small group research in the east of england: a novel approach to palliative medicine research training

Chloe Chin, Sarah Grove, Sarah Treaddell, Stephen Barclay, Anna Spathis. University of Cambridge, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Arthur Rank Hospice, Garden House Hospice, Sue Ryder Thorpe Hall Hospice

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Background Research is essential to advance the evidence base of Palliative Medicine. Few clinical trainees have the opportunity to become involved in research studies or to receive research training, which hampers trainees’ ability to attain research competencies. Attending research courses may improve knowledge about research but are no substitute for participating in a study. Rotation of trainees also hinders completion of projects once started.

Aim To improve clinical trainee involvement in research to facilitate achievement of research competencies.

Development of novel approach A UK-wide survey of research training was undertaken. It found that over 75% of regions had no regular research training available. Only one region had a research training programme available for all Palliative Medicine trainees.

A programme was devised whereby East of England trainees were organised pragmatically by job location into a small research groups. Four out of twelve monthly study days were dedicated to research projects and training. Two clinical academic Palliative Medicine consultants provided supervision and met with all project groups twice yearly for advice and guidance.

Results Year one, April 2014/2015 22 Patients developed pressure ulcers with 10 Pressure Ulcers reported as AVOIDABLE.

Year Two, April 2015/2016 23 Patients developed pressure ulcers but there was a huge reduction in AVOIDABLE pressure ulcers with only 2 reported.

Year Three, April 2016/2017 15 patients developed pressure ulcers but only 2 AVOIDABLE pressure ulcer reported.

Conclusion In making these key improvements there have been a significant reduction in hospice acquired pressure ulcers and remarkably the reduction in AVOIDABLE pressure Ulcers. The future hope for the hospice is to continue our best practice in minimising acquired pressure ulcers and abolish AVOIDABLE pressure ulcers.