

Title: Building the foundations for impact: Establishing a practice-based research network of physiotherapists and collaborative research question design.

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Background: The disconnect between research and clinical practice hampers behavioural research impact. There is a lack of information to guide researchers and clinicians on how to meaningfully collaborate.

Objective: To describe key learnings from establishing a practice-based research network of physiotherapists in the Hunter region of Australia.

Methods: We used program logic and theory of change to design establishment activities. We did a formative evaluation. We held a problem mapping workshop with local stakeholders and did an online poll to prioritise research areas. We generated research questions through 3 steps: i) individual interviews to explore clinicians' perspectives of research priorities; ii) review literature and propose initial questions; iii) propose and reach consensus on finalised questions.

Results: *Key lessons:* a) We generated a vision and mission statement from formative evaluation data, which was key to harness physiotherapists' motivations; b) we ensured network activities were pragmatic and 'time crunched'; c) we established a joint governance group to ensure meaningful collaboration; d) our research question development process minimised information loss in tackling the network's 3 priority research areas (i) preventing lifestyle risk factors; ii) improving care standards; iii) understanding patient's perceptions of pain).

Conclusion: This description of network establishment is a resource for those who want to optimise behavioural trial impact through collaboration. More work is needed to adapt our learnings and models to other contexts.