

Self-directed learning for the research curious

Curious about research but don't know where to start?

Here we asked 7 questions:

1. *Why and how should I make a change to improve my practice?*
2. *How can we use service evaluation approaches to measure the quality of our current practice?*
3. *How can we use research approaches to measure the quality of our practice?*
4. *What are the best ways to ensure service user, carer and stakeholder voices are heard in service evaluations and research?*
5. *How should I collect project data?*
6. *Why is it important that we share our research and service evaluation activities?*
7. *How can I get support to undertake research activities and/or service improvement activities?*

The following sections give some explanations about why the questions are asked and what you may learn from asking them.

The links provide resources that may be useful in considering answers to the questions.

Question 1

Why and how should I make a change to improve my practice?

The main aim of asking this question is to understand:

- 1) why we should engage in Research / Quality Improvement / Service Improvement projects,
- 2) the differences between these approaches and positive benefits these activities can have on lived experience and outcomes, service efficiency and translation of research evidence into practice and
- 3) how to identify, select and critique suitable research literature to support.

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Learning objectives	After considering this question learners should be able to: 1) identify a problem/ issue they would like to change or can identify resources to support best practice model to be implemented. 2) utilise existing evidence and/or select appropriate evidence to support their current and future service delivery.
Suggested sources of Information	<p>NIHR Learn https://learn.nihr.ac.uk/ NIHR Learn also have a series of e-learning modules aimed at individuals with little or no experience of research. Created by NIHR, selected Royal Colleges and their partners, the modules cover a variety of topics to provide you with new skills to feel more confident to engage with research and research opportunities. Search in the NIHR box for ‘Getting into Research’ and ‘Introduction to Research’ plus various modules on ‘Delivering Clinical Research’. There are a massive amount of courses to choose from, which are a mixture and written material, power points and videos.</p> <p>Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Ethics and governance: Highway code for researchers https://www.csp.org.uk/professional-clinical/research-evaluation/doing-research</p> <p>Society of Radiographers (SoR) ‘Getting started’ if you’re interested in getting involved in research this page is very useful https://www.collegeofradiographers.ac.uk/research-grants-and-funding/research/getting-started FAQs about research, this is a comprehensive list of common questions with great resources and signposting https://www.collegeofradiographers.ac.uk/research-grants-and-funding/research/research-faqs</p> <p>South Central CAHPR hub and Southampton University Some good resources here especially on poster presentations, plus tips about getting started in research and applying research to practice. https://www.southampton.ac.uk/ahprnhub/research/index.page</p> <p>How to search the literature</p>

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	<p>Searching the Journal Literature and locating papers: NHS Health Education England – E-Learning for Health Care: https://e-lfh.org.uk</p> <p>Why use literature reviews in health and social care? Open university Look in Health Sports and Psychology section: https://www.open.edu/openlearn/body-mind/free-courses?filter=date/grid/all/all/all/all&page=18</p> <p>How to read papers</p> <p>How to review a paper: NHS Health Education England – E-Learning for Health Care: https://e-lfh.org.uk</p>
<p>Question 2</p>	<p><i>How can we use service evaluation approaches to measure the quality of our current practice?</i></p>
	<p>This question is about service evaluation, audit and quality improvement and how these different methodologies should be applied. It is useful to understand why routinely collected data may be appropriate (patient reported outcome and experience measures and clinical outcomes) and whether additional information is needed. Understanding key concepts to help support the development of a service evaluation and or audit, these may include things such as models for change and implementation tools.</p>
<p>Learning objectives</p>	<p>After considering this question, learners should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) describe the differences between service evaluation, audit and Quality Improvement (QI) (Primary Objectives), 2) select appropriate measures / metrics relevant for service evaluation, audit or QI (Primary Objectives), 3) describe the best methodological approach for their project, 4) identify further resources to support the development of their project.
<p>Sources of Information</p>	<p>Service Evaluation and Quality Improvement Quality Improvement for Health Care Professionals</p>

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	<p>This course explores the principles of audit and how to conduct an audit https://elearning.hqip.org.uk/9100-welcome/ NHS Health Education England - Audit and Quality Improvement You will need to create an account and login and search for audit and quality improvement NHS Health Education England – https://e-lfh.org.uk The Audit process - The National Council for Osteopathic Research (www.ncor.org.uk) - Audit This is an e-learning module available for free online for anyone to access to learn how to audit a practice. https://ncor.org.uk/e-learning/e-learning_audit_FINAL-02.ppsx Using data to aid organisational change – Open university, choose Health, sports and psychology and search for the title https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue Chartered Society of Physiotherapy - outcome and experience measures: https://www.csp.org.uk/professional-clinical/research-evaluation</p>
<p>Question 3</p>	<p><i>How can we use research approaches to measure the quality of our practice?</i></p>
	<p>Whilst considering this question, the learner should acquire an introduction to the basics of research, the different research methodologies (Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed methods research) and describe their use within health and social care settings. Understanding different study designs are important so that learners can identify the suitability / utility of different approaches according to the research question and identify and select suitable outcome measures. Ethical issues surrounding the conduct of research and data collection will also need to be considered.</p>
<p>Learning objectives</p>	<p>After considering this question, learners should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) identify an appropriate research methodology. 2) demonstrate an awareness of ethical issues surrounding data collection, survey and research and their responsibilities, 3) identify further resources to support the development of their project, 4) select appropriate outcome measures / metrics relevant to their research project.

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<p>Sources of Information</p>	<p>Research study designs / research methods Study designs: Health Education for England e-learning for health https://e-lfh.org.uk</p> <p>Qualitative research Qualitative research fundamentals: NHS Health Education England – E-Learning for Health Care: https://e-lfh.org.uk</p> <p>Systematic reviewing The following websites have lots of useful resources about reviewing and appraising literature</p> <p>Joanna Briggs Institute: https://jbi.global/</p> <p>Cochrane: https://training.cochrane.org/</p> <p>Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP): https://casp-uk.net/casp-tools-checklists/</p> <p>Equator Network (checklists useful for critical appraisal): https://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/</p> <p>NHS Health Education England – E-Learning for Health Care: systematic reviews: https://e-lfh.org.uk</p>
<p>Question 4</p>	<p><i>What are the best ways to ensure service user, carer and stakeholder voices are heard in service evaluations and research?</i></p>
	<p>Whilst considering this question, the learner should gain an overview of the principles of involving service users, carers and other stakeholders in research and quality improvement, referencing personal care delivery, service/system planning/design, delivery and evaluation. Different models of engagement and involvement can be examined, to help determine how to plan involvement in research, including ways of mapping stakeholders, using one or a mix of mixed methods, and undertaking appropriate data analysis.</p>
<p>Learning objectives</p>	<p>After considering this question, learners should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) describe different approaches to service user/carers engagement, 2) identify key stakeholders to engage with, 3) identify and select resources to help develop a PPI plan.

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<p>Sources of Information</p>	<p>Patient and Public Involvement in Research NIHR have resources for both patients / public and researchers often referred to as INVOLVE https://www.peopleinresearch.org/ and the James Lind Alliance https://www.jla.nihr.ac.uk/</p> <p>Equity Diversity and Inclusion in Research The Health Inequalities Assessment Toolkit (HIAT) is an excellent resource to help researchers optimise diversity and inclusion in research. The HIAT aims to support people to integrate an intersectional equity lens into research, and consider how people with lived experience and policy or practice expertise can help in this process. The website For Equity has a wealth of useful resources including the toolkit. https://forequity.uk/ FOR EQUITY was produced by a team at Lancaster University. It was funded by the NIHR School for Public Health Research (https://sphr.nihr.ac.uk) and the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration North West Coast (https://arc-nwc.nihr.ac.uk).</p> <p>More on EDI</p> <p>Also do keep an eye out for the work being done by UKRI. They have created an interdisciplinary network of researchers and practitioners, called the EDI Caucus, they will identify, assess, and share existing evidence on the effectiveness of current EDI practices. It will also undertake research where pre-existing evidence is lacking. The information they gather will then be used to support UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the British Academy to test and evaluate new EDI initiatives.</p> <p>https://www.ukri.org/news/ukri-and-the-british-academy-fund-edi-network-to-boost-ri-in-uk/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery</p>
<p>Question 5</p>	<p><i>How should I collect project data?</i></p>
	<p>Whilst considering this question, the individual can learn to develop a plan for data collection and provide guidance on how data can be used to inform practice and/or</p>

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	<p>influence key decision makers. Individuals can learn how to identify whether their data is routine or project data and will explore the governance requirements for storage and use of different types of data. Understanding simple data analysis/visualisation techniques are useful to see how these can be used to provide data driven reports and business cases.</p>
<p>Learning objectives</p>	<p>After considering this question, learners should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) understand governance and regulations for storage and management of project data (paper and electronic), 2) identify and select appropriate metrics / measures relevant to their project, 3) complete simple analyses of data, and has an awareness of where to seek for / gain support, 4) develop an awareness of how data can be used to influence clinical and commissioning decisions (e.g. business cases).
<p>Sources of Information</p>	<p>General Data Protection Regulation Future Learn - Understanding the GDPR Faculty of Law University of Groningen (EU GDPR). Choose the videos they are succinct and informative. https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/general-data-protection-regulation/14/steps/1252523</p> <p>Coursera – Digital Governance – Erasmus University Rotterdam https://www.coursera.org/search?query=GDPR&page=2&index=prod_all_launched_products_term_optimization</p> <p>Statistics StatQuest Here you will find many short videos explaining fundamental statistics, you will be re-directed to Utube to access them. https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLblh5JKOoLUK0FLuzwntyYI10UQFUhsY9) www.statquest.org</p> <p>Discovering Statistics - Statistics Hell-P (especially useful if you are using SPSS statistical software to analyse your data) www.discoveringstatistics.com</p>

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	<p>Centre Statistics by Curran – Bauer Analytics: choose the free resources tab to watch their videos on fundamental stats to multilevel mixed effects modelling. www.centerstat.org</p> <p>Interpreting data: Box plots and tables and More working with charts, graphs and tables</p> <p>Open University, select Health, sports and psychology and search for these: https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue</p>
Question 6	<i>Why is it important that we share our research and service evaluation activities?</i>
	<p>Whilst considering this question, the learner can seek to understand the importance of dissemination of research activities and results in effecting change and improvement. Learners can examine where project information, outcomes and reports can be gathered, recorded and shared, in teams, organisations, professions and research communities. Routes to sharing and final publication of projects can be explored, from informal/internal to conference/journal/academic submissions.</p>
Learning objectives	<p>After considering this question, the learner should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Place a project within the health and social care landscape. 2) Identify how to use their findings to influence at local / regional / national level. 3) Define suitable routes to impact.
Sources of Information	<p>UKRI</p> <p>https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/impact-toolkit-for-economic-and-social-sciences/defining-impact/</p> <p>https://www.ukri.org/about-us/research-england/research-excellence/ref-impact/</p>
Question 7	<i>How can I get support to undertake research activities and/or service improvement activities?</i>
	<p>Whilst considering this question, the learner can examine how quality improvement/research activity can be supported, to ensure findings are actioned. Learners</p>

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	can explore the concept of developing a case for change, ensuring projects are aligned to organisational/profession priorities and consider ways in which professional and personal development support can be maximised for research and quality improvement.
Learning objectives	<p>After considering this question, learners should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) identify and seek out opportunities for support within their professional organisation and/or appropriate research network/s, 2) identify suitable peer support / mentoring opportunities to support their development, 3) develop an awareness of funding and training opportunities to support their development.
Sources of Information	<p>Mentoring is a structured, personal development relationship where a person, normally the mentee is guided by another, the mentor. The mentor is usually more experienced and, or knowledgeable than the mentee but need not necessarily be more senior or in the same professional field.</p> <p>Mentoring can take many forms, some examples are below:</p> <p>Traditional – the mentoring relationship is between the mentor a person who is more senior and experienced than the mentee.</p> <p>Reverse mentoring – the mentor may not be more senior but has more experience than the mentee. For example a senior researcher being mentored by a full time clinician.</p> <p>Peer mentoring – mutual mentoring relationships for example two people providing support for those in challenging situations.</p> <p>Cross disciplinary mentoring – the mentoring relationship is between two people from different professions or disciplines</p> <p>Group mentoring – where there are insufficient mentors to mentees</p> <p>Multi-mentoring – where one person may seek several mentors</p> <p>Automatic mentoring – often new-comers into organisations are matched with a mentor as early as possible</p> <p>Targeted Mentoring – often in under-represented and marginalised groups</p> <p>Mentoring is a collaborative relationship built around ongoing learning, dialogue and questioning that helps to guide and support professional development, it is normally time limited.</p> <p>Reasons for mentoring include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career advancement and development • Personnel retention

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- Confidence building
- Community enhancement
- Optimising opportunities

Free mentoring training can be accessed via the Open University:

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/money-business/exploring-career-mentoring-and-coaching/content-section-overview?active-tab=description-tab>

There are many opportunities and schemes for mentoring below are a selection of those available to AHPs:

CAHPR hubs

Please do make contact with your local regional CAHPR hub. Any AHP can join in a network. The hub networks are welcoming and will support and guide you to find a mentor.

<https://cahpr.csp.org.uk/regions>

National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)

Mentoring opportunities are for those who are ‘members’ of the NIHR academy, that is, those on existing fellowship and training programmes, full or part funded by the NIHR and, or those working in the NIHR Infrastructure or Research Capacity Building Structures (please see link for FAQs).

More information can be found here as well as useful information about mentoring:

<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/academy-programmes/nihr-leaders-support-and-development-programme>

Frequently asked questions about the NIHR mentoring scheme can be found here:

<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/mentoring-programme-faq/26893>

Council of Deans of Health (CoDH)

The CoDH, with support from the Burdett Trust for Nursing, launched a Student Leadership Programme to build the capacity of nursing, midwifery and allied health students in leadership. This includes a mentoring component. This initiative was started to develop students’ knowledge, skills and networks to enhance their leadership potential both as students and as professional practitioners. The mentoring scheme is only open to all students on the leadership programme but all students on NMAHPS courses in the UK are eligible to apply. More information can be found:

<https://www.councilofdeans.org.uk/studentleadership/mentoring-on-the-student-leadership-programme/>

Professional body schemes

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Each of the AHP professional bodies have either formal and / or informal mentoring schemes. These schemes are open to members of the respective professional bodies. However please don't be put off seeking a mentor from another AHP profession. The professional bodies welcome mentors from outside their professions. Contact the CAHPR research leads directly and there may well be opportunities available.

British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists <https://www.bapo.com/resources/leadership/>

British Dietetic Association <https://www.bda.uk.com/> .

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy <https://www.csp.org.uk/professional-clinical/leadership/csp-mentoring-scheme>

Institute of Osteopathy <https://www.iosteopathy.org/> (members only zone)

Occupational Therapy : Elizabeth Casson trust <https://elizabethcasson.org.uk/support-development/leadership-programme/> (only OTs can apply)

Royal College of Podiatrists <https://rcpod.org.uk/> (members only zone)

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapy The RSLT provide lots of useful information on different aspect of leadership –open access

<https://www.rcslt.org/learning/leadership-resources/>

Society of Radiographers The leadership and mentorship programmes are closely linked and also includes a leadership elective for students for 5 / 6 weeks. (FORRM, PLMS). SoR members only can apply <https://www.sor.org/learning-advice/career-development/developing-tomorrows-leaders>

Education Institutions, Employer schemes and Charities

Education Institutions and Employers often have their own mentoring schemes, its a good idea to check opportunities that exist close to you and organisations that operate within your fields of interest.