

## Comment



## Clare Meachin

### ‘Clinical research nurses have a vital role in high-quality care’

**A**s a nurse of 36 years, and for the last 17 years working in clinical research, I feel passionate about the impact that nursing and clinical research nursing make on the lives of our patients.

Working in the NHS we face relentless clinical demands that present a challenge in communicating the benefit of and need for research to our patients and colleagues.

To that end a new strategy for clinical research nursing has been released by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Clinical Research Network, outlining a vision for the future of clinical research nurses (CRNs), and highlighting their economic impact for the next five years.

CRNs have a vital role in the delivery of high-quality clinical research care, and this new strategy ensures that, as a professional group, we continue to meet the changing expectations of the society we serve. Nurses continue to be at the forefront of promoting and ensuring high-quality care as did Florence Nightingale. She is often considered a pioneering nurse researcher and she committed much of her life to understanding and using statistics to influence others.

The NIHR has a mission to “provide a health research system in which the NHS supports outstanding individuals working in world-class facilities, conducting leading research focused on the needs of patients and the public”. To make this happen, we need to attract, develop and retain the best research professionals and the best leaders.

The new clinical research nursing strategy brings an inspiring focus to the very values I strive for and believe in. CRNs need to become a group of dynamic nurses

and leaders who are approachable and open, clinically knowledgeable and competent, positive role models and empowered decision makers.

The strategy sets out four strategic goals:

- Creating a clinical research culture that is both patient- and public-focused;
- Promoting innovation in research delivery practice to include the use of digital technologies to improve data quality and find new ways of using resources;
- Improving awareness and understanding of the specialty of clinical research nursing and its contribution and impact;
- Developing leaders to share best clinical research nursing practice locally, nationally and internationally.

By improving the awareness of the specialty of CRNs we become ambassadors in our teams, making it obvious that there is a relationship between high-quality research care and high-quality research outcomes. As trailblazers of new technologies we can be role models in digital initiatives. The strategy will develop a culture of research and innovation.

It will make a difference to patients and the public by enabling research to take place in locations convenient to them. It will empower CRNs to be visible leaders, forge new paths and improve the quality of clinical care. **NT**

- The new NIHR clinical research nursing strategy can be viewed at: [Bit.ly/NIHRCRNurseStrategy](http://Bit.ly/NIHRCRNurseStrategy)

*Clare Meachin is deputy chief operating officer for the NIHR South London Clinical Research Network*

*“By improving the awareness of the specialty of CRNs we become ambassadors”*

## CPD activities



### Journal club

Frailty and heart failure often coexist in patients. How to manage and plan their complex care p28



### Self-assessment

How to assess pain in trauma and orthopaedic settings. Test your knowledge, p18

## Archive pick



### A report has found that newly qualified mental health nurses are not being adequately trained

### and that mentoring and clinical supervision are undervalued.

The report by the Centre for Mental Health recognises the role of mentors and reflects on how difficult that role can be in busy healthcare environments ([www.nursingtimes.net/MHfuture](http://www.nursingtimes.net/MHfuture)).

Our online archive contains a number of relevant articles. One explains how a trust recognised the pressures of mentoring and introduced a support team to assist with and improve the mentorship of students ([nursingtimes.net/MentorSupport](http://nursingtimes.net/MentorSupport)).

A second article explains how a community care provider developed a clinical supervision system that suited a range of work settings and learning styles ([nursingtimes.net/ClinicalSupervision](http://nursingtimes.net/ClinicalSupervision)).

Being newly qualified is a challenge as you have increased responsibility but still feel new to the job. In our archive we report on a preceptorship group programme that has helped newly qualified nurses in a mental health trust to develop and grow. Supporting them in making the transition helped them become competent and confident ([nursingtimes.net/Preceptorship](http://nursingtimes.net/Preceptorship)).

### Don't miss out!

Make the most of your *Nursing Times* subscription by using our extensive online clinical archive to keep your practice knowledge up to date. Visit the archive at: [nursingtimes.net/clinical-archive](http://nursingtimes.net/clinical-archive)