Aim: Engagement in research has positive impacts on healthcare performance and patient outcomes. The integration of R&D activities into NHS services remains an NHS Scotland strategic aim. To these ends, in 2006 the NHS Fife R&D strategy was expanded to include a dedicated team of research nurses within the R&D Department.

Methodology:
• An R&D research nurse team was established via a pragmatic and developmental approach.
• Collaboration with UK-wide Research Networks enabled the R&D nurse team to be expanded by strategically targeting: increased study numbers; maximised recruitment; delivery of a quality R&D support service from study concept to dissemination of findings.
• Supportive relationships were built, identifying new/ongoing support for our ongoing research.
• Establishing a research nursing career pathway maximised staff retention (Support Workers, Band 5, 6 & 7 nurses) all linked to Knowledge & Skills Framework (KSF) clinical competencies.
• Placements of clinical staff within R&D enabled the transfer of research nursing skills and experience.

Results:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;D Research Education Program uptake (participants since 2006)</td>
<td>1816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;D research nurse numbers (2006 n = 1)</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total studies open</td>
<td>249</td>
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<tr>
<td>% increase in active researchers (since 2006)</td>
<td>179%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median R&amp;D approval time</td>
<td>5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% increase in R&amp;D approvals (since 2011)</td>
<td>236%</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Increase in commercial activity (since 2014)</td>
<td>150%</td>
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Conclusions:
The integration of R&D into clinical practice, and our close alignment with clinical services, has further enhanced a growing research culture by:
• increasing involvement of staff ‘on the ground’ in research
• developing research skills of clinical colleagues
• facilitating collaboration between local academics and clinicians
• increasing research activity
• growing our reputation internally & within NHS Scotland (see video)
• increasing access to research for staff
• increasing access to research for the local population
... delivering a quality innovation in line with NHS Scotland’s ‘Setting The Direction’ education priorities and ‘20:20 Vision’ Quality Strategy.

References:
2 Setting the Direction for Nursing and Midwifery Education in Scotland. (2014) Scottish Government

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