

RENURSE CONSORTIUM - OPTIMIZING NURSING RESEARCH

Background

Scientific research in hospitals conducted by nurses and nurse researchers gained increasingly more attention in the last decade. Strengthening evidence-based nursing care not only positively influences the outcomes for patients, but also the nurses' work experience, as it increases control over their own practice [1][2]. Conducting scientific research stimulates the interdisciplinary collaboration with doctors and paramedics, and generates scientific output by means of publications and presentations. To provide an academic nursing infrastructure, a professor of Nursing Science, senior nurse researchers, managers and board members of ten Dutch Top Clinical Training Hospitals formed the RENurse consortium in 2017 [3].

Aim(s)

The RENurse consortium aims to improve the quality of nursing care in hospitals by developing, disseminating and applying state-of-the-art nursing knowledge.

Methods

The RENurse consortium members collaborate in 1) teaching research skills to junior nurse researchers, 2) writing research grants, 3) conducting research in the participating hospitals, and 4) publishing results in scientific journals and presenting at conferences. The research program includes themes related to nursing outcomes, professional development and organization of care. Typically, the nurse researchers bring forward the themes that need investigation by writing a proposal. Following the approval of the senior researchers, they conduct the research in the participating hospitals, often in collaboration with peer nurse researchers within the consortium (and always under supervision of the senior nurse researchers).

Results

Since its inception in 2017, the RENurse consortium has expanded to fourteen hospitals. Thus far, the nurse researchers conducted nine research projects, of which four are still ongoing. Topics include 'nurses' knowledge regarding older patients', 'influencing factors of continuing professional development over a nursing career', and 'self-efficacy in Evidence Based Practice'. The results have been disseminated by means of seven publications in peer reviewed national and international journals. In addition, the researchers have presented their research at various conferences, both national and international. The RENurse consortium includes two PhD students. Recently two junior researchers were successful in obtaining grants.

Discussion

The RENurse consortium has proven to be a successful collaboration. However, the success is linked to the availability of senior researchers. Junior researchers take an average of 4-6 years to write a grant application or publication independently. To access more senior research capacity, it is important to collaborate with multiple universities and colleges. Also, hospital administrators can invest in these collaborations by funding professorships and chairs within which junior researchers and nurses can develop research skills.

Implications and future perspectives

In the coming years, the RENurse consortium is committed to further building the knowledge and academic infrastructure in the Dutch Top Clinical Teaching hospitals. The challenges they face in the coming years are staff shortages, rising demand for care and cuts in care budgets. Hence, together, the consortium members have conducted a knowledge agenda 2023-2026:

1. Care well for nurses (including inclusiveness, training, career opportunities, retention, positioning nurse scientist)
2. Care well for patients (including strengthening self-reliance, self-management and patient control)
3. Take good care of the (work) environment (including autonomy, interdisciplinary collaboration, green and climate-neutral care).

References

1. Hoegen, P et al, 19: no 21 , 2022.
2. Hakvoort. L et al, 65, 2022.
3. Havoort, L et al, 1: 4-5, 2019