RCPCH Progress domain resources: Research and scholarship

Quality and Standards team
Paediatricians at all levels need to demonstrate they can apply an evidence-based approach to their practice - and so need research skills.

"Paediatricians need to be clear with children and young people about what research is, what will happen and how they can get involved. Stop using jargon or words that might mean something different for children and young people"

Young people - RCPCH &Us

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What children and young people say

We asked CYP how they want to get involved in research with paediatricians. They want us to...

- raise awareness of research with CYP
- encourage CYP to get involved from the start - including the question, how to do the research and who needs to be involved
- helping CYP be able to give informed consent
- enabling CYP to do the research and check it is doing what it is meant to be doing.

RCPCH &Us have shared their voices and views with the Children and Young People's engagement team on this curriculum domain.

Download poster (PDF)

Overview and teaching resource

Our presentation explains the domain in more detail, and can be used as an overview or in a teaching session.

Download presentation (PPTX)

How paediatricians use this domain in their everyday practice - videos

By thinking about research when we are caring for our patients, we will always be identifying ways in which we might be able to improve patient care...

Dr Rod Mitchell, Consultant in Paediatric Endocrinology at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh explains why research is important at all levels of training, and how you can get more experience and start to develop your own research ideas. And, find out his key tip for all trainees.

The idea is that everyone will understand what is involved in research and take this as far as
they wish to develop their own career

Dr Katherine Cox at NHS Lothian in Edinburgh provides easy examples of how research skills can be developed across your training.

The below case studies give examples of evidence that could be used to demonstrate contribution towards the domain learning outcome.

**Gaining skills and understanding in obtaining consent for clinical trials - case study**

[Through the course] I’ve gained a better understanding of the design of clinical trials

Setting: Neonatal

**How did the opportunity arise?**

I found out about a clinical study that my neonatal unit was recruiting patients to. I wanted to be able to recruit babies when I was working to help the study achieve its aims.

**What happened?**

I registered for a “good clinical practice” course run jointly by the university and Trust. On this I learnt about the principles of clinical research, how to design trials and how to obtain informed consent for potential participants.

**How did this support your development?**

I’ve gained a better understanding of the design of clinical trials to make sure the results can demonstrate whether particular interventions affect outcomes. The course has allowed me to recruit to national research trials and to make sure parents are fully informed about local research opportunities.

**Any practical tips?**

It helps to have some practical knowledge of trials going on locally to get the most out of the course – this doesn’t need to be detailed, just ideas. Find out about the local clinical research facility which will be able to link you up with courses.

**Assessing a clinical question - case study**

Look out for articles in the “education” section of Archives of Disease in Childhood

Setting: Ward

**How did the opportunity arise?**
When I moved to a new hospital I found that they used different guidelines for duration of antibiotic treatment for community acquired pneumonia, and I was not sure which guideline was best.

**What happened?**

I reviewed published information on the duration of antibiotic courses and compared these with the guidelines from the two hospitals I have worked in. I presented the findings at our weekly clinical meeting.

**How did this support your development?**

I gained skills in critical appraisal and evaluating evidence. The activity improved my knowledge of antibiotic pharmacology and guided my future clinical practice. I also improved my presentation skills by sharing this information with my colleagues.

**Any practical tips?**

Look out for articles in the “education” section of *Archives of Disease in Childhood* which can give pointers for answering clinical questions. Ask consultants if they have ideas for questions which they think are relevant to your own clinical setting.

**Writing a clinical guideline - case study**

Make sure that senior clinicians are aware of your interest in projects

**Setting:** Emergency department

**How did the opportunity arise?**

One of the consultants was interested in developing a new local guideline for the management of wheezy children presenting to ED. As this was an area of interest to me I was happy to help write the guideline.

**What happened?**

I reviewed British Thoracic Society guidelines and published treatment pathways from other regions. I assessed the quality of evidence available to help develop a guideline which is now used in the department.

**How did this support your development?**

I have gained an understanding of how to assess evidence and the relative strengths of evidence, for example, case report compared to randomised clinical trial compared to meta-analysis. I’ve also gained an understanding of the local systems concerning guideline development, publication and review.

**Any practical tips?**

Make sure that senior clinicians are aware of your interest in projects and ask them to
Gaining skills and understanding in obtaining consent for clinical trials - case study

Try to interest others in your research so that they can support you with the practicalities

Setting: Outpatient clinic

How did the opportunity arise?

A new patient-directed clinic system was introduced to the adolescent diabetes clinic. I wanted to find out how patients and their families felt about the new arrangements.

What happened?

I created a survey for patients and families to complete and handed this out in the waiting room before appointments. I collated responses to find out which aspects of clinics worked well, identified key themes and took on suggestions for improvement. I fed these back through the diabetes team meeting and helped to implement some of these suggestions to improve patient experiences.

How did this support your development?

I learnt about questionnaire design and the challenges of engaging patients in research. I used qualitative research as part of the PDSA (Plan Do Study Act) cycle to improve clinical practice. Patient involvement is a key part of service development, and I learnt a lot about the way adolescents view their healthcare and lifestyle priorities.

Any practical tips?

Try to interest others in your research so that they can support you with the practicalities – I found that the consultants in clinic were very happy to collect questionnaire on my behalf.

Make sure that the resources required are readily available - eg pens, clipboards - and if possible let patients know in advance that you’d like to involve them to improve response rates.

Special thanks and acknowledgement to Dr Kathryn Cox and to all who contributed in providing the content for this domain.