

# Quality Audit and Research Coordinators (QuARCs) in local trusts



**Professor M Grocott**  
Director

A central role of the HSRC is to provide the 'glue' between clinical anaesthesia and the research agenda through comprehensive audit of perioperative care, national quality improvement initiatives and the maintenance of a network of active engaged clinician researchers. To facilitate this, we are seeking to establish a network of local Quality Audit and Research Coordinators (QuARCs) within every Trust to be a single point of contact for national audits, quality improvement projects, multi-centre research and other academic issues. This is a new initiative from the Health Services Research Centre (HSRC) with the National Institute of Academic Anaesthesia (NIAA).

The role of the QuARCs will be to identify individuals within each department that would take responsibility for the local delivery of individual audits or research studies. For example, we will use the QuARCs to work with their departments to identify appropriate leads for the next National Audit Project and for

the National Emergency Laparotomy Network (where there is not one currently identified). The QuARC may identify others who wish to take these roles on, or may take them on themselves, but they will have a responsibility for making sure that the process is open, fair and transparent. QuARCs will also have a role as a conduit for information to and from the HSRC/NIAA including monitoring of research activity and capacity as well as surveys from the NIAA/HSRC/RCoA/AAGBI. They will identify the right person(s) to complete each survey and monitor and support completion and return of these surveys. In order to avoid surveys of questionable quality, it has been agreed that such surveys will require a council level sponsor from one of the national organisations (AAGBI/RCoA) and will be approved by the HSRC board. QuARCs will also be the local point of contact for national research training and engagement initiatives, such as the UK Clinical Research Forums (perioperative, pain, critical care).

We aim to use email as the primary mode of communication and the NIAA/HSRC website as the primary route for dissemination of resources. HSRC Coordinator workshops will be run in conjunction with major AAGBI and RCoA events to provide face-to-face communication between QuARCs and the HSRC team.

Audit and research activity for patient benefit are clearly identified by the Chief Medical Officer<sup>1</sup> and by the Clinical Directors group of the RCoA

as being important elements of the role of a consultant. The councils of the AAGBI and RCoA consider this role to be a valuable contribution to 'anaesthesia UK' that should be recognized in the appraisal and job planning processes.

Therefore, although there will be no direct remuneration for this role, it is anticipated that the scope and volume of the work involved will amount to about 0.5 Supporting Programmed Activities. In the first instance QuARCS will be appointed through a transparent and fair local process for a period of three years. The draft job description is available on the HSRC website (follow the tab on the left hand side of the HSRC home page).

Success of audits and research projects supported by the HSRC is critically dependent on local engagement and effective communication between the HSRC team and individual departments within NHS trusts. We appreciate all your help with these new initiatives and hope that you will be enthused to engage in future projects.

<sup>1</sup> [www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/CMO-Letter-to-NHS-230112.pdf](http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/CMO-Letter-to-NHS-230112.pdf).