

Organisational developments using research as a driver for change: an example in tissue viability services

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Published version

FOWLER DAVIS, Sally, KING, Brenda and DOYLE, Kevin (2018). Organisational developments using research as a driver for change: an example in tissue viability services. In: 3rd World Congress on Nursing & Nurse Education, Valencia, Spain, 12-14 Jul 2018.

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Euro Nursing-2018, Valencia, Spain- 12th -14th July

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Organisational developments using research as a driver for change: an example in tissue viability services in Sheffield

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Clinical academic developments have been a priority for the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) in England [1] promoting a strategy for non-medical professions to engage in research for patient benefit. Adopting this strategy in Sheffield Teaching Hospitals has enabled nurses to review current practice and the city-wide tissue viability team have led a study in practice.

The tissue viability service supports the prevention and management of static and non-healing wounds. The service also provides advice and information to health care practitioners, patients and their carers about the management of care. The service was already using 2-D images on an electronic record system to take referrals, triage and provide remote and face to face clinical care. The research question was 'Does a 3D camera data provide a more accurate baseline measurement (compared to 2 D images with manual measurement) to support better clinical decision making in referrals to tissue viability?' It directly addressed a national and a local strategic priority[2]

The study enabled staff to gain direct experience of research (ethics review, data collection, critical evaluation of technology, data analysis and reporting) that builds enduring capability within the team. Organisational results that will be presented include; the findings from 30 recruited patients monitored at 4 time points, demonstrating healing and non-healing trajectories. The critical review includes theory development related to reasons for non-healing and case vignettes support further studies into prevention and public health interventions, particularly for lower limb ulcers. Research outputs enable the continuing development of specific outcome measures across community nursing as an important development in wound management [3]

Organisational development that enables learning and service improvement through research is an important initiative. It offers a significant opportunity to develop nursing research capacity. The research outcomes have enabled continuous improvement of wound management [4] and practitioner learning.

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