

SWARM: a successful model of trainee led research and audit

Background

The South West Anaesthesia Research Matrix (SWARM) was founded in 2012 by a group of anaesthetic trainees in response to concerns that there were few opportunities for involvement in academic research activity within the region.¹ The aims were to establish a regional network of anaesthetic trainees to conduct multi-centre research and audit and allow trainees to continue their involvement as they migrate around the deanery.

Since its establishment the group has grown to include over 200 trainee members and 60 students, representing all six acute hospital trusts within the South West School of Anaesthesia.²

Methods

In addition to the committee of nine members, each project has a regional lead delivering the project with a local trust lead and investigators at each site.

Projects are published under the SWARM name, emphasising the importance of teamwork whilst still recognising individual contributions, referenced at www.ukswarm.com.²

Results

The effectiveness of SWARM was proven by recruitment to LAS VEGAS, an international multicentre study, where SWARM recruited 28% of the UK total including one SWARM site as third highest recruiting centre worldwide³.

Concurrently SWARM has developed seven home-grown projects with results being used for departmental clinical governance and service improvement.

To date SWARM has produced six prospective projects and contributed to two national studies^{3,4}, published a peer reviewed paper⁵, seven abstracts² and delivered numerous presentations at local, regional and national meetings. CuPPA, the first ever anaesthetic trainee collaborative led RCT awarded an NIAA research grant is due to start recruiting patients in 2015.

Key messages

Establishing a trainee collaborative has led to a number of high quality projects in a short timeframe and has improved trainees exposure to research activity⁷. The success of SWARM has led to development of similar trainee research collaboratives using this successful, innovative model⁸.

References

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