

Clinical Research Nurse Outreach Service

Delivering Results

Faye Forsyth and Jo Piper, NIHR Clinical Research Facility Satellite, Cambridge

Background

Outreach services have grown substantially in acute healthcare environments; critical care outreach, major trauma outreach, oncology outreach are just a few of the extended services now commonly available. Clinical research nurse outreach services however, are not so ubiquitous. A review of current literature does not yield any evidence for operational clinical research nurse outreach services within acute hospital settings. This poster details the innovative Clinical Research Nurse Outreach Service at the NIHR Clinical Research Facility Satellite. The first study supported by the initiative will be outlined before the results of the support are detailed and conclusions presented.

Aim of the poster

- To detail an innovative outreach initiative in a clinical research setting
- To showcase the outreach contribution of the research nurses of the NIHR Clinical Research Facility Satellite, Cambridge
- To promote the ensuing benefits of the outreach service



Methodology

Clinical research nurse outreach support began following a request from a team of researchers who were struggling to recruit to their head injury study, known as DETECT. The DETECT study is a longitudinal, observation study that aims to characterise the clinical and imaging features of mild and moderate traumatic brain injury (TBI) with the objective of improving treatment and outcome. TBI is the commonest cause of death and morbidity in those under 40 years of age, and in the UK alone, over 1 million people present to the emergency department (ED) with head injuries every year.

Three cohorts of participants were being recruited and followed up over time: mild to moderate TBI, non-TBI trauma controls and healthy volunteers, recruited from different locations within Addenbrooke's hospital. Despite exploring several strategies over a 17 month period, recruitment rates of mild TBI subjects in the ED remained low. NIHR CRF Satellite nurses provided nurse support on an outreach basis; attending the ED hourly to screen, recruit and collect data from eligible participants with mild traumatic brain injury (TBI) and non-TBI trauma controls. The service was extremely successful in a significantly shorter timeframe, as is demonstrated in the graph below.

Outcomes

Benefits of outreach for the DETECT research team:

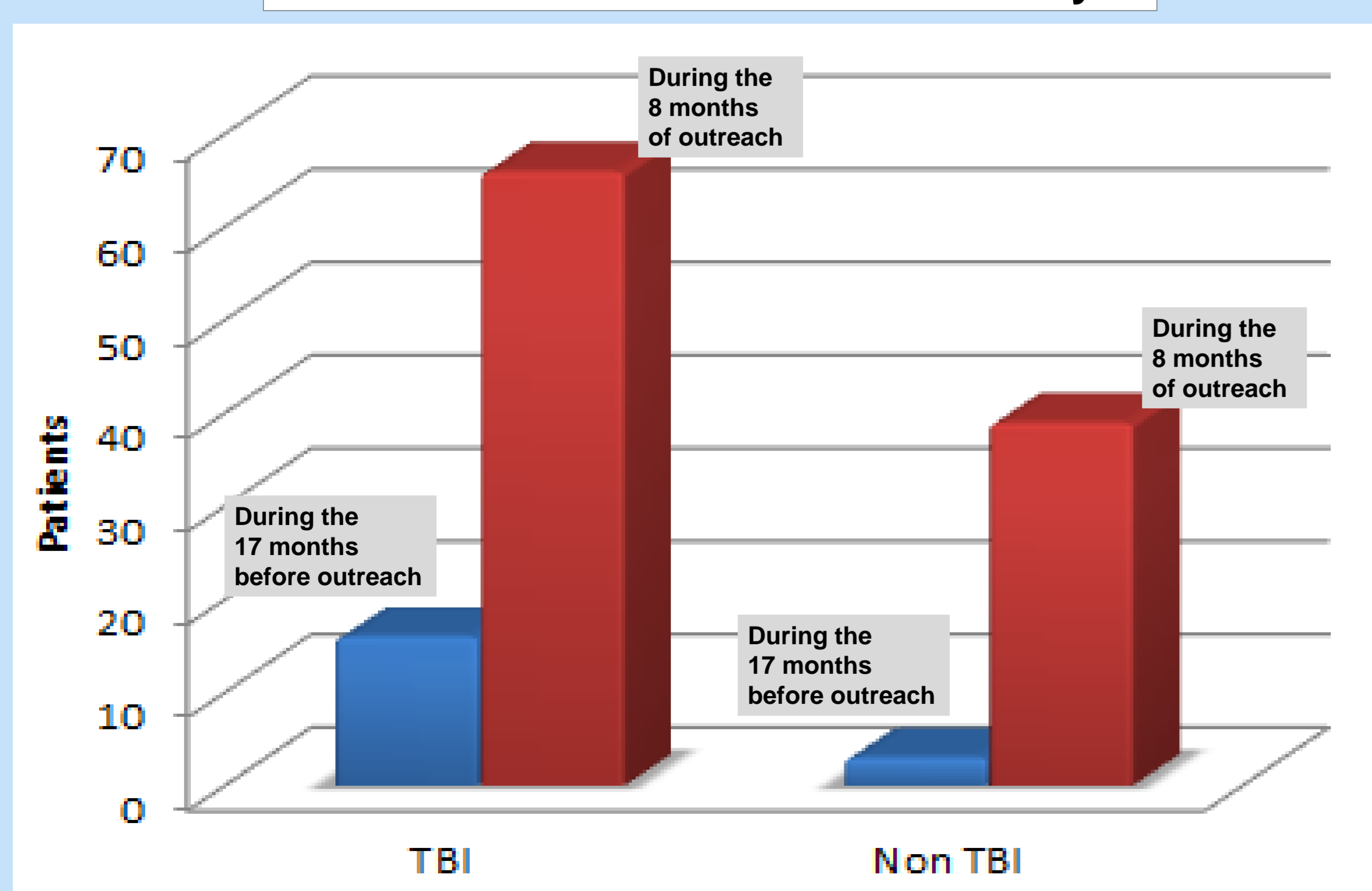
- 66 people with mild TBI and 39 non-TBI trauma controls recruited in only 8 months (see graph below)
- Significant boost to the number of subjects enrolled within a very short time frame
- Flexible service ensured a more representative sample recruited

The generic benefits of research nurse outreach include:

- Fast and effective delivery of results
- Smoother facilitation of research in areas with little or no research infrastructure
- Significant cost and time saving – no need to hire and train new staff

The ability of this service to address an unmet need, flexible clinical research nurse support, was quickly identified and actively promoted as an extended capability. The NIHR CRF Satellite nurses are now actively supporting four studies in an outreach capacity with more in set-up.

Patient numbers recruited into study



Evaluation and conclusions

Study teams cannot always facilitate the volume of participants required and manage the other essential components associated with running a research study. A clinical research outreach service can meet this need by providing highly skilled research nurses to assist in whatever setting is necessary.

The CRF Satellite team continues to receive requests for outreach support, this demand evidences the need for this service.

Contact: Jo Piper, Nurse Manager, NIHR Clinical Investigation Ward
Addenbrooke's Clinical Research Centre, Cambridge University
Hospitals Foundation Trust, Cambridge, UK
Jo.piper@addenbrookes.nhs.uk Tel. 01223 348986