Empowering Nurses to Promote Research Capacity Building in the Community Setting

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Background
Globally, patients who participate in research report greater satisfaction with care and improved clinical outcomes. However, community nurses often lack the expertise, confidence or engagement to undertake research. Reasons for this include lack of time, unstructured career progression pathways and a lack of mentorship and role-modelling. Clinically, this has resulted in a suboptimal evidence base, with implications for staff retention and recruitment and quality and safety of patient care.

Aim
The project aim was to undertake a James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnership in Community Nursing to identify the top ten evidence uncertainties in this area and to increase community nurses' engagement in research

Methods
This mixed methods study consisted of surveys and co-produced national meetings with stakeholders, including community nurses, patients, families and project leads. Stakeholder meeting members contributed to protocol development, survey design, recruitment strategies, data analysis and interpretation of findings. Two surveys were disseminated to community nurses, patients, families across England to identify evidence uncertainties. These were prioritised in a final stakeholder workshop in September 2021.

Results
Ten evidence uncertainties were identified. In addition, the collaborative process resulted in increased community engagement with research at a local and national level.

Conclusions and implications
This project has promoted research empowerment among the community nursing workforce and has ensured that research funders and policy makers prioritise community nursing research. Findings can be shared internationally to enable healthcare providers to support community nurses to generate research questions that make a difference to patient care outcomes.