Multi-professional Advanced Practice Research Toolkit

Version 3 April 2024







Background

This third version of the Multi-professional Advanced Practice Research Toolkit (Gaskin 2023) aims to unify the content of the toolkit with the Multi-professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework (NHSE 2024) and the multi-professional framework for Advanced Clinical Practice (HEE 2017).

The Advanced Practice Research toolkit was originally developed in 2023, in 2023, to enable Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) teams and individuals at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GHNHSFT), to plan activity within the research pillar of the ACP role using the research capabilities in the multi-professional framework for Advanced Clinical Practice (HEE 2017):

- **4.1** Critically engage in research activity, adhering to good research practice guidance, so that evidence-based strategies are developed and applied to enhance quality, safety, productivity, and value for money.
- **4.2** Evaluate and audit own and others' clinical practice, selecting and applying valid, reliable methods, then acting on the findings.
- **4.3** Critically appraise and synthesise the outcome of relevant research, evaluation, and audit, using the results to underpin own practice and to inform that of others.
- **4.4** Take a critical approach to identify gaps in the evidence base and its application to practice, alerting appropriate individuals and organisations to these and how they might be addressed in a safe and pragmatic way.
- **4.5** Actively identify potential need for further research to strengthen evidence for best practice. This may involve acting as an educator, leader, innovator, and contributor to research activity and/or seeking out and applying for research funding.
- **4.6** Develop and implement robust governance systems and systematic documentation processes, keeping the need for modifications under critical review.
- **4.7** Disseminate best practice research findings and quality improvement projects through appropriate media and fora (e.g. presentations and peer review research publications).
- **4.8** Facilitate collaborative links between clinical practice and research through proactive engagement, networking with academic, clinical and other active researchers.

Anecdotally this pillar was perceived as more difficult to achieve within the Advanced Practice (AP) role due to operational barriers. A common theme arising from communication with APs at GHNHSFT was 'not knowing how or where to get started', which informed development of the toolkit. The objectives of the AP research toolkit were to support advanced practitioners to 'get started' with the research pillar; to encourage advanced practice teams to consider their research priorities; to enable individual and team research objective setting and to aid appraisal discussions. The toolkit was disseminated to GHNHSFT APs through shared leadership councils and presented at the One Gloucestershire AP Summit (22nd March 2023). The concept gained interest via a blog in Evidence Based Nursing, June 2023 (Gaskin 2023) and the National AP Conference, November 2023. Requests to implement the toolkit were subsequently received from individual APs and organisations across England and Scotland, demonstrating its accessibility, usability and relevance at practice and organisational level. As a result, the toolkit has been presented at numerous local and regional AP events, research webinars and Trust research meetings.

In February 2024, the NHS England Multi-professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework was launched to 'facilitate and accelerate the development of practice-based research capabilities, capacity and career pathways across the health and care professions' (NHSE 2024, p.5). The framework aligns with other national regulatory requirements, strategies, and frameworks (appendix 1, NHSE 2024), to outline the common core research capabilities expected across the health and care professions **in practice** at four levels (entry, enhanced, advanced and consultant levels of practice). The framework organises capabilities within eight non-hierarchical inter-related domains:

- 1. Research related career growth.
- 2. Planning and designing research.
- 3. Delivering research.
- 4. Knowledge mobilisation and research implementation.
- 5. Networking and collaborating in research.
- 6. Supporting research related development in others.
- 7. Leading and managing research projects and teams.
- 8. Strategic leadership in research and knowledge mobilisation.

At the advanced level of practice each domain includes a variety of capabilities (table 1), with the expectation that all advanced level practice-based health and care professionals develop these fundamental capabilities (NHSE 2024, p.15). For clarity, these new domains and capabilities have been mapped to the eight capabilities originally included in the research pillar within the multi-professional framework for advanced practice (HEE 2017) (table 2). The new framework (NHSE 2024) adds structure to the original capabilities (HEE 2017), providing greater clarity for individuals to plan their research related career development.

Table 1 Multi-professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework (adapted from NHSE, 2024, p.16-38)

Multi-professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework (2024) Domains	Advanced Level Practice Capabilities
Research related career growth.	 Identify and pursue realistic and achievable research-related career goals, giving specific thought to growing own contributions to the development and application of new knowledge Actively seek out and engage with research-related professional development opportunities, including master' level education, and other relevant credentials, certificates, or qualifications. Effectively integrate developing and maturing practice skills and expertise with developing and maturing research skills. Plan and pursue opportunities to develop and apply new knowledge to own and others' practice in structured ways that can be evaluated. Contribute to development and delivery of research projects at service level.
Planning and designing research.	 Undertake advanced information searches using a range of software, databases, resources, and techniques, recognising their individual advantages and limitations. Critically analyse the evidence base and other relevant information sources to develop and clearly articulate research questions that address the needs and priorities of practice Demonstrate understanding of a range of standard research and quality improvement methodologies and designs and their related ethical considerations. With support, design small scale research studies to address issues arising in practice using methodological and analytical approaches that appropriately consider environmental impact and sustainability. Work collaboratively with all relevant stakeholders, explicitly embracing and enabling meaningful Public and Patient Involvement / Engagement and co-production and ensuring a diverse and representative range of contributors and participants. Apply understanding of a range of analytical approaches to examine qualitative and quantitative data Make effective use of digital technologies and computing packages relevant to undertaking quality improvement or research projects and the analysis of data. Demonstrate insight and critical thinking by clearly identifying own assumptions, and by developing robust arguments that are clear, evidenced and concise.

	9. Draw on practice and research expertise to contribute constructively to processes for peer review of publications
	10. Contribute to the development and submission of research funding applications that reflect the requirements of the
	target funding body, data protection, information governance, ethical and research governance frameworks and processes.
3. Delivering research.	1. Undertake Good Clinical Practice (GCP) training and maintain its currency, effectively applying its principles to
	safeguard participants and ensure research quality.
	2. Develop, implement, or comply with local research governance processes, demonstrating ethical conduct throughout all
	aspects of own research and supporting others to do so.
	3. Apply knowledge and understanding of legal requirements of research (e.g., data protection, mental capacity,
	safeguarding and human tissue acts, etc.), demonstrating the highest regard for participant's rights and safety, and data
	integrity
	4. Demonstrate awareness of procedures for reporting concerns about research conduct when breaches of protocol are
	identified or when fraud / misconduct is suspected.
	5. Design and deliver audit, service evaluation and quality improvement activity, working with others to develop or benefit
	from their skills in these areas.
	6. Contribute to and support the delivery of research designed by others to address issues arising in practice.
	7. Contribute to the development of study documentation (e.g., participant information leaflet, consent forms, case report
	forms, data collection, etc.) and related management systems.
	8. Effectively and sensitively communicate complex information to stakeholders and participants in the context of
	conducting applied research.
	9. Critically reflecting on research, evaluation, and improvement processes, carrying learning forward to inform how projects are undertaken and managed in future
4. Knowledge mobilisation	1. Actively champion the central role of evidence-based practice, knowledge mobilisation and implementation science in
and research	service developments to improve the outcomes and experiences of individuals and communities.
implementation.	2. Demonstrate critical understanding of the latest evidence relevant to own practice and related fields, appraising and
	synthesising the outcomes of research, evaluations and audits, effectively integrating it into practice and supporting others
	to do so.
	3. Analyse the latest evidence relevant to own practice and related fields to identify any further work required to strengthen
	evidence for best practice.
	4. Effectively communicate the relevance of research findings and best practice to colleagues, advocacy groups and the
	wider community
	5. Make identifiable contributions to changes and developments in practice at service level that are informed by research
	findings.
	6. Contribute to the development of evidence-based guidelines and policy at service, organisational or national levels
	7. Develop outputs from research and quality improvement initiatives that reflect the preferred style and communication
	method of the target audience/s, working with stakeholders as required to achieve this.
	8. Disseminates findings from research and quality improvement initiatives through appropriate media and forums,
	including through publication, to optimise the sharing of knowledge and translation into practice.
	9. Proactively contribute to knowledge mobilisation practices such as in-service training, communities of practice, and
	service improvement initiatives, to optimise the timely translation of findings into practice.

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	10. Make effective use of interactive technologies to build a digital presence to support the dissemination of new evidence
5. Networking and collaborating in research.	and own research development and engagement. 1. Role model meaningful allyship, supporting less experienced colleagues from marginalised and under-represented groups in their research-related development 2. Proactively collaborate with others to develop and deliver research and quality improvement projects, simultaneously learning from them and providing the opportunity for others to learn and develop at levels appropriate to them. 3. Develop and nurture collaborative multi-disciplinary links between practice and research through networking with other practitioners, academics, university research departments / teams, clinical trials units, industry, practice-based and other researchers. 4. Actively encourage and facilitate the equitable participation of people who access services, their families and their carers and wider communities in quality improvement and research initiatives, including through networks to help inform and design projects. 5. Plan and ensure effective communication between partners, stakeholders and research teams, using communication approaches, tools and channels that meet the needs of particular audiences and individuals. 6. Proactively participate in and grow research networks to engage with colleagues, support own career development,
6. Supporting research related development in others.	respond to opportunities, and facilitate the engagement of less experienced colleagues. 1. Effectively use a range of approaches and techniques to support learning and development, showcasing up-to-date data and findings from research and service development projects. 2. Foster the development of critical appraisal skills to facilitate understanding of what good research looks like and how to implement findings effectively and safely. 3. Support, organise and promote professional development and educational events / activities to equitably build the capability of colleagues to engage in audit, service evaluation, quality improvement and research. 4. Support awareness of the availability of local and national research-related resources and opportunities amongst those with less experience. 5. Engage in peer support, mentorship and supervision of less experienced colleagues, including those undertaking academic qualifications, to support development and nurture talent. 6. Provide learners and practitioners with opportunities to experience undertaking or contributing to research. 7. Support learners and less experienced practitioners to publish, disseminate, promote and implement the outcomes / findings of their quality improvement and research projects
7. Leading and managing research projects and teams.	 Promote a culture in which practice is continuously measured, evaluated, reviewed and improved through quality improvement and research initiatives. Support colleagues to obtain, collate, measure, analyse and evaluate data through audit, service evaluation and quality improvement projects and to translate their findings into practice. Act as a service level research champion, articulating the benefits of engaging in, and with, research, motivating, encouraging, and inspiring others to do so

	 Generate and recognise viable ideas and opportunities for research and quality improvement projects and acknowledging the contribution of others, work collaboratively with more experienced colleagues to shape research questions and contribute to funding applications. Recognise relevant organisational and national policy drivers and priorities when planning and reporting on quality improvement or research activities. Effectively consider the environmental impact of research and the methods by which it can be measured. Demonstrate understanding of ethics related to applied research, advising, and guiding those with less experience accordingly Contribute to the development of competitive grant funding applications. Demonstrate awareness of research team roles and responsibilities, contributing to the development of supporting infrastructure and effective lines of communication.
Strategic leadership in research and knowledge	1. Demonstrate knowledge of advances and knowledge-gaps in own and related areas of practice and research, and how they relate to organisational and national policies and priorities.
mobilisation	Champion the role of applied health and care research to transform service design and delivery and the outcomes and experiences of individuals and communities.
	3. Demonstrate commitment to stakeholder involvement in the identification and selection of research priorities and throughout the research process.
	 4. Contribute to the development, implementation, or review of service or organisational strategic plans for research 5. Demonstrate appropriate application of regulatory and legal frameworks to applied research in practice settings. 6. Demonstrate understanding of a variety of research-related funding sources and how to access them. 7. Report to or hold membership of research-related committees or boards, internal or external to employing organisation.

Table 2 Mapping: Multi-professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework Domains 1-8 (2024) with the multi-professional framework for Advanced Clinical Practice research capabilities 4.1-4.8 (2017).

MPRCF Domain	HEE							
Domain	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8
1								
2		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
3	✓	✓		✓		✓		
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5		✓			✓			✓
6					✓			✓
7					✓			✓
8					✓			

Multi-professional Advanced Practice Research Toolkit

This toolkit provides working examples of individual and team activities and example resources and training opportunities, that indicate how the Multi-professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework (NHSE 2024) and the multi-professional research pillar capabilities (HEE 2017) can be achieved in practice.

This toolkit is divided into two sections:

Section A: the research pillar framework

This section aligns with domains 2-8 of the Multi-professional Practice-based Research Capabilities Framework (NHSE 2024) and the research pillar capabilities (HEE 2017) against suggested individual and team activities, with example resources and training opportunities.

Section B: the research pillar activity log

This section aligns with domain 1, research related career growth (NHSE 2024)

This section is designed to help you to work with your research supervisor to plan and record research activities, considering your medium-term (3-year) research ambitions in relation to research activities both planned (next 12 months) and completed (previous 12 months). You are encouraged to share the information within this log with your line manager, to further discussions about research aspirations and objectives more broadly within your Advanced Practice role.

Section A: the research pillar framework

SECTION A: the research pillar framework

Table 1 Suggested actions to meet research capabilities

HEE Research Capabilities	Individual Actions	Team Actions	Training/Resources
Health and care professionals working at the level of advanced clinical practice should be able to:	Trainee ACP (TACP)Qualified ACP (QACP)		
4.1 Critically engage in research activity, adhering to good research practice guidance, so that evidence-based strategies are developed and applied to enhance quality, safety, productivity, and value for money.	 Undertake a research methods module at master's level to enhance your knowledge and understanding (TACP) Explore your own research philosophy, epistemology, ontology (TACP) Engage in research activity by undertaking primary research for your MSc dissertation (TACP) Identify personal development objectives within annual appraisal to enhance research knowledge, understanding and skills (QACP) Undertake Good Clinical Practice training (TACP) Undertake Associate/Principal Investigator Essentials programme (QACP) Register as PI with Trust research team (QACP) Become a research champion within your team and department (QACP) 	 Undertake a training needs analysis of the team to identify strengths and weaknesses and identify learning opportunities Encourage attendance at monthly research workshops Find out what research is already happening in your speciality, department, or organisation Engage with Knowledge and Library service in your organisation Review the underpinning evidence base for all team service delivery to ensure quality and safety Ascertain need for quality improvement projects, considering quality, safety, productivity, and cost improvements 	 Register your projects via the Organisation's Research intranet pages, or QI page, email R&D team for Trust approval – following SOPs Follow your Trust's/organisation's flow diagram for approval process register with NIHR Learn. Go to: Getting started with NIHR Learn Undertake the Good Clinical Practice Training available from NIHR Access the NIHR N&M Incubator Consider your path in research Read the UK Standards for public involvement

HEE Research Capabilities	Individual Actions	Team Actions	Training/Resources
Health and care professionals working at the level of advanced clinical practice should be able to:	Trainee ACP (TACP)Qualified ACP (QACP)		
4.2 Evaluate and audit own and others' clinical practice, selecting and applying valid, reliable methods, then acting on the findings.	 Engage in service evaluation or audit activity for your dissertation (TACP) Identify personal development objectives within annual appraisal to enhance knowledge, understanding and skills around undertaking an evaluation (QACP) Re-evaluate or re-audit your dissertation project using a Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle (QACP) 	 Organise a research planning exercise to identify the priority research/QI/audit/evaluation areas for the ACP service collaborating with the speciality multi-disciplinary team and engaging with stakeholders, patients and public Ascertain the team's short, medium, long-term goals for undertaking research Identify the top 5 or top 10 priorities and rank them in priority order Decide on a time frame for implementation of each priority Allocate leaders for each priority Undertake literature reviews of each of these to identify gaps in the evidence base in collaboration with knowledge and library services 	 Attend research workshops Access quality improvement resources Planning and improving research HRA resources Read Twycross & Shorten (2014) Service evaluation, audit and research: what is the difference? Improvement Leader's Guide NHSE

HEE Research Capabilities	Individual Actions	Team Actions	Training/Resources
Health and care professionals working at the level of advanced clinical practice should be able to:	Trainee ACP (TACP)Qualified ACP (QACP)		
4.3 Critically appraise and synthesise the outcome of relevant research, evaluation, and audit, using the results to underpin own practice and to inform that of others.	 Use relevant critical appraisal tools to review and evaluate research papers for robustness (TACP), encourage colleagues to implement these tools and share findings with colleagues (QACP) Review the different typologies of literature review to ensure that you are following the most appropriate method (TACP/QACP) Consider writing a literature review up for publication 	 Plan team workshops or training events to increase literature searching and reviewing skills Create regular opportunities to discuss the outcome of evidence appraisal e.g., team meetings, research huddle 	 Attend research workshops Read Grant MJ, Booth A. A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. Health Info Libr J. 2009 Jun;26(2):91-108. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-1842.2009.00848.x. PMID: 19490148. Critical appraisal tools workshops Critical appraisal checklists

HEE Research Capabilities Health and care professionals	Individual Actions • Trainee ACP (TACP)	Team Actions	Training/Resources
working at the level of advanced clinical practice should be able to:	Qualified ACP (QACP)		
4.4 Take a critical approach to identify gaps in the evidence base and its application to practice, alerting appropriate individuals and organisations to these and how they might be addressed in a safe and pragmatic way.	 Search and review the available evidence for a module assignment or dissertation and feedback your findings to your team (TACP) Support colleagues who are new to searching for evidence using databases such as Cinahl, Scopus, EBSCO (QACP) Use relevant critical appraisal tools to review and evaluate research papers for robustness (TACP), encourage colleagues to implement these tools and share findings with colleagues (QACP) Report any evidence updates to the clinical guideline author or relevant approving group (TACP/QACP) 	 Organise regular opportunities for the team to review research papers and discuss the application to practice e.g., monthly journal club, posters, or as a standing agenda item on team meetings Review guidelines and procedures used in your area and ascertain changes to the underpinning evidence – report any updates to the guideline author or relevant approving group Consider running a 'critically appraised topics' event in your area) 	 Attend the literature review workshops held by library services Attend research workshops

HEE Research Capabilities Health and care professionals	Individual Actions	Team Actions	Training/Resources
working at the level of advanced clinical practice should be able to:	Trainee ACP (TACP)Qualified ACP (QACP)		
4.5 Actively identify potential need for further research to strengthen evidence for best practice. This may involve acting as an educator, leader, innovator and contributor to research activity and/or seeking out and applying for research funding.	 Discuss with your team the potential need for further research to strengthen evidence for best practice in your clinical area – this could form the basis for your dissertation (TACP) Attend the relevant committees or meetings to engage in research discussions (all) Discuss opportunity to contribute to research studies with colleagues to enhance own knowledge and skills (TACP/QACP) Arrange workshops/peer support with colleagues to enhance their knowledge and understanding of research and evidence-based practice (QACP education pillar) Consider leading a research project in one of the identified priority areas and identify potential funding streams (QACP) 	· ·	Attend research workshops NIHR How to apply for funding Consider the Associate Principal Investigator scheme

HEE Research Capabilities	Individual Actions	Team Actions	Training/Resources
Health and care professionals working at the level of advanced clinical practice should be able to:	Trainee ACP (TACP)Qualified ACP (QACP)		
4.6 Develop and implement robust governance systems and systematic documentation processes, keeping the need for modifications under critical review.	 Read, digest, and follow University and Trust approval processes when undertaking dissertation, ensuring appropriate approval has been given by both parties before a project starts (TACP) Ensure appropriate documentation is used e.g., University template/HRA templates for participant information sheets, consent forms (TACP/QACP) Always follow and adhere to Trust and/or University Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), ethics policy, Code of Conduct, GDPR, data management policies (TACP/QACP) 	 Ensure that the whole team are aware of the importance of keeping all documentation generated before, during and after undertaking a research project in an Investigator Site File Ensure GDPR and data protection policies are followed in the storage and disposal of research documentation 	<u>HRA</u>

HEE Research Capabilities	Individual Actions	Team Actions	Training/Resources
Health and care professionals working at the level of advanced clinical practice should be able to:	Trainee ACP (TACP)Qualified ACP (QACP)		
4.7 Disseminate best practice research findings and quality improvement projects through appropriate media and fora (e.g. presentations and peer review research publications).		 Involve colleagues, stakeholders, patients and the public Organise regular opportunities for the team to showcase/present findings of research/QI projects (oral presentation or via posters on noticeboards) Consider creating a team Twitter 	Attend research workshops How to disseminate your research NIHR Sign up for: Academia.edu, ResearchGate, ORCID, LinkedIn Ross-Hellauer et al (2020) Ten simple rules for innovative dissemination of research. PLoS Comput Biol. 2020 Apr 16;16(4):e1007704. doi: 10.1371/journal.pcbi.1007704. PMID: 32298255; PMCID: PMC7161944.

HEE Research Capabilities	Individual Actions	Team Actions	Training/Resources
Health and care professionals working at the level of advanced clinical practice should be able to:	Trainee ACP (TACP)Qualified ACP (QACP)		
4.8 Facilitate collaborative links between clinical practice and research through proactive engagement, networking with academic, clinical and other active researchers		 Make a targeted plan about the impact of your research – who do you want to engage with and why? Impact is the effect or change on activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding Think about the reach and significance of the impact Increase visibility, build networks, partners, and collaborators (consider your team/individual online profiles) Think about ways to engage wider groups throughout your research projects – build impact evaluation measures into your projects at the beginning Consider the change and benefit occurring from your projects, outside of clinical practice and academia e.g. Economic, social, cultural, environmental, health and wellbeing, policy influencing change legal, technological developments 	Read the UK Standards for public involvement What is research impact? Research impact: what is it, why it matters, and how you can increase impact potential HEE Clinical academic careers pathway The Health Education England (HEE) / NIHR Integrated Clinical and Practitioner Academic (ICA) Programme

ACP Research Pillar – Team Plan
AOI Research I mai - Team I fair

Team:

Date:

Issue or objective to be addressed	Action/s to be taken	Key dates for achievement of action/s	Key person/s responsible	Criteria for success/impact	Progress

You could record and share this information in other mediums – this is just an example

SECTION B

Research Pillar Activity Log

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Team/Division:	
Supervisor Name:	

Supervisor Role:

Nama.

This Research Pillar Activity Log is designed to help you to work with your research supervisor to plan and record research activities, considering your medium-term (3-year) research ambitions in relation to research activities both planned (next 12 months) and completed (previous 12 months). This section aligns with the first domain 'research related career growth' in the Multi-professional

- 1. Identify and pursue realistic and achievable research-related career goals, giving specific thought to growing own contributions to the development and application of new knowledge
- 2. Actively seek out and engage with research-related professional development opportunities, including master' level education, and other relevant credentials, certificates, or qualifications.
- 3. Effectively integrate developing and maturing practice skills and expertise with developing and maturing research skills.
- 4. Plan and pursue opportunities to develop and apply new knowledge to own and others' practice in structured ways that can be evaluated.
- 5. Contribute to development and delivery of research projects at service level.

Practice-related Research Framework at the level of Advanced Practice (NHSE 2024, p.16-17):

You are encouraged to share the information within this log with your line manager, to further discussions about research aspirations and objectives within your role more broadly. You could record and share this information in other mediums – this is just an example.

Part 1 – Where am I now? Research activities from the previous 12 months

For the period	d from:	to:	
Capability Activities undertaken number		Achievements	Reflection (what went well and why? What didn't go well and why? What gave you the most / least satisfaction? Any training or support needs?)

Add more rows or sheets as required

Part 2: Your medium (3 year) ambitions for your research activities.

What specific achievements/goals would you like to realise through your research activity over the next 3 years:

Capability number	Aim/Goal	Date by?
number		

Part 3 – Where Next? Research Plans for forthcoming 12 months

For the period from: to:

Planned Research activities	Anticipated achievements and timeline	Goal Alignment (align with one or more of your goals from Part 2).	Potential training or support needs

Add more rows or sheets as required

Part 4 Signatures

Signature (ACP):
Signature (supervisor):
Date:
Date of next meeting:
Any information to be shared prior to the next meeting – including plans for sharing and date by when this will be shared

Add more rows or sheets as required.