

Impacts of the research activity of nurses, midwives, allied health professionals and pharmacists

To explore the impacts of research led by these healthcare professionals, we carried out a systematic review of the existing literature and qualitative interviews with managers and research-active clinicians at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust (ICHT).

Positive impacts

Reported positive impacts were classified as six overlapping and interlinked categories, which described their research activity as:



Contributing to positive organisational reputation

- *Staff recruitment*: applicants attracted by research opportunities and reputation of clinical academics
- *Patient satisfaction*: choose ICHT services, report positive experiences



Improving services and approaches to patient care

- *Pathways of care*: effective and evidence-based
- *Patient and public involvement*: research addresses pertinent questions



Creating local research culture

- *Engagement in service improvement activities*: including audit and QI
- *Evidence implementation*: change practice in response to new evidence
- *Mentorship*: provide formal and informal research guidance and support



Aiding knowledge transfer and collaboration

- *Shared research knowledge and expertise*: locally, nationally, internationally and across disciplines
- *Academic outputs*: publication and presentation of research findings
- *Social media*: active dissemination and engagement in clinical and academic discussions



Promoting and developing the professions

- *Contribute to national clinical bodies*: develop national guidelines, teaching and education, mentorship and guidance
- *Peer review* – for journals, funding organisations, healthcare charities



Generating research income

- *Win research funding and support others to apply*: maintain and promote research activity and provide resources

Opportunities

The lack of career options for individuals wishing to combine research and clinical practice was identified as a limitation. An ideal clinical academic career pathway would have:



Clear routes and steps for progression

- *Common pathway*: available for all disciplines outside medicine
- *Protected time*: for research, dissemination and implementation, limiting the need for short periods of backfill

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Funding: This work was funded by NIHR Imperial Biomedical Research Centre (BRC)