; consider someone passionate about evidence based practice and data collection who can signpost others to opportunities and promote research resources such as the CAHPR top ten tips series. Identify someone in your organisation or nominate yourself to take on this role.

Tip 3 – Get involved

Get involved in recruiting to large research studies, look into becoming a patient identification site. Contact your local Research Design Service (<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/>) to see how you and your service might become more involved. Look to link current national research studies with your own organisation's specific needs and focus. Link with local universities or centres studying your area of specialism.

Tip 4 – Staff and students

Involve everyone in your team/department or service in data gathering activity. Include newly qualified staff as well as students in research processes such as data collection. Newly qualified staff and students will be aware of the latest evidence and practices and can help generate ideas as well as capacity for research activity. Staff undertaking their MSc modules could also be good links e.g. for critical appraisal support or evidence searches.

Tip 5 – Personal development plans

Include research activity within your own Personal Development Plan. Link exploring current evidence to your identified area of clinical learning for example you might want to contribute to NICE consultations relevant to your particular field, undertake a literature review, critically appraisal a single journal article to evaluate the best treatment approach for a particular condition, undertake a research module or consider the NIHR clinical academic career opportunities.

Tip 6 – Service strategy

Include research activity within your service development strategy. There is no need to 're-invent the wheel' on this one and there are many models for how this might be achieved. Contact your local CAHPR hub to find out what examples already exist or other organisations to see what they do and how they do it.

Tip 7 – Funding research activities

Explore ways in which research activity can be funded. You may like to look at the NIHR clinical academic careers. You might also consider developing a joint researcher post within another organisation such as a charity or university. Contact your local CAHPR hub to find out what examples already exist locally. Speak to your local CLAHRC about support, training and funding opportunities.

Tip 8 – Patient and public involvement (PPI)

Include PPI in your service delivery plans and use patients to help generate ideas on what research topics would be useful, what questions need to be asked and answered, and are important to patients. PPI will help develop well thought-out and meaningful project and service delivery plans and you are more likely to be successful in attracting research funders or partners.

Tip 9 – R&D Committee

If you have a Research and Development Committee, try to recruit an AHP representative on the committee. This will help facilitate communication and support for any research activity you are looking to undertake, it will also make you aware of what research opportunities exist for you and your team and enable you to understand internal funding streams within your organisation.

Tip 10 – Up-skill

Make use of free resources available to you to increase your data gathering skills. For example, look at the resources published by CAHPR and attend local CAHPR hub events, organise an in-service training session to include some data gathering activity, attend networking events to help you make contacts or target University research activity sites.

For contact details about your local hub and for further information about **CAHPR** please visit our website <https://cahpr.csp.org.uk/>

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Fran Fitch, Ruth Heaton, Dr Carol McCrum, Emeritus Professor Ann Moore, Dr Hazel Roddam, and the participants of Physiotherapy UK 2017 workshop: *Making the case for research in service delivery*, for providing the content for this top ten tips.