



## **NAPICU Research Strategy (2020-2024)**

### **BACKGROUND**

NAPICU is a not for profit multidisciplinary UK-based and internationally inspired organisation that is dedicated to improving the experience and outcome of psychiatric service-users and promoting the support and development of staff members working within the various psychiatric services.

This research strategy was developed by NAPICU to ensure that clinical research is a core business for everyone involved in providing and using the psychiatric services, rather than a matter for the highly specialised and interested academics. We believe that our contribution to research is particularly imperative for the following key reasons.

1. To help improve quality, safety and effectiveness to service users, carers and staff throughout the services we support.
2. To continue to enhance our reputation and credibility (e.g. when formulating national guidance and changing policy).
3. To provide a proper multidisciplinary understanding of the challenges our services face, offer creative solutions and ensure the delivery of excellent care.

## **KEY PRINCIPLES FOR THE STRATEGY**

NAPICU believes that research, education, quality improvement and practice development are closely interlinked, and our organisation will continue to promote the development of new initiatives within these capacities. We fully acknowledge the uncertainty in our operational environments and hence wish to maintain flexibility and adaptability in our approaches. We are particularly keen to support research opportunities where they fit into our overall strategic visions. Proposals for new projects are expected to meet the following general criteria:

1. Clinically relevant to our areas of expertise. This includes but not limited to acute psychiatric care, PICU (adults and CAMHS), emergency psychiatry, rehabilitation (within forensic and non-forensic settings) and other areas of mental health.
2. Ambitious: promoting high standards.
3. Filling important research gaps.
4. Service-user centred: co-produced and directly involves service-users and carers.
5. Collaborative, promoting multi-institutional partnerships.
6. Multidisciplinary: bringing together expertise from different disciplines to ensure scientific rigor and efficient collaboration.
7. Cost-effective.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING**

The NAPICU executive committee and director of research will oversee the strategy development, monitor progress and implement action plans for the strategy. The focus areas for the strategy will include:

1. Participating and contributing to the scope, remit and data collection in (external) national research work conducted by other agencies and organisations.
2. Developing collaborative research projects that are jointly led and sponsored by NAPICU and other national organisations (e.g. DIMHN, BAP, etc.), so that research is jointly undertaken and jointly disseminated.

3. Developing local and national NAPICU run research projects (in line with the aims of NAPICU - funded via NAPICU, which links to the charity status and getting of grants).
4. Promoting projects undertaken by NAPICU members by communicating these projects amongst the membership, tie these into conferences and quarterly meetings and attract submission to the NAPICU journal.

## **UNDERSTANDING CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVING SUCCESS**

Since established, NAPICU has always supported the multidisciplinary approach to clinical research and service development that is directly linked to the benefit of the service user. We understand the current challenges to clinical research that include increasing bureaucratic and regulatory processes and decline in research funding, which makes it very time consuming and highly competitive for any team to conduct clinical research.

We believe that for us to achieve success, our strategic thinking should take into consideration the following factors.

1. Building on our strengths and areas of success.
2. Streamlining our work and making use of available resources.
3. Developing partnerships with other organisations via joint bids.
4. Linking research to education, training and practice development.
5. Aiming for projects / grants with a relatively higher success rates if possible.
6. Making the greatest impact to the end user.
7. Making a difference to the people on the ground and still of interest to potential funders.
8. Ensuring ethical principles are maintained and avoiding any conflict of interest.
9. Promoting excellence in clinical research among our membership groups and the wider links by creating specific research accolades that are awarded during the NAPICU annual conferences.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING STRATEGIES

As one of our key priorities, research needs to be appropriately communicated via interactive messages to reach our target audience in a timely manner. Research communication should be part of the wide strategy to engage our associates and key stakeholders and is also likely to help in increasing our direct connection with the service user and carer groups. This will inevitably improve our reputation as an organisation that promotes evidence-based approaches to mental health practice.

The aim of our messages will be to showcase our effective engagement with clinical research on a regular basis. Examples of how NAPICU will communicate research ideas, progress and outcome include:

1. Social media, including twitter, facebook and LinkedIn. These are all highly effective ways of reaching out to the target audience with succinct and efficient messages. The impact is likely to increase if regular (daily) communications are made with appropriate tags being used and more members (particularly among the execs) are avidly engaged.
2. Press release: a regular press release (twice a year) will aim to showcase our engagement with research, education and training, highlighting success stories and achievements.
3. Publications of journal articles within the NAPICU journal and other peer-reviewed esteemed journals.
4. NAPICU website: NAPICU website will have a dedicated section for research, which will publish this research strategy, an overview of ongoing projects, teaching materials and guidance about how to submit a project for publication in the NAPICU journal.
5. Mainstream media: The public often find news stories easier to access and comprehend in comparison with original research papers. The EC will utilise where appropriate media outlets to shed light on relevant research projects and any key findings, explaining facts and avoiding any exaggerated or sensationalised headlines.