

Why do research?

An introduction to Health Research

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Session aims

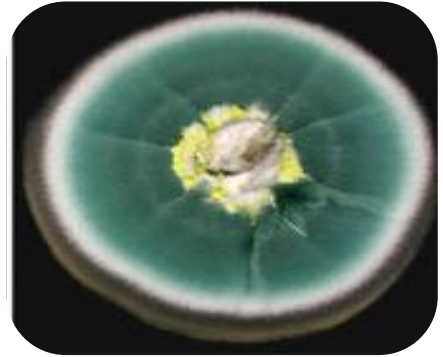
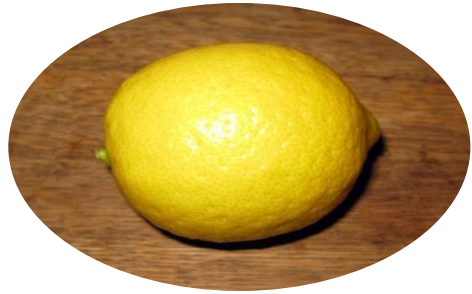
- Some milestones of health research
- Types of health research
- How do we decide what research is needed

Some milestones of health research

Clinical research has been with us throughout the ages....



Turn to the person sat next to you and identify an important discovery or advance over the past 2-300 years that has changed medicine and how people are treated?





What motivated doctors and scientists to do these studies?

Research

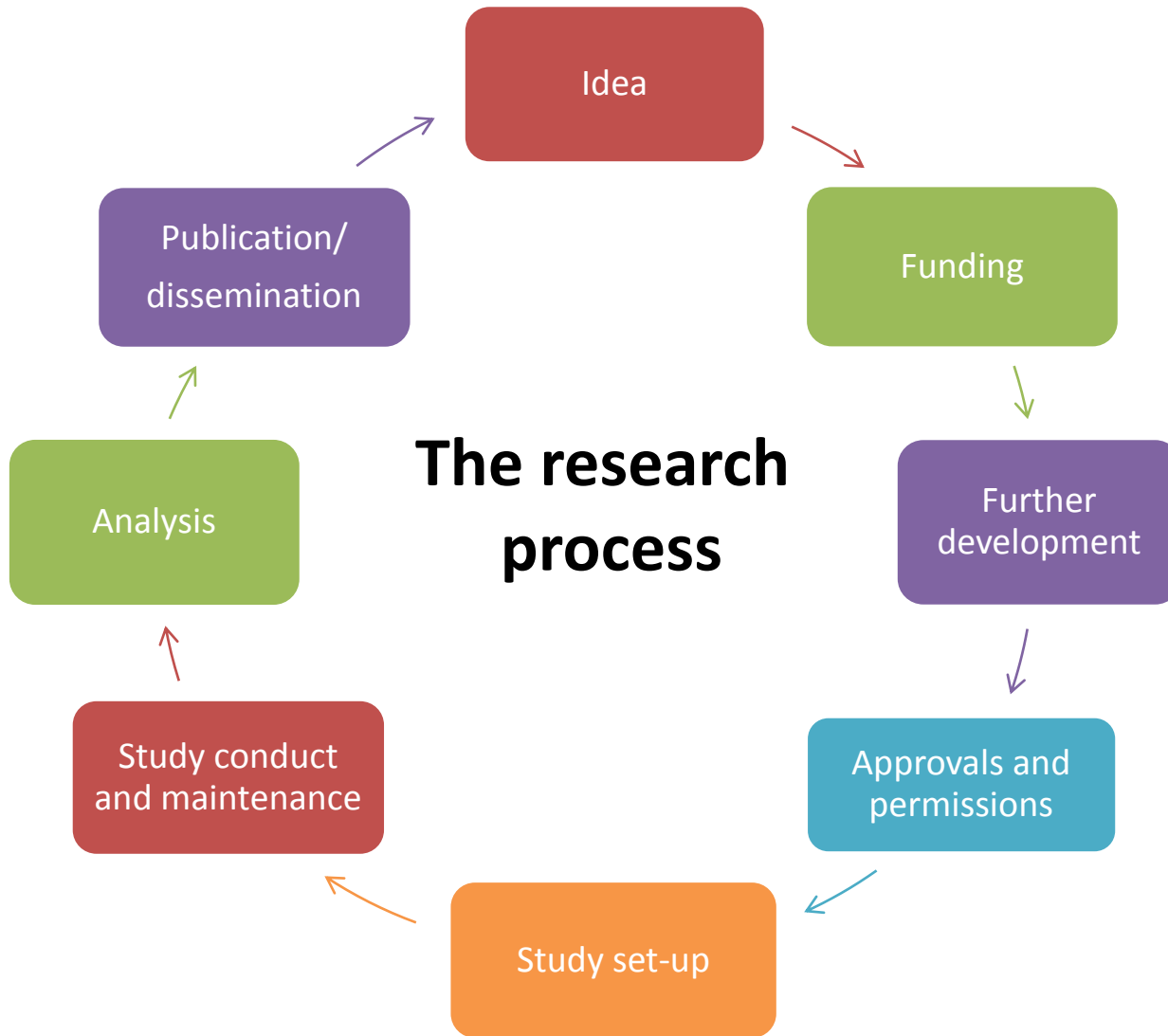
- Aims to derive generalisable or insightful new knowledge.
- Generalisable - can the results of the research be applied more generally and more widely than the study itself or are they only relevant to the specific context of the study.
- Insightful – explorations of experiences and meaningfulness. The how and why questions.

Research

- Addresses clearly defined questions, aims and objectives
- May involve evaluating or comparing interventions
- May involve randomisation or treatment allocation
- May involve talking to people about their experiences of interventions or their health
- May involve actual implementation of interventions and the process of involvement in this
- Usually involves collecting additional data

Clinical research

- Applied
- Primary - new research; specific question or issue
- Secondary - use of existing data
- Hypothesis driven - a question to answer
- Hypothesis generating - patterns and links
- Defined purpose of knowledge - to inform practice and treatments



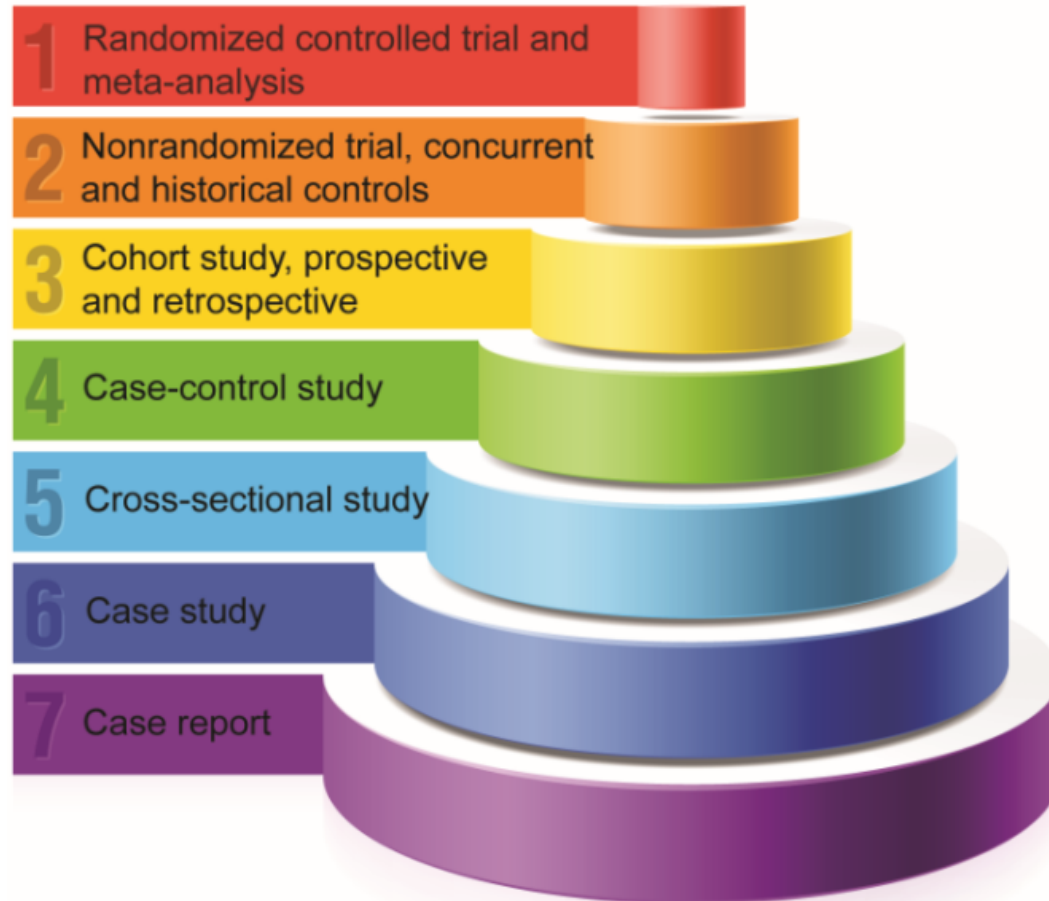
Research types

- Interventional and observational studies
- Clinical trials (phase I-IV) and clinical investigations
- Randomised, blinded (masked), crossover
- Commercial and non-commercial
- Qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods
- Action and participation research

Observational vs experimental

- **Observational**
 - Identify participants
 - Observe and record characteristics
 - Look for associations
- **Experimental**
 - Identify participants
 - Intervention according to protocol
 - Observe/ evaluate effects of the intervention

Hierarchy of research design





In your groups discuss why you think research matters. Decide on some compelling reasons to feedback to the wider group.

Some reasons

- Academic endeavour
- To extend what is known
- To gain personal knowledge
- Curiosity
- Discovery
- Invention
- Improvement

The 'right' research

- What type of research should we be doing?
- Research is for the benefit of patients (and the NHS)
- Evidence to support practice
- Research should not duplicate other work, unless it is necessary
- Research must be reviewed by experts

Risks and benefits

- What are acceptable risks?
- What benefits would you expect to receive from taking part in research?

Findings into practice

- [NICE](#) – National Institute for Health and Care Excellence - guidance, pathways, standards and recommendations for treatments
- Based on evidence
- Guidelines, reviews
- Findings that set further questions

Participatory and action methods

- Mixture of research and development
- Democracy and dialogue in the research process
- Community ownership of findings
- All about change – social and personal

How do we decide what research happens?



With the person sitting next to you, decide on a health problem where you'd like to see more research being conducted – think of a few reasons why this should be a priority?

Supporting research

- Identified national priorities
- New treatment/ drug development
- Inventions
- Local priorities
- Clinical need/ uncertainty
- Response to urgent problems

Why is patient and public involvement in research important?

- Defines priorities
- Brings the patient and public voice
- Vital and intrinsic part of both design and delivery
- Dissemination of findings
- Active involvement

