

## **Publishing a service evaluation, audit or case study: What to consider if your project isn't research.**

*Traditionally, journals only publish research articles; pieces of work which are deemed to be ethically sound through independent ethics approvals. Increasingly, however, other types of projects are now being published in high-impact journals. Here are some pointers for non-research projects when thinking about publication.*

### **What to do before you start**

- Check that the journal that you would like to publish in will consider proposals that do not require an independent ethical review, particularly for non-UK journals.
- Ensure that participants involved in your service evaluation and case study have received best ethical practice by receiving an information sheet and providing Informed Consent prior to any project work taking place – templates are available.
- Confirm that your service evaluation or audit has received written approval from the UHP Clinical Audit Team before you start.

### **Best Practice Tip!**

*Every project should have a protocol or project brief written to support conduct and the review and approval process before the start of the project. This also helps enormously when writing the subsequent publication.*

### **What Journals are looking for in non-research projects:**

- Is the publication scientifically valid? Among the factors examined by journal reviewers and editors are: Numbers of participants involved, the robustness and clarity of the results and explanations presented, awareness of the limitations and biases in the project, the originality of your results and the contribution of your project to the knowledge base of the service/condition area.
- Is the publication ethical? Have ethical risks and considerations been minimised? Is there evidence that participants have had confidentiality and safety protected, that they have voluntarily taken part without coercion? Presenting the information sheet and consent form used in your project is important to allay concerns in this area.
- Overall question asked: do the benefits outweigh the harms and risks of the study?

### **Evidencing review and approval**

- If there is doubt about whether a project being published is research or not, and/or should have received an independent ethical review first, correspondence with the UHP Research Office and or the Clinical Audit Team confirming that the project is not research before the project started, with a letter stating that the project has been reviewed and approved is essential.
- UHP typically provides e-mail authorisation of service evaluations, but if you require a signed letter for publication purposes, then this can be arranged through either UHP R&D or Clinical Audit.
- If you are working on an educational project and registered with a higher education institute, then you will need to provide an institutional letter of approval from the relevant faculty ethical committee.