

HCAI **RESEARCH** NETWORK

SURF: Involving patients and public in healthcare-associated infection research

Workshop 2: 13 May 2008 – Baker Street, London

Workshop Report

Workshop Objectives

The main objectives of this workshop were to:

- Provide a forum for SURF members to continue their discussions on how best to involve patients and public in future infection-related research in what they consider to be the most important areas in the field;
- Update SURF members on the current activities of the HCAI Network and outline proposed SURF activities over the next 12 months;
- Give SURF members a general overview of research, covering the what, why, who and how of research and focussing on the difference between quantitative and qualitative methods;
- Identify future research training needs; and
- Facilitate SURF members drafting of conference abstracts for the 6th INVOLVE National Conference and 1st Infection Prevention Society Conference.

The Process

The second SURF Workshop was held on 13 May 2008 at the Baker Street Meeting Rooms, London and was attended by seven of the 10 SURF members. The morning session commenced with a welcome from Alison Tingle, the HCAI-RN's Principal Research Officer. Alison re-introduced the SURF members, discussed the aims of the day and presented an update of the current activities of the HCAI Network while outlining the proposed activities of SURF over the next 12 months. In her update, she covered areas regarding the establishment of the National Research Priorities Advisory Group and the Antimicrobial Resistance & Healthcare Associated Infection Advisory Committee. With regard to SURF, she suggested that the group should concentrate on:

- Raising awareness of SURF through conference attendance and presentation;
- Getting involved in research commissioning;
- Getting involved in priority setting;
- Organising further workshops to provide members with appropriate training; and
- Expanding membership

The rest of the day was then split between three speakers, Simon Jones, SURF Coordinator; Dr Peter Harper, Senior Lecturer at the Richard Wells Research Centre, Thames Valley University (London); and Heather Loveday, Deputy Director of the HCAI Research Network.

Simon delivered a presentation entitled 'A Hitchhiker's Guide to Research: What is Research' in which he discussed with SURF members what research is, the reasons why research is done, who carries research out and how they can become involved. The session gave participants the opportunity to share and discuss their own ideas of what research is and allowed them to appreciate that not all areas of infection are researchable.

Following this Peter gave two presentations focussing on the differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches to research and the advantages and disadvantages of both. He did this using a range of examples from a variety of fields and ended the session with a discussion of the trend towards mixed methods research. Members indicated that they particularly liked these sessions and found them extremely useful in putting their experience of research into context.

After a working lunch which gave SURF members the opportunity to brainstorm ideas for a SURF logo, Heather facilitated a skills exercise in which SURF members identified future research training needs and drafted abstract submissions for two conferences: the 6th INVOLVE National Conference and 1st Infection Prevention Society (IPS) Conference.

Future needs members identified included:

- Presentation skills, e.g. PowerPoint, speaking to large groups etc;
- Reviewing and critiquing proposals and methodology / Peer review;
- Committee board working;
- How to search for literature online using electronic databases;
- Presentations from other users that have been involved in research to get a better understanding of how user involvement can work;
- Create surf identify, logo and website;
- How to build a user-led research proposal; and
- Establishment of a website discussion board.

SURF members were also encouraged to come up with 'sound bites' that could be used to explain, in simple terms, why researchers should involve patients and the public in infection-related research. Some of these sound bites included:

"We have lived through the experience of HCAI and would like to make use of that in furthering research"

"User perspectives of HCAI can complement traditional approaches by helping researchers see things a different way"

"We want to work in partnership. To collaborate, not confront"

Workshop Evaluation

At the end of the workshop participants were asked to complete a short evaluation form. Of those that returned a questionnaire, all had either a good or excellent overall impression of the event. One participant commented that the workshop had been clearly focussed, useful and gave members an opportunity to continue their discussion around patient and public involvement in research.

All participants who completed the question agreed that the workshop had given them a clearer idea of what public involvement in research was all about and that they had gained an insight into why we need research, how they can become more involved and why there are different approaches to research.

Generally, members reported that they thought this workshop was better than the last as it was better organised, 'less crammed', at a nicer venue and more informally facilitated.

All of the seven participants thought that the information and assistance they received prior and during the workshop was either 'good' or 'excellent', and all also rated the content of their delegate packs as either 'good' or 'excellent'.

For members, however, the most exciting aspect of SURF is perhaps best encapsulated by something one of them wrote in the comments section of their evaluation form: "The group seems to offer almost unlimited opportunity for involvement at various levels since members can set the agenda and decide what should be tried."

Next Steps

- Establish a dedicated SURF website and logo with online discussion forum;
- Develop online research methodology materials;
- Poster presentation development for IPS and INVOLVE conferences; and
- Organise next training day.