



RaCES

Rapid Conversion Evidence
Summaries project

CASE STUDY: THE RAPID CONVERSION OF EVIDENCE SUMMARIES (RACES) PROGRAMME: BUILDING RESEARCH CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY, DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE, INFORMING PRACTICE, AND DEVELOPING RESEARCH COMMUNITIES.

ARC NWC Theme: Methodological Innovation, Development, Adaptation & Support Theme (MIDAS)
Project: RaCES

KEY AIMS

1. Respond to health and social care professionals' need for research evidence
2. Increase health and social care professionals' skills in interpreting and applying findings from evidence syntheses into practice
3. Disseminate findings within the care professional's organisation, professional and academic networks, the wider ARC NWC members and public
4. Develop a network of RaCES professional groups across the ARC NWC members to support the production of RaCES and implementation of findings.

BACKGROUND

Decision-makers, including health and social care professionals (HSCP) and the public, require high quality up-to-date evidence to address questions on health and social care. Challenges occur if research skills are lacking. The RaCES programme addresses these challenges through provision of an academically supported programme offering training, mentoring and feedback to produce evidence summaries of relevant systematic reviews. The programme is facilitated using Microsoft Teams, including online guidance, a designated lead and is conducted via meetings or a workshop format. Participants develop their ability to understand, critically appraise, and interpret systematic review evidence in addition to producing a publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Support is also available for knowledge exchange through infographics and patient leaflets, with the support of public advisors. HSCPs have benefitted from the development of research skills, networking and publication. In projects where implementation has occurred, services and patients are benefiting from evidence-based changes to practice.

IMPACT DETAILS

The RaCES programme raises awareness of the importance of research in service provision, developing (i) people's skills in critically appraising, interpreting and implementing findings; (ii) knowledge exchange; and, (iii) developing networks of communities.

Increasing research capability and capacity: ARC NWC has enabled the RaCES programme to foster collaborative partnerships between members from NHS Trusts, Primary Care, Local Authorities, the Voluntary, Care, Faith and Social Enterprise sector (VCFSE), Universities, Innovation agencies and the public. Over 50 members have produced RaCES, gaining an understanding of evidence synthesis, critical appraisal and writing for publication (>110 published in peer-reviewed journals). These have led to staff promotions, fellowship applications and further research opportunities.





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NHS Priority Area: TBC

IMPACT CONTINUED

For example, a health professional who completed three RaCES developed a RaCES journal club with colleagues, applied for an NIHR Research Fellowship, and started a new role as an NIHR senior research leader to support research capacity building of nursing staff.

Twenty RaCES have been produced through internships, supported by research and implementation training. An example of impact from an internship is a RaCES that identified the risk factors for dysphagia, with frailty considered as significant. As a result of the findings, the Speech and Language Therapist intern conducted a Trust audit of people with dysphagia who are admitted with a high frailty score. They are planning to use the frailty score as an indicator of possible dysphagia and likely onward referral.

Informing policy and practice: RaCES projects have informed practice including changes to staff training, developing patient information leaflets, and guidance for informing policy (e.g. reviewing processes, procedures and making recommendations). Two examples are provided below:

- **Pressure Sore Management:** A series of RaCES co-produced in a workshop with Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (LSCFT) informed guidance for pressure sore management. They were accompanied by a Trust wide staff survey to assess current use of guidance, allowing further initiatives to be developed.
- **Dementia in Prisons:** An Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) in a Memory Assessment Service (MAS) at LSCFT undertook a RaCES on the impact of dementia in prisons, focusing on screening and referral processes, the needs of

older prisoners with dementia and knowledge of dementia amongst prison/legal personnel.

- The RaCES was motivated by the ACPs experience of referrals from the prison service including delays and lack of necessary information. Following publication in the British Journal of Neuroscience Nursing, the ACP undertook an implementation project to expedite the dementia pathway in prisons, implementing both training and revised paperwork for prison staff to recognise dementia symptoms and refer to the memory services.

Informing further research: RaCES have helped HSCPs to explore evidence syntheses in response to their need for evidence, whilst highlighting gaps requiring further research. During Covid-19, the use of intensive care units (ICUs) led to concerns about patients developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A RaCES was produced assessing the effectiveness of virtual reality (VR) in preventing and managing PTSD associated with ICUs. It highlighted an evidence gap, leading to a collaboration with a digital therapy platform to produce further research and development of a prototype VR.

NEXT STEPS

Recent RaCES workshops have involved new collaborations with the VCFSE sector and social care. Expected impacts from these workshops include:

- providing an evidence base to support the continued funding of Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinators for patients with respiratory disease;
- the development of an information leaflet with a drug rehabilitation service to inform the common obstacles and facilitators for peer involvement in harm reduction initiatives.



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NEXT STEPS CONTINUED

Developing the RaCES network further and ensuring its long-term future necessitates the establishment of RaCES communities, formed around existing and new organisational networks. The North West Ambulance Service has established a sustainable RaCES group where a commissioned programme is undertaken through the Journal of Paramedic Practice. This has led to five publications so far. A similar scheme was facilitated with a cardiac team at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust through the British Journal of Cardiac Nursing. Plans are in place to develop a similar group at Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust and Liverpool Women's Hospital. Developing self-sustaining RaCES groups at partner organisations will allow the programme to build further research capacity and capability, increasing the potential for impact within constrained resources.

With the necessity to provide cost-effective services, the RaCES programme works alongside the Rapid Conversion of Economic Evaluations (RaCEEs) programme. The RaCEEs programme enables ARCNWC members to develop an understanding of, and critically appraise, health economic evaluations that are used to develop guidance and guidelines concerning different health technologies.

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