



## LETTERS

## NHS STAFF AND RESEARCH

## Engaging NHS staff in research: training is key

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We welcome the Royal College of Physicians' statement *Delivering Research for All* and agree with Maben and King that the major barriers to the engagement of medical staff in research are lack of research knowledge and skills and poor access to research training.<sup>1 2</sup> Such training is a fundamental skill that should form part of all specialty training curriculums for higher trainees. Not all future consultants will be involved in primary research, but they will all need to be able to read and appraise the scientific literature and integrate new research findings into clinical practice.

This is recognised in the higher training curriculum for child and adolescent psychiatrists,<sup>3</sup> which since 2010 has included mandatory requirements for trainees to be able to find and analyse research carried out by others and assimilate this into a (systematic) literature review, written to a publishable standard. The curriculum describes these skills as "essential in order to provide the high quality of care based on the evidence base that our patients and their parents have a right to expect."

Research review training is a practical way of identifying research competencies that could be pursued by all trainees, many of whom are working in settings that do not offer opportunities for primary research.

Furthermore, we think the skills acquired through literature review increase scientific reasoning and the ability to write and synthesise complex data, as well as enhancing time management skills and promoting positive attitudes to self directed learning, which are all necessary for a lifetime in medicine.

To achieve the aspirations of the Royal College of Physicians, research training is key; its inclusion in training curriculums must be specific with clear objectives.

Competing interests: None declared.

Full response at: <https://www.bmj.com/content/365/bmj.l4040/rr-3>.

- 1 Maben J, King A. Engaging NHS staff in research. *BMJ* 2019;365:l4040. 10.1136/bmj.l4040.31208964
- 2 Royal College of Physicians. Delivering research for all: expectations and aspirations for the NHS in England. 2019. <https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/guidelines-policy/delivering-research-all-expectations-and-aspirations-nhs-england>
- 3 Royal College of Psychiatrists. *A competency based curriculum for specialist training in psychiatry*. London: Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2018.

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