

Research Support Conversation Guide for Health Leaders

A practical guide for conversations with staff interested in research.

1. Evaluate Interest & Motivation Goal: Understand what's driving them	
Prompts <i>"What's sparked your interest in research?"</i> <i>"Is there a clinical problem or question you've noticed?"</i> <i>"What would you love to improve or better understand?"</i>	Progress ☐ I understand their motivation and area of interest.
2. Shape the Idea Goal: Turn interest into a focused, feasible question	
Prompts <i>"What specific question are you trying to answer?"</i> <i>"Who would this impact—patients, staff, the service?"</i> <i>"Have you done a literature review?"</i>	Progress ☐ The idea is clear and relevant to service priorities. ☐ The scope feels achievable.
3. Right-Size the Approach Goal: Match the project to the evidence and context	
Prompts <i>"Do you think this idea is best approached as a QI project, audit, or research study?"</i> <i>"Is there existing evidence in a similar context?"</i>	Progress ☐ Agreed on a realistic project type and scale.
4. Identify Support & Connections Goal: Ensure they're not doing it alone	
Prompts <i>"Who could mentor or guide you?"</i> <i>"Would it be helpful to link you with a university or research team?"</i> <i>"Who else in the team might be interested?"</i>	Progress ☐ Mentor/partner identified. ☐ Key connections initiated.
5. Clarify Time & Capacity Goal: Make participation feasible	
Prompts <i>"How much time do you realistically need to move this forward?"</i> <i>"What can we adjust to create that space?"</i>	Progress ☐ Protected time discussed, agreed, and documented (PDP). ☐ Workload considerations addressed.

6. Navigate Approvals & Process Goal: Reduce delays and uncertainty	
Prompts <i>"Do we know if this needs ethical approval or is it exempt?"</i> (QI activities do not require ethical approval) <i>"Who can help us with ethical and governance approvals?"</i>	Progress ☐ Pathway clarified. ☐ Next steps for approvals are clear.
7. Plan the First Steps Goal: Build early momentum	
Prompts <i>"What's the next small step?"</i> <i>"What can you realistically achieve in the next 2–4 weeks?"</i>	Progress ☐ Clear, immediate actions agreed. ☐ Follow-up date set.
8. Embed in PDP Goal: Turn the conversation into a clear, supported commitment	
Prompts <i>"What should we include as your goal in your PDP?"</i> <i>"What timeframe suits this project?"</i> <i>"What support should we document?"</i>	Progress ☐ Goal documented in PDP. ☐ Timeframe agreed. ☐ Support recorded (time, resources, mentor).
9. Agree on Check-ins & Support Goal: Maintain progress and confidence	
Prompts <i>"How often should we check in?"</i> <i>"What support do you want from me along the way?"</i>	Progress ☐ Regular check-ins scheduled. ☐ Support needs understood.
10. Think Ahead to Impact Goal: Link work to real change	
Prompts <i>"How might we use the findings in practice?"</i> <i>"How can we share / showcase your successes?"</i>	Progress ☐ Early thinking about translation and impact.
11. Encourage Growth Goal: Build a longer-term pathway	
Prompts <i>"Where would you like this to lead?"</i> <i>"Would you be interested in presenting or publishing?"</i>	Progress ☐ Next opportunities identified.