Evolution of the Clinical Research Workforce

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Introduction and Aim

Care Contact Time (CCT) is a locally developed app, originally introduced as a method to determine the percentage of time nurses spent delivering direct patient care within the ward setting. The R&D team adapted it by creating research codes relating to direct and indirect patient care together with research activities.

The aim was to review current workforce roles and activities within the research environment and look at inventive methods to tackle the reduced pool of nurses available when recruiting to posts. It also set out to identify value for money for the NHS and ensure we have right staff and skills completing the appropriate role.
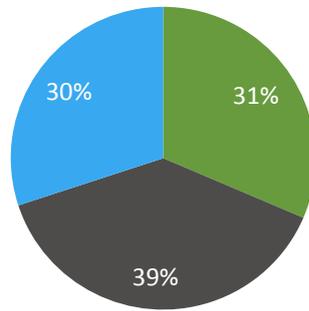
Figure 1

Research Nurse/Midwife Time Spent on Tasks

18%
33%
49%

Figure 2

Research Assistant Practitioner Time Spent on Tasks

30%
31%
39%
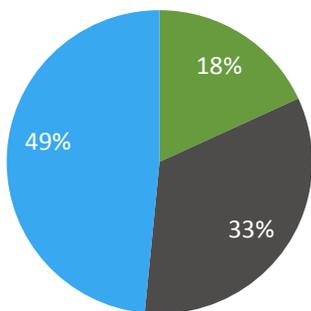
■ Direct Care (Clinical) ■ Indirect Care (Clinical) ■ Non Patient Activities

Method and Results

The R&D team adapted the CCT app by creating codes relating to direct and indirect patient care in research so that teams could measure their activity and capacity over the course of the working week. 10 research teams (36 staff) completed the app daily for 2 weeks resulting in 3100 hours of data being collected.

The results demonstrated that;
- Research Nurses and Midwives spend approximately half of their time on patient related activities, ¼ of their time on direct care, and their remaining time on non-patient activities (Figure 1).
- Assistant Research Practitioners (ARP) spend a total of ¾ of their time on patient related activities (Figure 2).
- Some tasks were not being performed by the most appropriate team member.

Conclusion

These findings resulted in the creation of new posts locally to support data needs highlighted. This also enabled the department to recruit from a new pool of talent. The finding that nursing staff were carrying out many administrative activities prompted an admin review and provision of appropriate admin and data support.

Value and opportunity was added due to:
- Increased patient facing time - value for patient & staff
- Increased R&D people power
- Opportunity to explore new talent sources
- Value £$£$
- Addresses workforce challenges

Right person for the right job !

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Literature cited:

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2.   Department of health (2013). A review of the potential benefits from the better use of information and technology in Health and Social Care : Final report . Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health