UK Palliative Care Trainee Research Collaborative Fact sheet

What are we doing and why?
We’re setting up a research collaborative for palliative care trainees – the UK Palliative trainees Research Collaborative (UKPRC). Research collaboratives are networks of interested people who recognise the benefits of working together to get research done. They are a great way to identify clinically important research questions, and bring together liked minded trainees with differing levels of research experience.

This is important because to date, most trainees have worked independently on relatively small, often unpublished ad-hoc research projects. Getting research done in this way is hard, partly because we need to rotate from post to post, and also because the actual process of planning research, obtaining NHS ethics, and research and development (R&D) approvals takes so long. To get research done alongside delivering high quality patient and family care, and fulfilling clinical training needs, is extremely challenging.

Research collaboratives can overcome some of these issues. Run by trainees for trainees, they provide a framework for us to develop, manage, and deliver far better research than was possible for trainees to achieve in the past. Follow this link for more information about Trainees Research Collaboratives in the UK.

Why in palliative care?
As clinicians, our responsibility to practice evidence-based medicine is just as important. To provide the best Person-Centred care, we need to be able to assess and offer the very best in therapies, treatment and care, to help people live well despite their illness as well as controlling symptoms at the end of life. But the evidence base for our specialty is lacking; much of what we currently do is based on what we have always done.

Research has potential to provide answers for the many complex problems and symptoms that people have, as well as for emotional, social and spiritual issues. There is now an increasing need for ALL palliative care health care professionals to engage in research. That is easy to say, but more difficult to do as trainees, and that’s why we need a research collaborative in palliative care.

Why you should get involved?
1. Research is easier when done together.
   - Anyone who has ever done research will know that at times, it can be quite a lonely and frustrating experience. It does not have to be this way! A collaborative provides a network of people to rehearse ideas together and explore solutions.

2. Research within a collaborative is more flexible.
   - As part of the collaborative, members can engage with research in a way that is flexible and fits in with training. Tasks can be divided and progress made with greater certainty using a collaborative approach.

3. It’s good for CV’s and curriculum competencies.
   - Working with a group of others to develop research and collect data means we can conduct larger and better studies, which are more likely to be published in peer-reviewed journals, and make a real change to practice. Having a joint publication looks great on your CV, and engaging with the research process ticks several teamwork and management boxes on the curriculum.
Next steps
We are looking forward to getting things started and are currently working on the protocol for our first research project – a national audit of CPR discussions pre and post the Tracey ruling. This will be a great opportunity to look at this issue from a national perspective, and we hope to collect data from as many hospice and hospitals as possible around the country.

If you’re interested in getting involved with the collaborative in general, or in this project in particular, Please get in touch by emailing palliativetraineecollaborative@gmail.com so we can keep in touch with developments.