

Welcome to the first of our FIRE project newsletters. We would like to give you an update on our progress so far.

FIRE IN 2009 – OUR FIRST YEAR IN REVIEW

The start of 2010 marked the end of the FIRE Project's first year.

2009 was a very busy and exciting year. Our activities included recruiting the Research Fellows (Carole Mockford at Warwick, Claire Hawkes in Bangor, Paul Slater in Ulster, Ankie Eldh in Sweden, and Theo Niessen and Teatske van der Zijpp in the Netherlands), and the Project Manager, Deirdre Kennedy.

The Advisory Committee and the Project Board met for the first time

in September 2009. The Committee comprises academic, research, and lay members. They gave us invaluable information and guidance, both at the meeting and later through individual consultation.

Regular teleconferences between the Collaborators, the Research Fellows and other across-team groups are now well established.

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A Project Board Meeting at the RCN in London

“We don’t
speak about
anything
below the
waist”

“Don’t
mention the
‘E’ word”
(ethics)

PROJECT SUMMARY

The preparation work for the project is nearing completion with the data collection and final planning for the May workshops in the Netherlands now taking place.

Good progress has been made in all Work Packages (WP) although the ethics application in England took longer than expected. Recruitment of

nursing home sites is also underway, as is organising the various tools for collection and analysis.

Footnote: The website was launched in March 2010 and ethical approval for England obtained in April 2010.

WORK PACKAGE 1—FACILITATION

Work is ongoing to develop and refine the Type A and Type B facilitation programmes in preparation for the learning and development workshops that will

take place for facilitators in Arms 2 and 3 of the intervention. These are scheduled to be held during the last two weeks of May 2010 at Kapellerput in the Netherlands.

WORK PACKAGE 2 —EVALUATION

This evaluation is embedded within the trial to enable us to gain an understanding of what works (and does not) from the facilitation development programmes for whom, how and in what circumstances.

Using a realistic evaluation approach, we aim to evaluate the impact of the processes of facilitation, continence care and the context in which care is delivered.

Data will be gathered through interviews with residents, their next of kin and staff, from observations of practice and the administration of the Alberta Context Tool.

Over the life of the project we will be evaluating a number of evaluative propositions, which we currently are in the process of developing.

WORK PACKAGE 3—INTERVENTION

The intervention work package is designed as a pragmatic randomised controlled trial and focuses on the extent to which research based recommendations for continence care are implemented in practice,

and whether this impacts on costs and resident outcomes. We are gathering data at baseline, then at 6, 12, 18 and 24 months after the facilitation programmes.

WORK PACKAGE 4—DISSEMINATION

To date, we have focused on some key internal and external dissemination activities, including establishing the FIRE website and communication strategy, planning to build dissemination into the programmes of work with the Type A and Type B facilitators, and

identifying conferences to attend and submit abstracts to at appropriate points in the project.

Further work is to be undertaken to develop and implement the wider stakeholder engagement strategy for the project.

WORK PACKAGE 5—PROJECT & CONSORTIUM MANAGEMENT

At the outset, documents were drafted to provide a framework for the project. These included a comprehensive Risk Register and Communications Strategy. They will remain live throughout the life of the project.

The Advisory Committee and Project Board met in late 2009 and will reconvene at the RCN (Royal College of Nursing) in London in September 2010.

Ethics applications proved to be an early challenge. Sweden and Ireland's approvals were relatively straightforward and they started data collection in February 2010. Local permissions were required by The Netherlands, while in England the Research Ethics Committee (REC) raised questions around the Mental Capacities Act. This REC was then closed, so the revised application had to be submitted to a new REC in March. This delayed data collection in England.

The first Interim Report for the period January 2009 to June 2010 will be submitted to the European Commission in mid 2010. It will include a project progress summary and financial reports from the collaborative universities that have received funding for FIRE.

As the FIRE researchers are spread worldwide, developing effective communication systems has been vital. One mechanism to be used is the FIRE website (<http://www.parihs.org/pages/firestudy.html>). The site will provide document repositories, information and discussion boards for the Project Team, Advisory Committee and the Internal Facilitators. It will also give us a public image. Due to the project's virtual nature and sizeable team, a large volume of email has been generated. The website along with teleconferencing, Skype and other tools (as available) will alleviate or streamline much of this traffic.

Our next edition will be late summer 2010.



From spring into summer

FIRE

Facilitating Implementation
of Research Evidence

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