

Mapping activity and perceived capacity, readiness, culture and aspirations

Victoria Carruthers, Christine Comer, Ben Foxcroft, Soujanya Yarlalagadda, Jill Halstead-Rastrick
Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Background: With increasing healthcare demands, a research-positive culture is needed within community healthcare settings to inform efficient and effective practice.

Aims: To capture current research activity and outputs, research perceptions and aspirations in our community healthcare organisation.

Methods: Four interrelated workstreams included:

1. A review of research databases to identify studies delivered in the Trust 2021-23.
2. A systematic search to identify publications and conference abstracts authored by Trust staff 2021-23.
3. Online surveys, incorporating two validated rating scales, to capture perceptions of research capacity¹ (senior leaders and team managers) and of research readiness and aspirations² (healthcare staff and senior leaders).
4. Semi-structured interviews with team managers, senior leaders and research-interested staff to further explore survey responses.

Analysis included study and publication counts analysed by service type, survey response frequencies and thematic analysis of interview data.

Results:

- 57% research studies delivered and 76% research authors were from specialist services, where 3 established clinical academics are employed.
- Surveys were completed by senior leaders (48%), team managers (54%) and staff (2.5%): Median scores on a validated research capacity scale¹ (1-10) were 6.5 (senior leaders) and 4.25 (team managers). Median ratings of research readiness² (1-5) were 2.0 (senior leaders) and 2.5 (staff). Median level aspired to in the next 5 years was 4 (across all staff). Senior leaders aspired to level 5 for advanced practitioners.
- Themes from interviews completed by senior leaders (72%), team managers (74%) and research-interested staff (12%) focussed on: Research processes (e.g. research reporting); workforce development (clinical academic opportunities); training plan (shared learning); leadership (advanced practice researchers); strategic planning (research priorities, strengths, gaps).

Conclusions: Some community services are more research active than others, especially specialist areas and those with embedded research leaders. Team managers seem less optimistic than senior leaders about research capacity and capability, but future aspirations are high especially for advanced practitioners.

References:

1. Holden L, et al. Evaluating a team-based approach to research capacity building using a matched-pairs study design. *BMC Fam Pract.* 2012;13(1):1–10.
2. Iles-Smith, H., Burnett, C., Ross, D.H. and Siddle, H.J., 2019. The Clinicians' Skills, Capability, and Organisational Research Readiness (SCORR) Tool. *International Journal of Practice-Based Learning in Health and Social Care*, 7(2), pp.57-68.