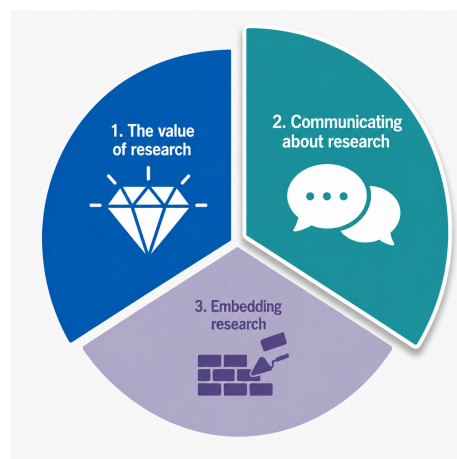


Communicating with clinical teams about research



Communicating about research

This document provides practical guidance for health leaders to communicate with their clinical teams and frontline staff, to develop and empower their research engagement.

Why communicate with clinical teams about research?

Clinical workforces have the most direct exposure to and experience with clinical services and delivery of care. They are well placed to identify research opportunities to support service development and evaluation, and address gaps in practice. Clinicians also play an important role in translating research evidence into local practice. Clinical teams need leadership support to consider research as part of everyday work and to feel confident participating in and leading research activities. Health leaders play a pivotal role in empowering their teams to bring research activities into daily clinical practice.

Strategies to empower and encourage clinical teams to engage in research

Multiple approaches can be used to effectively engage with clinical teams to encourage research. Potential ideas include:

Be a visible research advocate	Actively and publicly advocate to clinical teams for research to be a part of clinical practice and service activities. Example: Having research as a standing agenda item within team/staff meetings; including research goals and activities in PDP discussions.
Find out interests, barriers and enablers to research	Ask teams about their interests in quality activities, service development, research and research translation – learn and understand what teams want and need to engage in research. Determine specific perceived barriers and enablers to engaging in research activities. Example: Include a research and quality improvement discussion in annual team planning meetings to determine key research or quality improvement goals for the year.
Encourage scientific enquiry and evidence-based practice	In meetings encourage teams to critically analyse service performance data and ask about underlying research evidence and how performance could be improved. Example: Ask about current outcomes for a specific patient cohort and how the current service aligns with research-informed clinical guidelines.
Encourage the use of research to answer questions	In meetings and conversations with staff, encourage team members to pursue research to answer clinical questions. Example: When a team member has a clinical question, encourage connecting with the health service librarian for a literature search. The staff member could then present back to the team about the answer.
Empower teams to influence practice and progress clinician-researcher careers	Foster the understanding that clinicians can directly influence and innovate their own practice through research; emphasising their unique role in developing services and opportunities to follow clinician-researcher career pathways. Example: Invite research active team members and external researchers to present at meetings or in-services, with a focus on how their project changed clinical practice.
Articulate the link between quality activities and research	Draw specific links between quality activities and research, encouraging teams to upgrade quality projects to formal research to more thoroughly and sustainably solve service gaps. Example: Invite your local research administration team to present at a team meeting about the progression between quality improvement to research and how this could occur; ask a researcher in your health service to talk to your team about how they progressed a project from quality improvement to research.

Celebrate research activities and achievements	Provide opportunities to recognise and celebrate research completed or in-process by clinicians and teams. Highlight service impacts driven by local research team projects. Example: including research agenda items and shout-outs in clinical team meetings, or in dedicated research events and meetings (i.e. journal clubs).
Share information about available research supports	Identify and share information about local opportunities to support research and encourage clinical staff to participate in these opportunities, including; research training, mentoring, embedded research roles, research resourcing (i.e. funding, protected time), or statistical / research writing support, as available. Example: Circulate emails about upcoming research training opportunities to your team; invite your local research administration or human research ethics team to talk to your team about what support is available.
Share information about current research	Make research accessible and stimulate discussion about the latest evidence by sharing topical research evidence. Example: Subscribe to evidence updates from relevant professional bodies and special interest groups and circulate these updates around your team; start a journal club to discuss topical articles that directly link to clinical practice.