

UKCRC  
Registered  
Clinical  
Trials Units



# UKCRC Information Systems Operational Group Abstract Writing for Future Conferences Sub-group



igniting our potential

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**UKCRC Information Systems Operation Group**  
**Subgroup: Abstract Writing for future Conferences**

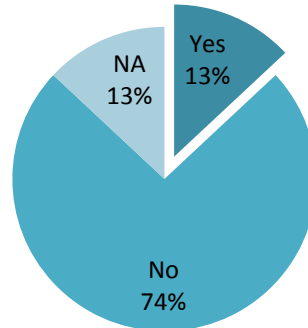
**Sharon Kean, Carolyn McNamara, Emma McKenzie**

**Q1: Please confirm the name of your Unit.**

Survey responses were completed by the following units –

Barts CTU  
Cambridge CTU  
Clinical Trials Unit  
CRUK CTU Glasgow  
Glasgow CTU  
ICR-CTSU  
Institute of Cancer Research Clinical Trials and Statistics Unit  
Keele CTU  
Leeds  
Newcastle CTU  
Northern Ireland Clinical Trials Unit  
Norwich Clinical Trials Unit  
NPEU CTU  
NORTH  
OCTRU  
Oxford Vaccine Group  
SEWTU  
Southampton CTU  
TCTU  
University of Sheffield  
Warwick CTU  
York CTU

**Q2: In the last 2 years have you within your IS/DM teams submitted or successfully published clinical trial related articles in peer reviewed journals?**



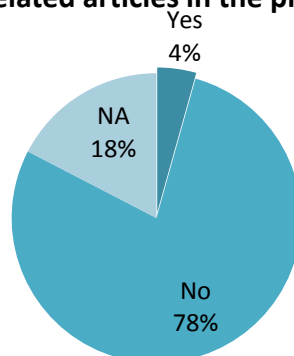
Only 13% of CTUs surveyed have, within their IS/DM teams, submitted or successfully published clinical trial related articles in peer reviewed journals in the last 2 years. These papers are - Webster-Smith et al. *Trials* 2015,16 (Suppl 2):P41 <http://www.trialsjournal.com/content/16/S2/P41>; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/jep.12284> and <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/jep.12576>.

One respondent feels that their IS/DM staff have been included as authors, but more as a recognition for their work.

*'But, IS/DM team staff have been included as authors on a couple of papers published by study PI/CIs. They wouldn't have been involved in authoring the papers more as recognition for their background work'*

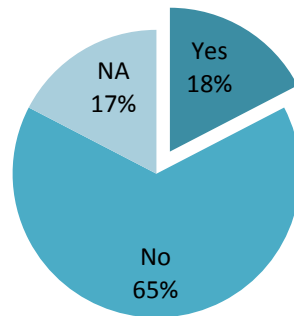
**Question 3** asked about the IS/DM team's involvement in the successful submission of clinical trial related articles in peer reviewed journals. The work involved in writing one of these successful submissions involved between eight and eleven people with about two hours per person over a period of two weeks. The length of the process from the first submission to publication was roughly four weeks.

**Q4: Do your IS/DM teams currently have any clinical trial related articles in the pipeline?**



Only 1 of the CTUs surveyed have any clinical trial related articles in the pipeline, two articles in this case.

**Q5: In the last 2 years have you within your IS/DM teams submitted or successfully presented clinical trial related posters/abstracts for presentations to national/international conferences?**



18% of CTUs surveyed have, within their IS/DM teams, submitted or successfully presented clinical related posters/abstracts for presentations to national/international conferences.

These conferences were:

SCT 2015 (Arlington, VA)

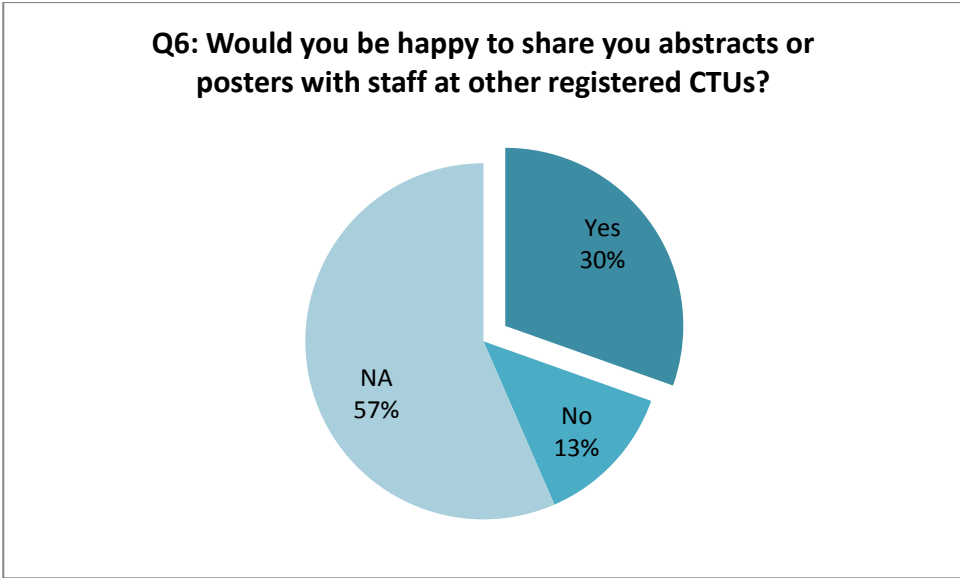
Farr Institute International Conference 2015

MRC International Clinical Trials Methodology Conference 2015

ITMC Glasgow 2015

Society for Clinical Trials May 2015 International Clinical Trials Methodology Conference Nov 2015

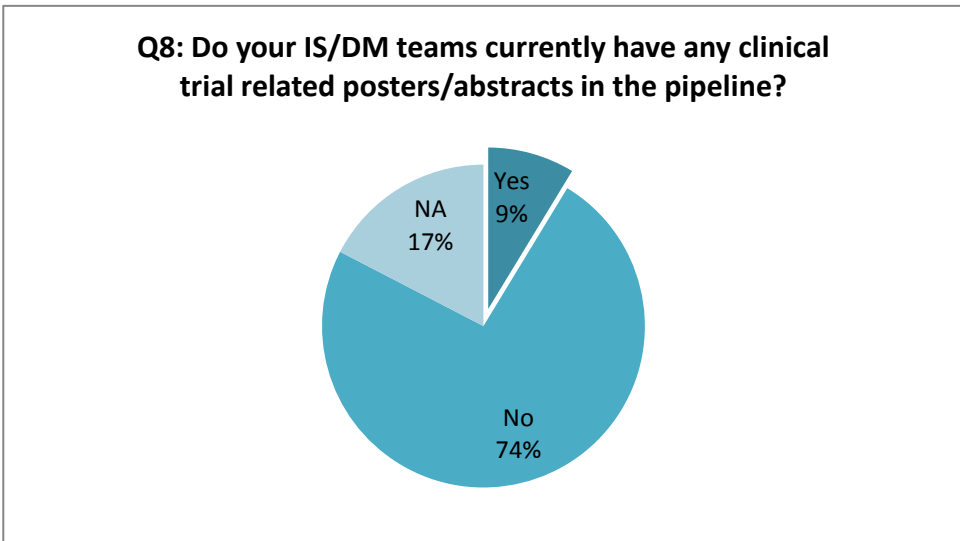
ICTMC 2015



30% of CTUs were happy to share abstracts or posters with staff at other registered CTUs. One respondent who is happy to share was nevertheless concerned about what format this would take –

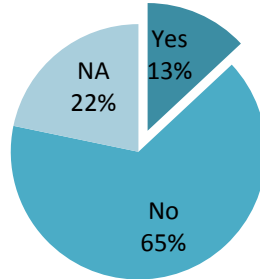
*‘Not sure how you want to ‘share’ - if part of poster display with credited authors etc then this should be fine. Electronic copies should be fine as well as hand-outs usually provided when displayed at conferences.’*

**Question 7** asked about the IS/DM team’s involvement in the successful submission of abstracts or posters. The work involved in writing one of these successful submissions involved between two and ten people and an average of five hours work. This work was spread over a period of two to five days, with one CTU having spent two months on average. The length of the process from the first submission to publication was roughly twelve weeks but this was also dependant on the date of the conference.



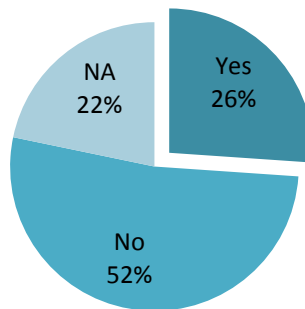
Only 2 of CTUs surveyed have any clinical trial related articles in the pipeline, two articles in the case of one of the CTUs.

**Q9: Do you plan to submit to a poster or abstract to the SCT/ICTMC 2017 conference this year (deadline 10th October 2016)?**



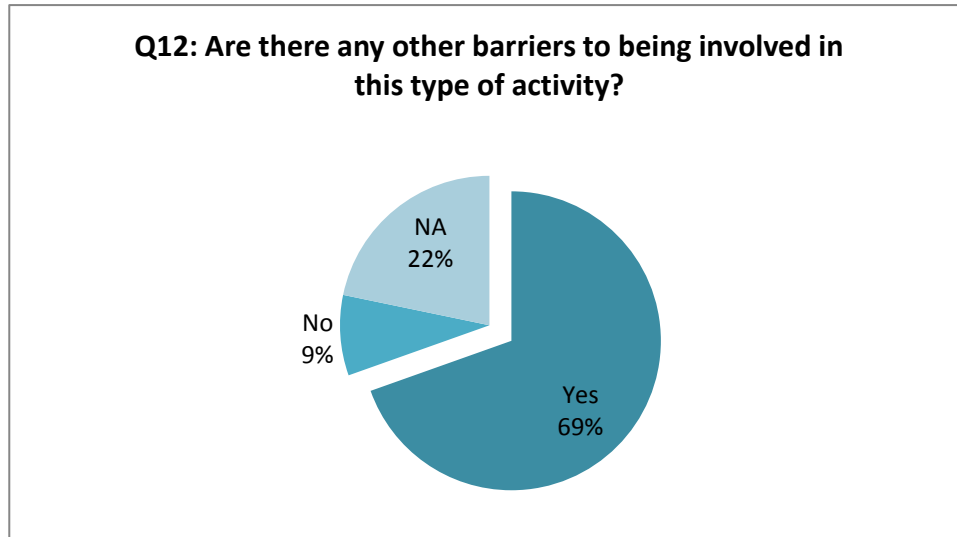
**Question 10** asked those who answered ‘Yes’ to question 9 what they intended to submit. 3 (13%) of CTUs planned to submit a poster or abstract to the SCT/ICTMC 2017 conference in May and all three planned to submit both an abstract and a poster.

**Q11: Would you like to submit this year but don’t feel confident in doing so? ie would guidance encourage this type of activity?**



26% of CTUs would like to have submitted a poster or abstract this year but didn’t feel confident enough in doing so.

When asked if there were any other barriers involved in submitting this type of activity, various responses were given. A common barrier was a lack of time, money and resource to create and submit an abstract/poster.



The lack of IS/DM team involvement in writing and publishing the abstracts/posters was cited.

*In our CTU abstracts and publications are written by the Statistics and Trial management teams. The DM team is involved up to the point of data lock then stats perform the analysis.*

The role of IT/DM in the publication process was also questioned.

*Not really sure what IT related presentations these sorts of conference would be interested in. Conferences perceived as more relevant to trials staff / statisticians rather than IT staff.*

*Not research staff (all DM staff are support staff)), so often not included in research-based work or, when have been, no real onus to produce outputs.*

*I also think there's a perception that the role of DM / IS is just in supporting trials, rather than doing research into the best methodologies.*

Not being seen as an academic and also being unaware of what was involved was mentioned or the feeling of having nothing to publish.

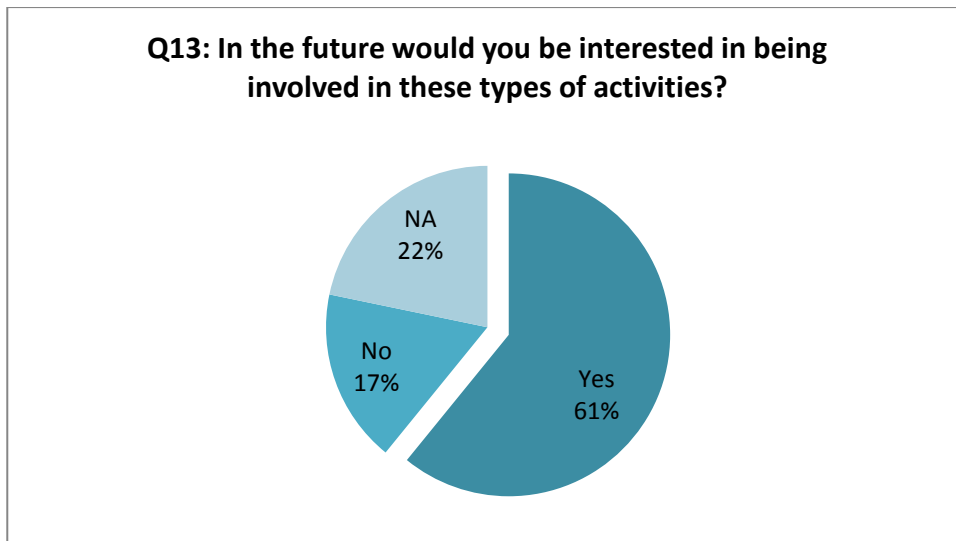
*Scale of routine work. Staff not on academic scales so no real incentive to publish.*

*We are increasingly seen as providing a service and not academics*

*Knowledge of suitable projects*

*Well we don't really have anything that is worthy*





61% would be interested in being involved in creating and submitting posters and/or abstracts.

**Question 14** asked those that would like to be involved in these types of activities in the future what areas would be of particular interest. The responses covered a wide range of topics:

*Data Sharing.*

*Information Governance.*

*Accessing data from NHS Digital and similar devolved nation bodies.*

*Implications of GDPR.*

*Effectiveness of e-surveys vs postal questionnaires (response rate and data completion).*

*Impact of reminder texts/emails/letters on questionnaire response rates.*

*The impact of eRDC on study timelines.*

*eCRF development Web development Alternative data capture methods (e.g. mobile technology) Randomisation methodology Drug Supply Management IVRS*

*Information Systems and Technology*

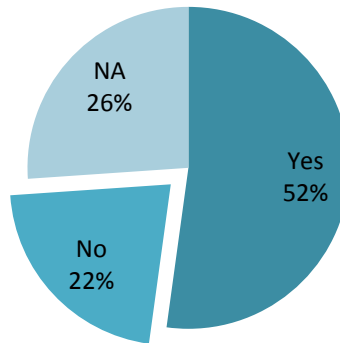
*Presenting Writing the abstract*

*New innovations in IT/DM relating to eCRF.*

One respondent, while interested in being involved generally, was currently unsure of the areas which could or would be covered.

*Difficult to pinpoint exact areas at present. Would need a greater understanding of the types of projects going forward for submission to see value in what our team could present.*

**Q15: Are you interested in being involved in submitting papers to journals or poster/abstracts to conferences and meetings?**



22% of CTUs are not interested in being involved in submitting papers to journals or posters/abstracts to conferences and meetings.

The amount of time required to produce the work was the main reason for not being interested as well as not having the correct background or support network.

*We are more providing a service and do not have the time for other activities that are not directly funded through our research studies.*

*Time required is a barrier - publication of activities is not a priority.*

*Time will always be a limiting factor.*

*Not sure I have a support network or correct background for that sort of thing. I'm always happy to help contribute to the processes outlined in papers and do the work behind them, though!*

**Conclusion:**

The results of the survey show that, for various reasons, the majority of respondents do not participate in this type of activity, although time and resource is a common theme. Six CTUs have indicated that they don't currently have any abstracts planned, but would be interested in submitting this year, although they do not have the confidence to do so. It is likely that these CTUs would find additional guidance and examples of abstracts/poster presentations/papers useful to build confidence, with the aim of submitting an abstract or poster in future. Other units felt that this type of work was not within the remit of an IT section, and that publication was a trial, rather than IT-related activity. On a positive note the amount of hours spent on preparation for an abstract submission did not seem to be prohibitive.

The benefits of participating in this type of work should be noted. It serves to raise the profile of the unit as well as the IT or DM sections, it may assist in future funding opportunities, and it may also provide an additional incentive to prospective employees that are interested in this aspect of work in an academic trials unit.