

Self-reported motivators, barriers and abilities of allied health teams to undertake research: Is there a link with actual research output?

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Background

Team-based approaches to research capacity building may be an efficient means to promote allied health research participation and activity. In order to tailor such interventions, a clearer understanding of current patterns of research participation within allied health teams is needed. Self-report surveys may provide insight into a team's research capacity and enablers and barriers to participation, however it is unclear how self-reported measures may be associated with actual research activity.

Method

The following exploratory research aimed to describe the self-reported ability, motivations and barriers of eight allied health professional (AHP) teams to undertaking research and explore whether a relationship exists between these measures and research activity within each team. A total of 95 AHPs from eight different professional teams completed a research capacity and culture survey, and an audit of research activity was undertaken within each team during a 20 month period. Kendall's correlation coefficient was used to determine whether any association existed between average self-reported measures of team success, frequency of barriers and motivators, with research activity (i.e., no. journal publications, ethically approved projects and funding received).

Results

Research activity varied between teams, with funding received ranging from \$0 to over \$100,000, and half the teams not producing any journal publications. Team motivators demonstrated a stronger association with research activity compared to barriers, with the motivator "enhancing team credibility" being significantly associated with funding received. No significant association between self-reported research success and actual research activity was identified.

Discussion

Preliminary findings suggest that self-report measures of research success may not always correspond to actual research activity, and a combination of both these measures may be useful when planning research capacity building interventions. Variation in activity between teams and organisations should also be considered when tailoring such interventions. Reinforcing intrinsically motivating rewards of research may also be useful in promoting research participation for some teams.