

Embedding Clinical Trials within the Australian Healthcare System

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Background

Embedding clinical trials within healthcare systems presents many challenges and the approach taken to overcome these varies across and within countries. However, many countries wish to integrate research into their healthcare systems to foster evidence-informed healthcare. Yet to date, there has been limited evaluation of the Australian landscape and the barriers and enablers to embedding research not well defined.

Objectives

The Australian Clinical Trials Alliance (ACTA) formed an expert working group to determine factors that could facilitate 'embedding' clinical trials within healthcare systems including; 1) An international scan identifying approaches to developing a learning healthcare system, 2) Sector-wide consultation of Australian healthcare institutions and services to identify local challenges and opportunities.

Method

Based on a literature search using terms; 'healthcare', 'embedding research', 'learning healthcare system' and 'integrating research within healthcare', three countries (United States, Canada and United Kingdom) were selected for in-depth analysis of activities. The sector-wide consultation (survey and semi-structured interview) was conducted of primary stakeholders within healthcare institutions and organisations which are, or have, the potential to support clinical trials. The consultation explored common themes from the international scan including 'operational processes', 'information technology', 'infrastructure and resource' and 'public awareness and involvement'.

Results

We aim to compare international best practice associated with the definition of 'embedding' clinical trials within healthcare systems. Correspondingly an in-depth consultation with national organisations may provide valuable insights, contributing to a more bi-directional dialogue between researchers and key stakeholders, and ultimately, the potential adoption of a learning healthcare model within Australia.