

09 February 2021| Live via Teams

Introduction to Clinical Research Principles

Problem definition: formulating clinical research questions to address knowledge gaps

via Teams

Facilitated by Professor Janet Davies MNHHS Office of Research MNHHS-Research@health.qld.gov.au



1

# **Sponsors**













# Agenda

Part 1 Introduction (15 min) Janet Davies

#### Part 2 Clinical research examples (10 min each)



Nicholas Green

Bachelor Industrial Design Masters Engineering (Research) Senior 3D Medical Modeller, Herston Biofabrication Institute, **MNHHS** 



**Amanda Corley** 

Bachelor Nursing, Master Adv Practice Health Care Research PhD candidate Research Fellow (Vascular Access), **RBWH** and Griffith University



Nicole Marsh

Bachelor Nursing, Master Adv Practice Director of Research, Nursing & Midwifery, Director Clinical Trials, Adj Assoc Prof Griffith Uni, QUT

#### Part 3 Panel Discussion (10 min)

What's next & session close

Please do not mention any confidential details of patients or research.

#### Teams Virtual session,

Facilitated by Prof Janet Davies, MNHHS Office of Research MNHHS-Research@health.qld.gov.au

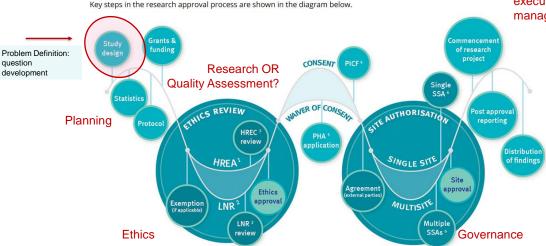
Metro North HHS Office of Research

3

#### Research process

Key steps in the research approval process are shown in the diagram below.

Research Project execution and management



Note: the above diagram does not represent proporational time speamt in each stage. ¹ Human Research Ethics Application (¹HREA), ² Low or negligible risk (LNR), ³ Human Research Ethics Committee (†HREC), ¹ Participant Information and Consent Form (PICf) - requires ethics review, ¹ Public Health Act (PHA), ¹ Site Specific Assessment (SSA).

https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/research/ethics-and-governance

#### Clinical research education resources and tools

#### https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/research

https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/metronorth/research/education-resources







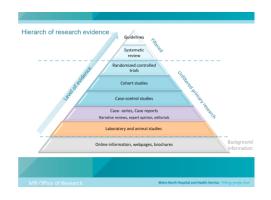
Metro North HHS Office of Research

5

## Read and review

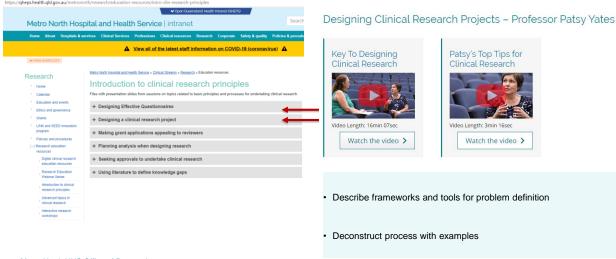
- Read literature in your field
- Access and utilize library services;
  - UQ on RBWH campus,
  - · MNHHS library at TPCH
- · Consider a systematic review
  - Lodge protocol PRISMA
  - Publish the systematic review→ track record evidence
- Work together
  - · Multiple separate reviewers of each paper
  - Joint publications, team support and community of practice.
- Evidence of knowledge gaps to inform research direction







## https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/research



Metro North HHS Office of Research

7

#### Stating the purpose and objectives for your research

- · What do you want to achieve?
  - Aims are general statements of what we are trying to achieve
  - Objectives should clearly state what you will do (actions) of your research and be:
    - o Specific
    - o Measurable
    - o Achievable
    - Relevant
    - $\circ \ \text{Timely}$
  - Hypotheses are specific statements of prediction
  - -What will be the outcome of your research?



#### Research design development

#### **Conceptual basis**



Metro North HHS Office of Research

#### Overarching goal Research question 1. · Hypothesis 1; anticipated outcome of primary • Objective to specifically address research Question 1. · Appropriate study design and protocol Research output 1 Research question 2. · Hypothesis 2. • Objective to specifically address research Question 2. · Appropriate study design and protocol Research output 2 Research question 3. · Hypothesis 3. • Objective to specifically address research Question 3. · Appropriate study design and protocol

Significant knowledge in field

· Research output 3

Informing Science: the International Journal of an Emerging Transdiscipline

Framework of Problem-Based Research: A Guide for Novice Researchers on the **Development of a Research-Worthy Problem** 

Timothy J. Ellis and Yair Levy Nova Southeastern University Graduate School of Computer and Information Sciences Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA

ellist@nova.edu, levyy@nova.edu

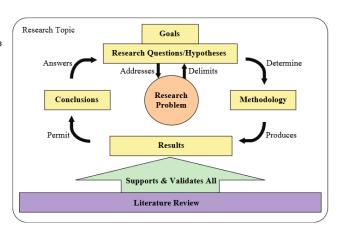


Figure 1: Conceptual Map of the Problem-Based Research Cycle

Metro North HHS Office of Research

# Formulating your research question

# Professor Patsy Yates Queensland University of Technology Director, Centre for Palliative Care Research and Education, Queensland Health https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/ data/asset s/pdf\_file/0022/1480315/patsy-yates.pdf

- Patient, population, problem
- Intervention
- Comparison
- Outcome
- (**T**imeframe)

#### PICO - An example

Patient or Problem	Intervention	Comparison	Outcomes
In people with cancer who are breathless	Would brief non- pharmacological interventions delivered using self-management techniques	When compared to standard information based interventions	Lead to reduced breathlessness and improved function

Metro North HHS Office of Research

11

## **FINER:** Judging the research worthiness of a research question

#### Table 2

 $\label{thm:main_features} \begin{tabular}{ll} Main features of FINER criteria (Feasibility, interest, novelty, ethics, and relevance) to formulate a good research question. Adapted from Cummings {\it et al.}[7] \\ \end{tabular}$ 

Component	Criteria
Feasible	-Ensures adequacy of research design
	-Guarantees adequate funding
	-Recruits target population strategically
	-Aims an achievable sample size
	-Prioritises measurable outcomes
	-Optimises human and technical resources
	-Accounts for clinicians commitment
	-Procures high adherence to the treatment and low rate of dropouts
	-Opts for appropriate and affordable frame time
Interesting	-Engages the interest of principal investigators
	-Attracts the attention of readers
	-Presents a different perspective of the problem
Novel	-Provides different findings
	-Generates new hypotheses
	-Improves methodological flaws of existing studies
	-Resolves a gap in the existing literature
Ethical	-Complies with local ethical committees
	-Safeguards the main principles of ethical research
	-Guarantees safety and reversibility of side effects
Relevant	-Generates new knowledge
	-Contributes to improve clinical practice
	-Stimulates further research
	-Provides an accurate answer to a specific research question

#### **Clinical Epidemiology**

Dovepress
open access to scientific and medical research



PERSPECTIVES

# From ideas to studies: how to get ideas and sharpen them into research questions

This article was published in the following Dove Press journal Clinical Epidemiology

Jan P Vandenbroucke<sup>1-3</sup> Neil Pearce<sup>3</sup>

'Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, the Netherlands; 'Department of Clinical Epidemiology, Aarbus, University, Aarhus, Demmark; 'Department of Medical Statistics and Centre for Global NCDs, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK Abstract: Where do new research questions come from? This is at best only partially taught in courses or textbooks about clinical or epidemiological research. Methods are taught under the assumption that a researcher already knows the research question and knows which methods will fit that question. Similarly, the real complexity of the thought processes that lead to a scientific undertaking is almost never described in published papers. In this paper, we first discuss how to get ian idea that is worth researching. We describe sources of new ideas and how to foster creative attitude by "cultivating your thoughts". Only a few of these ideas will make it into a study. Next, we describe how to sharpen and focus a research question so that a study becomes feasible and a valid test of the underlying idea. To do this, the idea needs to be "pruned". Pruning a research question means cutting away anything that is unnecessary, so that only the essence remains. This includes determining both the latent and the stated objectives, specific pruning questions, and the use of specific schemes to structure reasoning. After this, the following steps include preparation of a brief protocol, conduct of a pitot study, and writing a draft of the paper including draft tables. Then you are ready to carry out your research.

Keywords: study design, writing a paper, research questions.

Metro North HHS Office of Research

- Ideation (brainstorming)
- · Cultivation of thoughts
- Focus
- · Latent and stated objectives
- Pruning
- Worthiness

## Research-Worthiness?

- Will a known gap in the body of knowledge be filled?
- Will previous research be replicated and expanded by investigation of a different category of participants, environment, and/or constructs/variables?
- Will previous research be expanded by more thoroughly examining some identifiable aspect?
- Are there specific, identifiable, and documented problems with the currently available solutions?

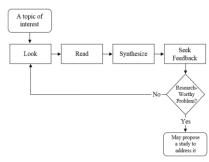


Figure 3: Process of Finding a Research-Worthy Problem

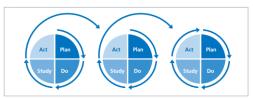
#### **Considerations:**

- Is research going to deliver an incremental increase in knowledge or provide a fundamental shift in current thinking?
- · Balance between
  - novelty/innovation and risk (may affect feasibility), and
  - risk and reward (flow on effect to benefit/value)
- · What is your, or your organisations, or the funding bodies',
  - · expectations for originality and innovation, and
  - tolerance for risk and feasibility to achieve outcomes.

Metro North HHS Office of Research

#### Plan, Do, Study, Act cycles in the context of clinical research (translation)

Figure 3: Sequential PDSA cycles



"Academia and researchers have a potential role to play to support appropriate rigour of planning and studying and understanding how to manage emergent learning while engaging diverse stakeholder groups."

Systematic review of current knowledge →

Problem definition and research question development → Observational Study →

Pilot study to assess feasibility of research design →

Larger clinical research study → Outputs used to design plan to change practice >

Framework for pragmatic study design / implementation science

Metro North HHS Office of Research

The problem with Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles

Julie E Reed, 1 Alan J Card<sup>2,3</sup>

What is the (primary) purpose of the research? What do you want to achieve through research?

2. Research Imp	pact indicators		
Knowledge	Health	Economic	Social
Evidence of scientific reach and influence	Engagement	Healthcare cost savings	End-user/public
	Participation in clinical research	IP development Industry collaboration Start-up company Product to market Employment	engagement Community health benefit Wellbeing of end-user and community
	Policy leadership		
	Clinical guidelines		
	Standards  Development of product/intervention		Reducing inequalities

What is the chief complaint? What is the intended effect (impact) of findings?

Metro North HHS Office of Research



# Writing my Research Question

Nicholas Green
Herston Biofabrication Institute

Metro North HHS Office of Research

17

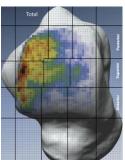
## Topic- Tibial Pilon Fractures











From left to right: a) a 3D model of a tibial pilon fracture; b) an interoperative photo of a talar fracture; c) map of talar injury drawn by the lead surgeon; d) the digitally transposed injury pattern on a statistical shape model (SSM) of a talar dome e) Heatmap representing the cumulative injuries sustained to the talar dome in association with 55 different distal tibial pilon fractures (AO/OTA 438/C).



#### **Problem Definition**

Questions from the Surgeon

- What is happening here?
- When do these injuries occur?
- Are there some areas that are worse for the patient than others?

In the study cohort, associated talar dome injuries occurred in 55 out of 104 observed tibial pilon fractures

D. Anderson (2011) found 50% of tibial pilon fractures resulted in osteoarthritis, 30% in the first 1-2 years

Total of 5 reported cases of talar dome fractures occurring with tibial pilon fractures

Metro North HHS Office of Research

19

# 400 Fracture area Tracture are

# Interfragmentary Bone Low Dennity Range High Articular Fracture Edge Measured

#### International Collaboration-Energy Expenditure

Custom-written software was used to measure surface area of pre-injury cortical and subchondral bone surfaces and post-injury exposed interfragmentary bone surfaces. The fracture-liberated surface area and the bone densities across that surface were used to calculate fracture energy (Dibbern 2019).

There was a highly significant relationship between contact area-normalized fracture energies and the rates of PTOA (Dibbern 2019). It can be seen the distal tibia is above the curve of PTOA rates.

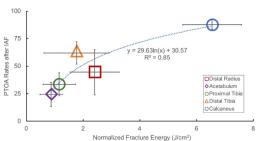


Figure 2. Contact area-normalized fracture energy was highly predictive of PTOA rates across joints

Dibbern, K., McKinley, T. O., Marsh, J. L., & Anderson, D. D. (2019). The influence of acute fracture severity on OA risk following intra-articular fractures. Osteoarthritis and Cartilage, 27(2019), S117–S118.

# Thought Process for Research Problem Definition

Ideation	With supervisors and collaborators, colleagues and friends from other disciplines.
Cultivation of thoughts	Taking notes and having to talk about your project infront of other people.
Focus	Remove ideas that distract from the goals and objectives.
Latent and stated objectives	Latent: Understand when these fractures occur Stated: Inform the treatment decision making for surgeons around the world, leading to better patient outcomes.
Worthiness	Research was requested by a senior orthopaedic consultant who wants to understand more about this fracture. No current literature on this phenomenon.

Metro North HHS Office of Research

21

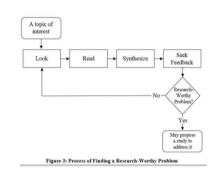
#### PICO- Research Question 1

<b>P</b> opulation	Intervention	<b>C</b> ontrol/ Comparison	Outcome
Patients aged 18-80 who were treated for a tibial Pilon fracture at the RBWH by the orthopaedics department. Patients that were not observed by the lead surgeon will be excluded.	All retrospective fracture CT scans and 3D fracture models will be analysed using the validated 'Fracture Energy Calculation' Matlab code.	Cases will be separated into two groups, patients who had an associated talar dome injury vs those that did not.	Predict talar dome injuries based off energy expenditure. Provide advice for surgeons as to when they should check if there is an associated talar dome injury with a tibial pilon fracture.

# Research Worthiness

## Seek Feedback





23

# Writing a Research Question

What causes injuries to the talar dome during a tibial pilon fracture? The question is too broad- has many different research directions

What impact does fracture energy have on talar dome injuries during tibial pilon fractures?

Fracture energy may only be one aspect of the injury, cannot determine causality

Can the energy expended during a tibial pilon fracture predict associated talar dome injuries?

# Generating evidence in an evidence vacuum

AMANDA CORLEY
RESEARCH FELLOW (VASCULAR ACCESS)
GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY AND RBWH

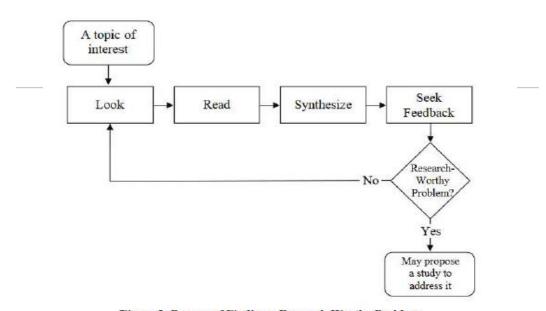
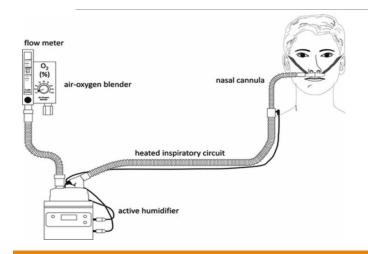


Figure 3: Process of Finding a Research-Worthy Problem

# Topic of interest — High flow nasal oxygen in adults



Around 2007, High flow nasal cannula (HFNC) released onto adult market with very little evidence guiding use

29

# Look and read

Evidence in neonates and paediatrics but none in adult ICU

PEDIATRICS

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADILAT OF PIDIATRICS

Areacle

High-Flow Nasal Cannulae in the Management of Apnea of Prematurity: A Comparison With Conventional Nasal Continuous Positive Airway Pressure

Con Streman, Robert P. Lemike, Ann Hadson Mason and Horacio Collovich
Pediatrics May 2001, 107 (p) 1091-1083, DOI Integrations or p71.5 Scilpeds 107.5-1081

Journal of Perinatology (2006) 26, 476

© 2006 Nature Publishing Group All rights asserted. 0/43-894600

www.nature.co

#### ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Work of breathing using high-flow nasal cannula in preterm infants

JG Saslow<sup>1,2</sup>, ZH Aghai<sup>1,2</sup>, TA Nakhla<sup>1,2</sup>, JJ Hart<sup>1</sup>, R Lawrysh<sup>1</sup>, GE Stahl<sup>1,2</sup> and KH Pyon<sup>1,2</sup>

**EVIDENCE VACUUM despite TGA approval** 

# Seek feedback

Discussed with ICU colleagues:

Where were the evidence gaps?

What did we need to know?

How will we find out?

IS THIS A RESEARCH WORTHY PROBLEM???

31

# Problem definition Research question development

#### THE PROBLEM

We did not know the effects of HFNC use on adults in the ICU requiring respiratory support.

Specifically:

- 1. Physiological effects
- 2. Patient-reported effects

#### THE QUESTION

What are the short term physiological effects of HFNC in adult ICU patients requiring supplementary oxygen?

Do HFNC improve subjective dyspnoea in adult ICU patients?

# Study proposal

#### PROTOCOL DEVELOPMENT

The team

Study design

Outcomes

Measurement tools

Sample size

#### **CLINICAL TRIALS REGISTRATION**

Australia and New Zealand Clinical Trial Registry: ACTRN12609000037202

#### **FUNDING**

Fisher & Paykel Healthcare

33

# THE Study

Observational study of post cardiac surgical patients requiring HFNC post extubation

N=20

Measured lung volume, respiratory rate, airway pressure, oxygenation, subjective dyspnoea (BORG score)

#### Findings:

- · Increased EELV, airway pressure and oxygenation
- Reduced respiratory rate
- Correlation between higher BMIs and lung volume increases
- No adverse events

British Journal of Anaesthesia 107 (6): 998–1004 (2011) Advance Access publication 9 September 2011  $\cdot$  doi:10.1093/bja/aer265



Oxygen delivery through high-flow nasal cannulae increase end-expiratory lung volume and reduce respiratory rate in post-cardiac surgical patients

A. Corley<sup>1\*</sup>, L. R. Caruana<sup>1</sup>, A. G. Barnett<sup>2</sup>, O. Tronstad<sup>1</sup> and J. F. Fraser<sup>1</sup>

# Synthesize

Current to March 2016

Randomised controlled trials only

11 studies (1972 participants)

Meta-analysis performed for some outcomes

Low quality of evidence

Insufficient evidence to recommend HFNC use over standard low flow oxygen for adults in ICU

Further research needed



Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews

High-flow nasal cannulae for respiratory support in adult intensive care patients (Review)

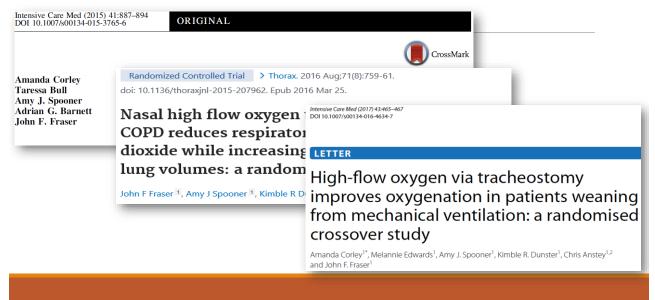
Corley A, Rickard CM, Aitken LM, Johnston A, Barnett A, Fraser JF, Lewis SR, Smith AF

35

# More synthesis...

# Use of high-flow nasal cannula https://doi.org/10.1007/s00134-020-06228-7 Laurent Papazi Samir Jaber<sup>8</sup>, S François Steph NARRATIVE REVIEW Use of nasal high flow oxygen during acute respiratory failure Jean-Damien Ricard<sup>1,2\*</sup>, Oriol Roca<sup>3,4</sup>, Virginie Lemiale<sup>5</sup>, Amanda Corley<sup>6,7</sup>, Jens Braunlich<sup>8,9</sup>, Peter Jones<sup>10,11</sup>, Byung Ju Kang<sup>12</sup>, François Lellouche<sup>13</sup>, Stefano Nava<sup>14</sup>, Nuttapol Rittayamai<sup>15</sup>, Giulia Spoletini<sup>16,17</sup>, Samir Jaber<sup>18</sup> and Gonzalo Hernandez<sup>19</sup>

# One question invariably leads to another!!



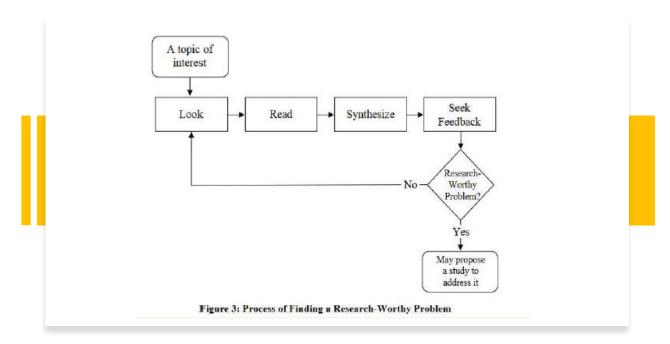
37

# Take home points...

- 1. Choose a question which means something to patients and clinicians
- 2. Clearly define the evidence gaps prior to embarking on question development
- 3. Rome wasn't built in a day...Make the question answerable!
- 4. Seek advice and input from those with experience in planning and conducting research studies...learn from their mistakes!

# From clinical audit to multicentre randomised controlled trial

Dr Nicole Marsh



HEALTH SERVICES RESEARC

# Topic of interest

# **Peripheral** intravenous catheters



**CSIRO** PUBLISHING

Australian Health Review, 2014, 38, 345-349 http://dx.doi.org/10.1071/AH13111

Intravascular device use, management, documentation and complications: a point prevalence survey

Karen A. New<sup>1,2,4</sup> RN, PhD, Nurse Researcher Joan Webster<sup>1,2,3</sup> RN, BA, Nursing Director, Research Nicole M. Marsh<sup>1,3</sup> RN, BN, Project Manager Barbara Hewer<sup>1</sup> RGON, BN, Clinical Nurse Consultant, Vascular Access Devices on behalf of the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Intravenous Access Research Council

#### **PIVCs**

- •25% medical/surgical patients had one or more complications (e.g. redness, pain, tracking, swelling)
- •25% device dressings were **NOT** clean, dry and intact
- Greater than 80% of PIVCs had non-sterile tape over the insertion site
- •Seven different primary dressings & securements in use

41











# Read and synthesize

What is the best way to dress and secure a PIVC?

Devices and dressings to secure peripheral venous catheters to prevent complications (Review)

Marsh N, Webster J, Mihala G, Rickard CM

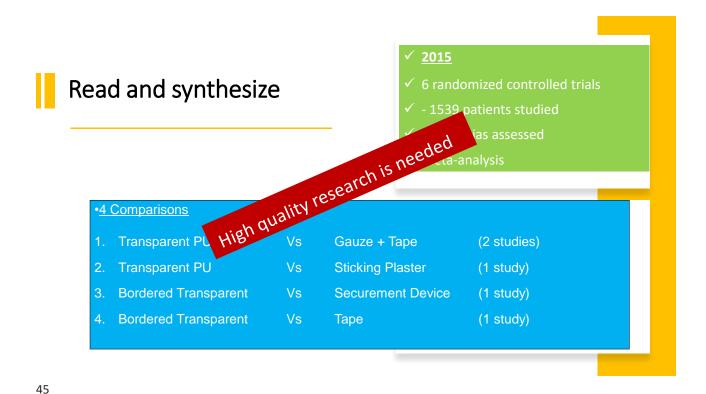


43

# Read and synthesize

What is the best way to dress and secure a PIVC?

- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 6 randomized controlled trials
- ✓ 1539 patients studied
- ✓ Risk of bias assessed
- ✓ Meta-analysis



\_\_

Seek feedback

What do we need from a PIVC dressing and securement?





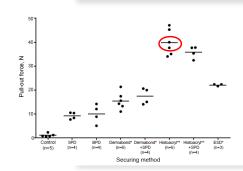
# Seek feedback

What do we need from a PIVC dressing and securement?

Cyanoacrylate tissue adhesives - effective securement technique for intravascular catheters: in vitro testing of safety and feasibility

G. SIMONOVA\*, C. M. RICKARD†, K. R. DUNSTER‡, D. J. SMYTH§, D. MCMILLAN\*\*,

Critical Care Research Group, University of Queensland and Prince Charles Hospital, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia



47



# Is this a research worthy problem?

# **Pilot randomised** controlled trial



J Vasc Access 2015; 00 (00): 000-000 DOI: 10.5301/jva.5000348

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Securement methods for peripheral venous catheters to prevent failure: a randomised controlled pilot trial

Nicole Marsh<sup>1,2</sup>, Joan Webster<sup>1,3</sup>, Julie Flynn<sup>1,2</sup>, Gabor Mihala<sup>2,4</sup>, Barbara Hewer<sup>1</sup>, John Fraser<sup>4,5</sup>, Claire M. Rickard<sup>1,2,5</sup>

#### Aim

- To identify clinically and cost-effective methods to prevent PIVC failure.
- · To compare usual care dressings (simple transparent) with a novel method (Glue) and two new commercially available technologies -(bordered polyurethane and sutureless securement device)
- To confirm **feasibility** of conducting a larger RCT

# The SAVE pilot trial



Simple Transparent PU Bordered Transparent PU





Adhesive Securement Device

Tissue Adhesive



49

# The SAVE pilot trial

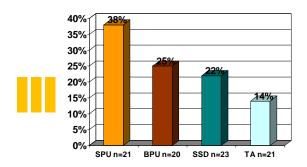


Figure 1: Proportion of failures by device type

#### Conclusion

- •Current SPU dressing did not prevent PIVC failure in many patients
- •Alternate products likely to reduce failure rates, but require testing in larger multi-centre studies
- •All *priori* established **feasibility criteria met**



# Propose a study

What is the best way to dress and secure and PIVC?

Dressings and securements for the prevention of peripheral intravenous catheter failure in adults (SAVE): a pragmatic, randomised controlled, superiority trial

Claire M Rickard, Nicole Marsh, Jose Webster, Nacest Burneyer, Endy Larser, Matthew R McGall, Fione Fulleton, Endie Bettington, Joseld W Witty, Md Aku Choudhuy, Hasthem Tuffsha, Amenda Code, Dowld J McMillan, John F Franc, Andrew P Marshall, E Geofficy Playford

- Multi-centre, 4-arm parallel, superiority RCT
- AUD\$1 Million National Health & Medical Research Council
- Recruitment March 2013-Sept 2014
- > 1,709 patients randomized to 4 groups



51

# The SAVE Trial

Primary outcome: PIVC Failure

	SPU controls N=422	BPU N=42 3	SSD N=425	TA N=427
PIVC Failure	43%	40 %	41%	38%
p value		0.46	0.74	0.21
Per/100 PIVC days	15.1	14.6	14.2	13.3
p value		0.82	0.47	0.25

# The SAVE Trial

Sensitivity analysis PIVC Failure (N=1100)

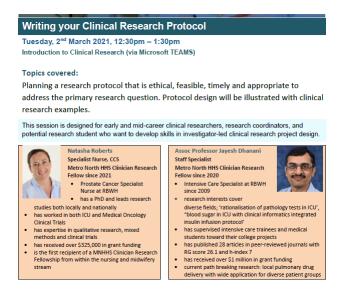
	SPU controls N=250	BPU N=273	SSD N=296	TA N=281
PIVC	34%	35%	34%	26%
Failure				
p value		0.93	0.93	0.04
Relative risk (95% CI)		HR 1·10 (0·82–1·48)	HR 0·91 (0·79–1·05)	HR 0.88 (0.79-0.98)
P value		0.52	0.20	0.018

53

# **Questions?**

Next Session: March 2, 2021



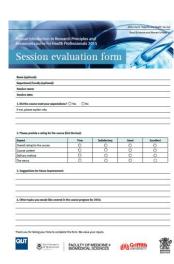


Metro North HHS Office of Research

55

# Online Feedback Form (or use the chat now)

- · Please provide feedback.
- Informs scope, design and improvement in research education sessions
- We will email link to the survey for attendees
- https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/research/webinarseries/evaluation



# **Sponsors**













Metro North HHS Office of Research