

Incorporating research delivery into the role of the Clinical Nurse Specialist in Tissue Viability. An exploration of the barriers, enablers, and experiences of one team.

Clare Greenwood, Sean Harrison

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Background: Research is essential for evidence-based practice through the development and evaluation of treatment strategies and optimising healthcare practice. WHiTE 14-PRESSURE 3(1) is a randomised clinical trial which aims to assess whether early use of heel specific devices prevent heel pressure ulcers (PUs). With a recruitment target of over 3000 patients across 30 sites in the UK, this will be the largest PU prevention trial ever conducted. Such trials are usually delivered with the support of dedicated research nurses. However, due to funding limitations, The Tissue Viability Clinical Nurse Specialists at LTHT undertook relevant training to incorporate trial activities into their usual clinical role.

Methods: A survey was sent to all members of the team who have undertaken research training to work on WHiTE14-PRESSURE 3, to explore their personal experiences of incorporating research delivery into their clinical role.

Results: All members of the team responded to the survey allowing trends and themes to be identified. Barriers included: length and relevance of Good Clinical Practice training; difficulty understanding research concepts; time management/balancing clinical workload; and repetition in some documentation. By contrast, respondents reported that their involvement was a good use of their skills and experience. Further benefits identified included: diversity in their clinical role; service development; greater understanding of research and its value in healthcare and how it can inform practice.

Discussion: This is the experiences of one small team, and although there were some difficulties incorporating research into a busy clinical caseload, overall staff found it to be beneficial. Being involved in research is known to improve patient experience, alongside generating additional income for the service. Further research in a larger population is required to determine whether this is a model that could be adopted by other clinical teams with an interest in becoming research active.

References:

1. <https://fundingawards.nihr.ac.uk/award/NIHR134839>