A critical collaboration for research: a new National Critical Care Research Network for Nurses and AHPs

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Introduction

Nurses and Allied Health Professionals who lead or coordinate research are pivotal to increasing capacity, and the quality and breadth of critical care research. Despite their increasing numbers, many work in relative isolation.

Objective

To develop a novel national network—a collaboration between nurse and AHP researchers and Research Coordinators, supported by key organisations/groups.

Approach

Implementation was underpinned with an organisational development approach: ¹
1) Consultation and stakeholder engagement.
2) Data collection to define priorities and role of the network.
3) Launch and implementation

Method

Enthusiasm for the project was confirmed at a UK Critical Care Research Group (UKCCRG) meeting in June 2017.

An online survey was designed to refine priority setting. Over a 2 month period, a link was regularly circulated via twitter, websites from relevant professional groups, distribution lists from prominent Trial Units, UKCCRG distribution lists and through the ANNCCR website.

We secured high level engagement with key institutional stakeholders, including the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), UKCCRG, British Association of Critical Care Nurses (BACCN), Intensive Care Society (ICS) and Royal College of Nursing (RCN).

Results

There were 160 responses to the online survey. Figure 1 describes respondents by professional group. The majority of respondents (86%) were involved in research. Figure 2 describes their research roles.

Respondents most valued aspects for a future network are described in Figure 3.

The UKCCRG and NIHR agreed to provide essential infrastructure for the group, allowing it to fall under their aegis, enabling hub and network development and conference activity.

Conclusions & Key Points

Key institutional stakeholders confirmed support for the network including NIHR, RCN, UKCCRG, the UK Clinical Pharmacy Association, UK Critical Care Nursing Alliance, BACCN, the National Outreach Forum, the Association of UK Dieticians, and the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Respiratory Care. Priorities comprised having a peer network and a discussion forum.

A key barrier was access to the NIHR google Hub, where the ANNCCR website and community was previously hosted. Thus as UKANNCCR emerged from and is aligned to UKCCRG values, a new webpage is being built on the UKCCRG website. Three meetings have recently been held and the implementation phase is now in progress.


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