





Want to do research in general practice? *Your practice manager can help*

A Wood^{1,2}, J Hocking², E Smyth², A Vaisey², M Temple-Smith¹

¹Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne
²Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne



Aims

Presentation of the results of a qualitative study of practice managers (PM) that aims:

To determine the role of the PM in the uptake and implementation of a research intervention in Australian general practice

- Conducted as a sub-study of a clinical trial of a chlamydia testing intervention in general practice – ACCEPt¹

1. Hocking JS, et al. 12 PPT 09010: Australian Chlamydia Control Effectiveness Pilot (ACCEPt): a cluster randomised controlled trial of chlamydia testing in general practice. Lancet protocol. May 2013.



The role of PMs in ACCEPt

Australia Chlamydia Control Effectiveness Pilot
 Randomised controlled trial of a chlamydia testing intervention

PM's tasks managing ACCEPt

- Keep the research on agenda
- Data collection (IT)
- Arrange meetings
- Invoicing for incentive payments
- Recruit new GPs
- Set up & maintain recall system
- Liaise with Research Officers





Methods- Recruitment

PMs from rural practices (70) in intervention group of ACCEPt

- 23 PM recruited – stratified by size of practice (no. of GPs)
- Recruited by direct contact – email
- Semi-structured interviews
- Telephone, recorded, transcribed verbatim
- Thematic analysis



Methods- Interview schedule

- Demographics (gender, age, qualifications, research training & experience)
- Role of PM
- How to contact general practice
- PMs and research
- Role in ACCEPt
- How to work with general practice



Results- PM interviews

- 23 Interviews (19 F, 4 M)
- Interviews conducted in 2014
- PMs from rural practices in NSW, VIC, QLD & SA
- Age 45-59 yrs
- Time as PM - 12 yrs
- Qualifications:
 - 3 nursing, 13 business, 7 clerical
 - 7 diploma of practice management
- 21/23 no research training or experience



Results- Practice managers (PM)

- What PMs do

"The day to day **management of the business**...human resources, employment, financial reporting, keeping up with all the **legislation in the medical environment**. It is **corporate governance**...a **higher end executive position** in private business."
PM 2



Results- Types of PMs

2 types of PMs

- **Practice manager** - coordinates all aspects of the practice activities
 - Advisers GP partners on business matters
- **Office manager**- coordinates office activities
 - Don't make strategic management and business decisions

Gatekeepers has authority to block access to GPs

Facilitators will create access to GPs



Results- Contacting general practice

- Gatekeeper

"It's no good going straight to the **clinician** and by-passing the **PM**...involve the **PM**." PM 3

"**The PM is pivotal** to this sort of thing and to **getting access to clinics**...I will be honest the **PM is the gate keeper**. And this (**ACCEPT**) wouldn't have got to where it got to if I hadn't sort of thought...hey this is a good idea." PM 12



Results- Contacting general practice

- Facilitator

"I am the **go-between**...getting access to GPs, getting access to data." PM 10

"I would be **your first point of call**... contact me...to organise the meetings with the GPs, get the information to the GPs and try and **work out the nuts and bolts of it**...our role is to implement it into the clinic." PM 8



Results- PM role in research

- 22/23 PMs believe their role is to manage research in the practice

"You need that **background planning** and I think that is an important role for the **PM**." PM 13

"**Implementing the research** ...and also making sure that it is **done correctly and on time**." PM 20

"If it hasn't got the **PM on board** you are really not going to get anything done...**PMs can run with these programs**."
PM 1



Results- PM role in ACCEPt

• PMs as “practice champions”

“Instigating and implementing and controlling...because the doctors just don't have time to do it...other staff, it is not in their job description.” PM 15

“The PM creates enthusiasm...if the PM was not interested...it is not going to be driven...it has got to have someone driving it.” PM 1

“I take a **leadership role**... I have got a clinical background and a strong rapport with all GPs ...I think that enables me to **easily lead or keep people on focus, on track and enthused.**” PM 17



Results- working with general practice

PMs' suggestions:

- “Build a rapport with the practice”
- “Keep the practice informed”
- “Face to face...meet with all our GPs”
- “Feedback is essential”
- “Keep using PMs, they are the centre of functioning of a practice”



Discussion

What has ACCEPt achieved working with PMs and general practice?

- 150 general practices across 4 Australian states in trial
- Over 90% of practices agreed to participate and only one has withdrawn
- Recruited 1200 GPs & 200 PNs since 2010
- 2 prevalence surveys
 - RAs working up to 4 weeks in each practice
 - Recruit 4000 young patients each prevalence survey
- 3-4 year intervention (70 practices)
 - Chlamydia testing rate nearly doubled
 - Education with GPs, PNs and medical students
 - Increase chlamydia knowledge and awareness
- Re-recruited the practices into a new trial



Discussion

- Identified role for PMs in research
- First point of contact
- Feedback research to GPs and PMs
- Invest time working with the PM
 - Build a relationship
 - Explain the research
 - Train the PM to manage your research



Recognise the nuances of each practice



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