Activities

# Chapter 1: Introduction to research in nursing and midwifery

## Activity 1.1

For ‘Think Point / Activity 1’ we asked you to make a list of all of the activities that you have taken part in over the last year that might be described as being ‘research’ and to include healthcare-related research and other studies that you have been involved in. To help you complete this task, we have the following hint:

### Hint – over the last year:

* Have you completed questionnaires sent to you in the post, by email or distributed to you at work or whilst you were on placement? Have you taken part in face-to-face or telephone interviews or a focus group?
* Has someone stopped you in the street and asked you to complete a consumer survey?
* Have you collected data for someone else’s research study? This might include asking patients to complete questionnaires, recording patient observations or collecting tissue samples specifically for a study.

## Activity 1.2

Make a list of all the words and phrases that you could use to describe or explain to someone what research is (either the noun or the verb). These could be words used to describe both healthcare and non-healthcare related research.

### Compare your list with ours:

*Study, rigorous, systematic, scientific, investigation, problem-solving, answering questions, orderly, testing, generating new knowledge, enquiry, reaffirming what is already known, finding answers, academic exercise, truth, examining, hard work, time-consuming, common-sense, scrutinizing, organised, valid, reliable, sound, robust, disciplined, methodical, search, hypothesis-testing, collection of information, analyzing*

You will almost certainly have thought of words and phrases that we have not included. Are there any words or phrases on our list that you disagree with?

Make a list of the words on our list that you are unfamiliar with. Some of these are likely to be research terms and the definitions for these can be found in the glossary. These terms will also be explained in later chapters.

Combine your list and ours to make one complete list of words and phrases that you think to describe or explain what research is. Use this combined list to help you to devise your own definition of research. You will be unable to use all of the words and phrases but try to develop a definition that incorporates the essence of most of them.

## Activity 1.3

Lookup a definition of research in a general dictionary.

Could the dictionary definition be applied to health care, nursing and midwifery research?

How does the dictionary definition compare with the definition you developed for Online activity 1.2 and our definition?

Of all of the definitions you have looked at, which do you think most accurately describes what research is?

Review the list you developed for Think-point/activity 1.1. On the basis of your chosen definition, do you now consider that each of the studies that you have listed is ‘research’? Keep this revised list and we will review it again in a later chapter.

## Activity 1.4

Read either or both of the following papers:

Hicks, C. (1996) A study of nurses’ attitudes towards research: a factor analytic approach Journal of Advanced Nursing 23: 373–379

Sleep, J. (1992) Research and the practice of midwifery Journal of Advanced Nursing 17: 1465–1471

Make a list of the reasons the author gives why nurses or midwives do not engage with research.

You will notice that both papers were published in the 1990s. Do you think the reasons the author has identified still apply today? Refer back to your response to ‘Think-point/activity 1.2,’ think about the nurses and midwives you have worked with recently and the research culture of the care settings where you have worked.

## Activity 1.5

See:

<https://www.nice.org.uk>

<http://www.midirs.org>

## Activity 1.6

We have provided an overview of the history of the development of nursing and midwifery research in the UK. Develop a timeline that includes the key milestones that we have identified. You may feel that there are important factors and events that we have not included in our summary. If this is the case, add these to your timeline.

## Activity 1.7

We have provided an overview of the history of the development of nursing and midwifery research in the UK. If you are currently based outside the UK, how does the development that we have described compare with that of your current setting? What are the important factors and events that have facilitated the development of research in your current setting?

The following chapter may be helpful:

Connerton, W. and D’Antonio, P. (2012) International comparisons: The nursing-midwifery interface in Borsay, A. and Hunter, B. *Nursing and Midwifery in Britain since 1700,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

## Activity 1.8

Write a short case study outlining an example of a piece of nursing or midwifery research from the 1970s or 1980s that changed practice. You may find it useful to access:

<http://rcn.sirsidynix.net.uk/uhtbin/cgisirsi/x/0/0/5?searchdata1=study%20of%20nursing%20care%20project%20reports%7b490%7d#>

or

<https://www.midirs.org/>