

ORIENTATING ALL STAFF: EVERYONE BECOMES RESEARCH MINDED

Project Description

Healthcare staff are essential in the recruitment of patients to clinical studies. For many reasons patients look to their local clinician or nurse for information so they can make meaningful decisions and choices about their care and treatment. We know that patients often prefer information to come from a trusted source. Staff have the ability to help people understand research, have dialogue with a potential participant and assist researchers to identify and enlist participants for a study. With around 2,000 staff at Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust (C&I) providing a service to approximately 500,000 patients from across the North Thames region, it was recognised that through training all healthcare staff, the profile of research could be raised and the number of patients into trials increased.

This project's initiative involved training hospital staff (medical and non-medical) at the



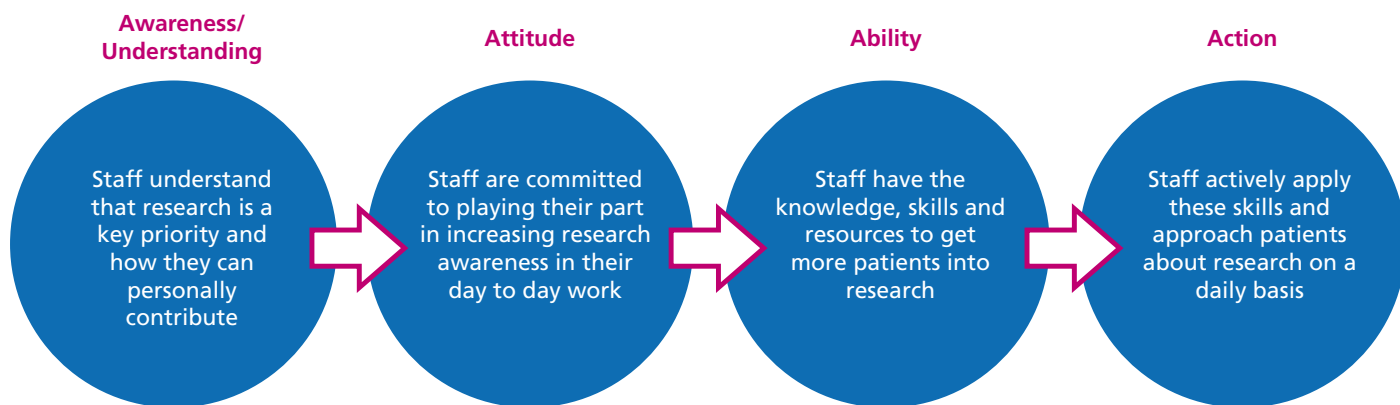
regular induction programme through a short video to raise awareness of clinical research and the importance of encouraging patients to participate in studies. Doctors and specialist registrars were also able to access an online e-learning tool with self-teach modules that could be used in their own time to better understand research at the Trust.

Raising the profile of research is slowly infiltrating the Trust. It is hoped that research will soon become routine practice and that every patient will be offered the same choice in treatment and research.

There is a range of compelling reasons why Trusts should support the research agenda. Increasing awareness of patient participation in research can only help researchers to better understand dementia and ultimately improve patients' care and treatment in years to come. So it is very important that all staff, from board to ward level, understand they have a role to play in providing patients and visitors with information about research. But how do you tackle an entire organisation and ask for research to be raised with patients in a target driven and time limited way?

The staff induction programme was identified to be a starting point for raising the profile of research at C&I.





Alison Fowler, project manager, says “We already had a good working relationship with Camden and Islington, which is part of the reason why they were chosen. At the beginning of the project we built relationships with leading clinicians responsible for clinical education at the Trust and gathered their ideas for how we could enthuse and take this agenda forward”.

Staff buying into the idea was vital, according to Dr Simon Adelman, Consultant Psychiatrist at C&I. He says, “For the project to be a success we needed to incorporate the experience and knowledge of people at the Trust. Our end product needed to train staff and arm them with the tools to actively approach patients”.

Approach

Alison did a great deal of preliminary planning with Trust staff. She explains, “We needed to be very clear with staff about what we wanted to achieve and win over their support for research. We began brainstorming different ways to create a research mindedness in staff, but in an innovative way. The approach we ended up taking was 4-pronged; awareness – attitude – ability - action”.

“After discussions with the Trust, we decided to produce a short 10-minute video, and have a staff member to attend and answer questions at their monthly staff induction programme. Staff thought a video would be much more powerful, appealing and memorable than yet another Powerpoint presentation. It was also about ensuring the same key message was put across in each induction programme and having this message come from well identified and respected sources; the Trust medical director in this case”.

With over 20 new medical and non-medical staff every month attending the training, the video included examples from board level down to ward

receptionists, including receptionists playing a ‘sign-posting’ role for patients.

A suite of materials were also produced to support the training of staff including a leaflet, e-learning module, and information for the Trust website.

Join Dementia Research materials are available free to order. Visit: news.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk/join-dementia-research-materials for more information.

A free e-learning tool was created online to help staff on the journey to being involved with research. This tool was primarily aimed at junior doctors, but since inception, other NHS organisations have used it to better understand clinical research, or learn new ways they could work with the Clinical Research Network. The training package was produced on a shoestring, as Alison articulates “The video was done at no financial cost as medical staff and researchers kindly came forward to be filmed”.

Impact of the Project

C&I has benefited from the staff induction programme, with all new employees becoming aware of clinical research and signposting more patients to information.

Caspar Myburgh, training and induction manager at the Trust, was integral in getting the video into the induction training. He says: “The staff on the training find the research video really useful. It gives staff an overall understanding of what research involves and provides a take home message for each person”.

“I think it’s been really beneficial and has introduced the idea that everyone has a role to play in research, it’s not just for clinicians or nurses, but that receptionists and cleaners on the wards can signpost patients to the availability of research”.

With the training in place, the Trust has seen a change in staff attitudes towards research. For example:

Previously	Now
"I don't know anything about research, nor do I need to know"	"I understand the importance of getting people involved in research to change the future of dementia"
"I feel weary about letting my patients take part in research, as they are frail and I don't feel it helps them"	"Every patient should be given the opportunity to take part in research"
It's the clinician's responsibility to talk to patients about research"	"It's everyone's responsibility to make patients aware of what our Trust is doing on the research agenda: board to ward"

Simon Adelman adds: "We have managed to get the project up and running in two Trusts in the short timeframe we had and already nearly 150 new employees have seen the video and hopefully taken on board its message. We hope that we can increase this going forward".

Learning Points

Alison feels that if she were leading the project again and had more resources, she would consider a professional audiovisual company. Alison says, "We're very grateful to staff for helping us make the very first video on research, doing the editing and helping develop the scripts. However, being the first video it was quite time-consuming to develop".

However many of the lessons learnt from editing can now be passed onto others wanting to do a similar initiative. Some of this learning included:

- The scripts needed significant reworking to pitch them at the right level – not too basic
- The video to be editable so the Trust can update it when needed, as there are elements in the C&I video that are already out of date

- Avoid any time specific references, such as saying 'this year 290 patients participated in studies'
- More digital engagement and social media to launch the training package across the Trust

Dr Simon Adelman carried out one of the induction training sessions with the junior doctors and found making the video relevant to the audience was essential. He comments that "with doctors you are working across a range of services. If it was delivered to a specific team of people that were dealing - for example - with dementia, you would be able to come up with examples of research more relevant to their discipline and that would resonate more with them".

Top Tips

- Engage with key clinicians from day one
- Plan the order of contents and script before filming
- Make sure the project is in line with key national initiatives – e.g. This tied in with the Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia
- Ensure the video is relevant to a particular audience and not too generic
- Consider creating a regional video about local dementia research studies in the Trust
- In addition, explore social media opportunities to engage with the staff, such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, etc
- The Join Dementia Research documentary and animation are excellent resources to explain to healthcare professionals how the service works. They can be viewed on the YouTube channel: [tinyurl.com/YouTube-JoinDementiaResearch](https://www.youtube.com/JoinDementiaResearch)

For more information visit:

nhs.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk