

Registered Nurses (Adult Branch) caring for children in clinical research studies requires well thought-out and particular preparation

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Background

When facilitating paediatric research it is paramount that age-appropriate care is given by suitable staff who are aware of the biological, emotional, ethical and legal issues arising in the care of paediatric participants and their families.

The NIHR/WellcomeTrust Clinical Research Facility (CRF) in Cambridge is designed to host and facilitate adult as well as paediatric research studies. 38 of the currently 115 active studies undertaken on the CRF involve participants who are children and/or young adolescents. It has been difficult to recruit paediatric trained nurses into the CRF team; with the result that currently only 2 out of a team of 18 nurses are registered 'Paediatric Nurses'.

One might argue that paediatric studies should only take place in paediatric research units. Nevertheless, there is a case for some clinical research units to accommodate adult and paediatric studies, (especially where whole families need to be studied) provided staff are appropriately trained and aware of their responsibilities and boundaries that are particular to children in health care and clinical research.

Aim

- To provide an overview of the strategies and activities the CRF paediatric-trained workforce (in conjunction with the leadership team) plan, implement and revise to ensure non-paediatric nurses (where appropriate) are trained and guided to provide safe, well-grounded and ethical care to paediatric participants
- To encourage dialogue and collaboration between adult and paediatric research nurses about best practice in paediatric research nursing



A paediatric nurse explains the content of the paediatric resuscitation trolley



Using a doll to simulate how best to hold a baby when needing to look into his/her ear



The Cambridge CRF strategies to prepare and equip 'Adult Nurses' for the care of children in clinical research

- When recruiting adult nurses, the expected paediatric component of the job role is made explicit
- Cambridge CRF paediatric nurses are the key resource in carrying out **paediatric induction** for new starters:
 - Familiarising adult nurses with content and use of paediatric resuscitation trolley
 - Undertaking teaching sessions focusing on anatomical, physiological, emotional and mental differences between adult and paediatric participants
 - Teaching, including scenario training, of the ethical and legal issues pertinent to research with children and adolescents.
 - Teaching and familiarising staff with particularities of equipment for use with children, e.g. when using equipment to take blood pressure
 - Teaching on creating a safe clinical environment for children in a mixed adult/child set-up, e.g. moving sharps containers out of reach
 - Teaching use and completion of documentation specific to the care of paediatric participants
- All adult nurses receive annual paediatric life support training as well as triennial training in *Safeguarding Children* at level 2
- Introduction of paediatric competency documentation tailored to the specifics of research participants
- Introduction of a paediatric handbook for CRF staff

Continuing learning

- Ongoing mandatory in-house up-dates in paediatric awareness
- Information board in the staff room specifically for paediatric information and up-dates
- Paediatric nurse bleep-holder back-up in Trust
- Possibility to observe paediatric nurses in outpatient clinics/ daycare unit
- Trialled UKCRF Network adopted governance tool: Working with children without paediatric registration (Casey 2010) and adjusted it to local needs

Discussion

It is important to regularly and critically review the effectiveness and appropriateness of these various interventions. We are looking out for evidence, comments and suggestions to further improve our service for the children, adolescents, their families and the paediatric research teams.



Key references

- Medical Research Council (2004, revised 2007) *MRC Ethics Guide – Medical research involving children*, MRC
- Royal College of Nursing (2011) *Health care service standards in caring for neonates, children and young people*, RCN, London
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (2012) *Advice for Nurses and Midwives working with young people*, NMC

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