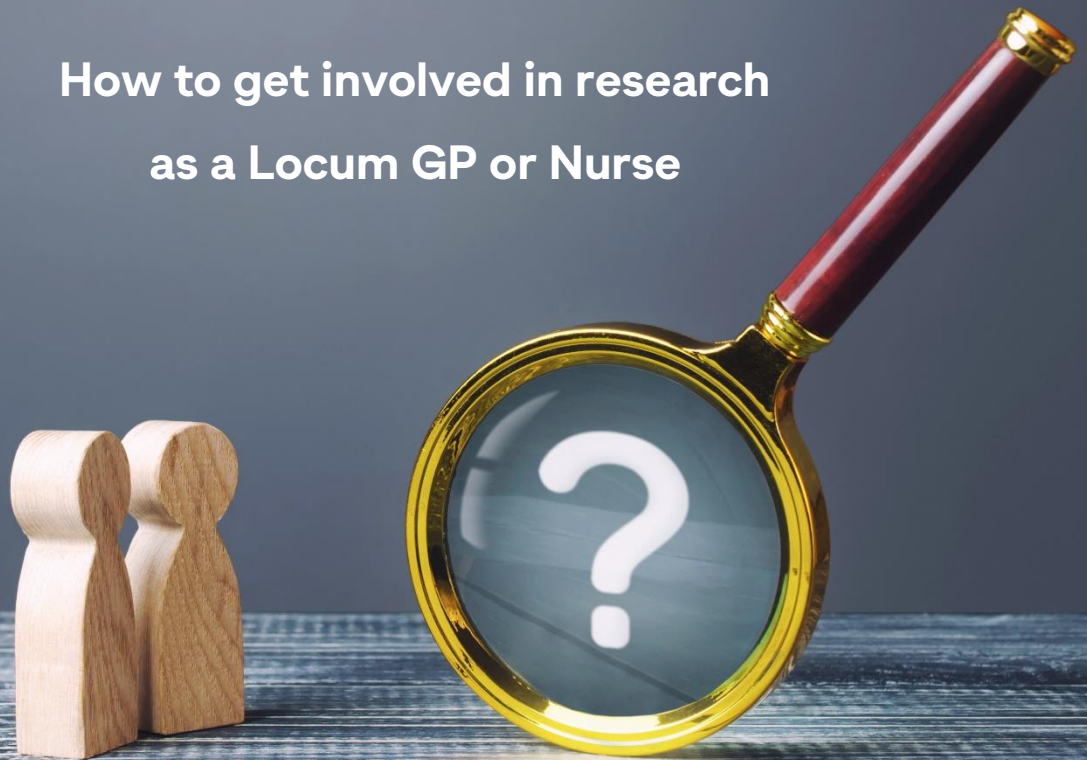




NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
ALLIANCE TRAINING HUB

How to get involved in research as a Locum GP or Nurse



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Introduction

Research in General Practice can be very rewarding and might be something you would like to consider as part of a portfolio career. Getting involved in these studies can be a great way to maintain interest and enthusiasm whilst giving yourself a break from day-to-day clinical work.

The research described here is not about being an academic GP or Nurse who designs studies. This is about delivering pre-designed studies within Practices.

However, it may not be obvious how you might be able to get involved. These are some ideas on steps you can take.

Step 1 – Getting the required training done

To undertake any research in General Practice you will need to have [Good Clinical Practice \(GCP\) training](#) under your belt. This training is free e-learning from the NIHR (research arm of the NHS) and takes 3-4 hours. The certificate lasts for 2 years at which point you can do a 1-hour refresher.

Step 2 – Aligning yourself to a friendly Practice(s)

Any finances that research activity generates must be funnelled through a Practice, rather than an individual. To ensure you get recompense for your time you will need to be 'on the books' of at least one Practice. You do not have to limit yourself to just the one if you are happy to do multiple studies across multiple Practices as your time allows.

There are benefits to Practices willing to take part in research, but they may not have capacity to do so without your help. The evidence shows that 95% of patients who have taken part in research would do so again:

- They enjoy feeling they are helping improve the NHS with cutting edge techniques
- They report feeling a better relationship with their Practice and
- They sometimes feel in better control of any condition they may have as a result of being in a related study

The CQC recognise the importance of research in Practices.

Step 3 – Sorting the finances

The finances take 2 forms:

1. Service Support Costs (SSCs)

This is financial recompense for the time taken to identify, screen and invite patients to take part in a study and will broadly reflect a break-even for your time to do this (a few tens of £, up to around £250 or so per study).

2. The Research Site Initiative (RSI) scheme

This is a framework for the participation in research by Practices in the East Midlands. There are 4 levels which represent increasing commitment but for which Practices can apply for increased amounts of funding. So for example at Level 1, the entry level, you will receive £3,000 funding and are expected to undertake 3 studies in the year. At Level 4, by contrast, you can apply for up to £25,000 and are expected to undertake 12 studies. This funding is intended to enable practices to create an infrastructure to undertake research and represents money that can pay for staff time and training, attending meetings, accreditation schemes etc. as the contract / agreement for Level 1 stipulates. Sign up is once a year in February (details from the [NIHR CRN East Midlands Research Site Initiative \(RSI\) Scheme](#)).

You can decide with your friendly Practice how you wish to allocate the funding. If you are the one doing all the work (which is entirely possible), you could keep all the SSCs yourself if the Practice is happy to just pass them on to you. If the Practice is willing to sign up for RSI Level 1 you could come to an arrangement over how the £3,000 is allocated. There is an argument that if you undertake all the work in the Practice, you could keep all of this yourself, but you may wish to top slice some to recompense the Practice for their willingness to allow you to get involved. Or if you do have some admin or other clinical support from them, they can keep an element for this.

Step 4 – Deciding what studies you want to undertake

There are 4 types of study:

1. Promoting

- Posters, social media posts, texts to patients etc.
- To advertise a study direct to patients
- All material is provided by the study teams

2. Survey

- The views / experiences of staff are collected for the study team
- Online surveys
- Interviews
- Sometimes attracts small payment e.g. £80 voucher

3. PIC (Patient Identification Centre)

- The study has defined inclusion / exclusion criteria
- The GP Practice / Primary Care Network (PCN) runs a search to identify suitable patients that fit the criteria
- The study team provides letters and the Practice sends invitation letters out to the identified patients
- Then patients interested respond direct to the study team
- Attracts SSCs

4. Recruiting

- As above but the patients are consented to join the study by the GP Practice
- The Practice may be involved in undertaking an intervention e.g. recording blood pressure, taking blood samples, prescribing
- A research Nurse or similar can be provided by the study team or the direct delivery team, to come to the Practice / PCN if needed
- Attracts SSCs and sometimes additional research activity costs

Step 5 – Support

You are not alone! You have support from:

- The local Clinical Research Network (CRN) who will be the ones sending studies your way and are available to help you if you have any issues
- Any local Level 3 or 4 Practice who is committed to helping any Level 1 and 2 Practices
- Local Research Champions employed by the CRN or ICS. In Notts:
 - jane.coleman6@nhs.net
 - ed.longridge@nhs.net

Step 6 – Making the leap!

What are you waiting for? Follow the above and you will be able to start your career in research!

Good luck!