Post Specification

Post Title:	Research Fellow – Patient Safety Research Network Manager
Post Status:	Fixed Term Contract for 4 years – Full-time
Research Group / Department / School:	Centre for Innovative Human Systems, School of Psychology, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin
Location:	1. Centre for Innovative Human Systems, School of Psychology, https://www.tcd.ie/cihs/ Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin College Green, Dublin 2, Ireland 2. The incumbent will may also be required to occasionally travel to HSE sites as required.
Reports to:	Principal Investigator: Prof. Sam Cromie
Salary:	Appointment will be made on the [IUA Researcher Salary Scale] at a point in line with Government Pay Policy [Level 3 Research Fellow €61,318 to €66,815 per annum]
Hours of Work:	37 hours
Closing Date:	12 Noon (Irish Standard Time) 20th March, 2024

Post Summary

Applications are invited from candidates interested in playing the key role of Network Manager for the **Evidence-based QUality Improvement and Patient Safety (EQUIPS)** research network. EQUIPS aims to build a community of Quality and Patient Safety (QPS) researchers, knowledge users, patients, public and other stakeholders to change the landscape of Irish QPS research. The project is co-funded by the Health Research Board and the Irish Health Service Executive (HSE). The grant was awarded to the Centre for Innovative Human Systems, School of Psychology, Trinity College Dublin. The successful candidate will have office space at the Centre for Innovative Human Systems, School of Psychology (https://www.tcd.ie/cihs/) and will be supervised by Prof Sam Cromie - Principal Investigator (PI).

EQUIPS Project summary.

Despite decades of focus, patient harm rates in Ireland have not improved significantly. Despite investment in, and an increasing culture of quality improvement in Irish health and social care, the services frequently fall below acceptable standards on all quality dimensions – efficiency, effectiveness, equity accessibility and timeliness. If we add staff welfare, person-centred or even kin-centred care as quality metrics the picture is no better.

EQUIPS aims to draw together existing pockets of research collaboration to build a community of Quality and Patient Safety (QPS) researchers, knowledge users, patients, public and other stakeholders to change the landscape of Irish QPS research. It will break down silos between stakeholder groups, between researchers of different disciplines and orientations, between knowledge users of different stripes. It will demystify QPS research for the patient and the public.

EQUIPS will have three strands. The Enable strand will put all the pieces in place to build a thriving research community – events, information sources, capacity and capability building. The Understanding and Informing strand will draw on this community set priorities and strategies for QPS research, identify barriers and enablers and evaluate the network itself to apply the quality improvement cycle to it. The Focussing strand will consist of clusters to start working on priority QPSresearch topics, set the agenda for them, put consortia together and start pursuing funding. Two initial clusters will focus on System and Process Design and Implementation and Evaluation.

A summary of the EQUIPS Work Programme is provided in an appendix.

Standard Duties and Responsibilities of the Post

Specific duties and responsibilities include:

- To conduct the specified programme of EQUIPS activities under the supervision and direction of the PI.
- To coordinate the activities of the network under the direction of the PI and with the assistance of the administrative team
- To build the EQUIPS community and facilitate the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders in it; this will require working closely with the project co-sponsors and lead knowledge users the HSE National Quality and Patient Safety Directorate to develop a strong familiarity with its people and work.
- To facilitate research collaborations among the network members
- To engage in a programme of action research to monitor, evaluate and improve the EQUIPS network.
- To support the publication of research findings in peer reviewed journals
- To engage in appropriate training and professional development opportunities as required by the PI, School or College in order to develop research skills and competencies.
- To engage in the dissemination of the results of the research in which they are engaged, as directed by, with the support of and under the supervision of the PI
- To carry out additional duties as may reasonably be required within the general scope and level of the post.

Person Specification

The candidate should be motivated to build a strong effective community of patient safety and quality improvement research in Ireland. They will be willing to work in a multi-disciplinary, collaborative context bridging perspectives from quality and safety improvement, human factors, public health, and other fields and linking together stakeholders including academics/researchers, practitioners, patients and the general public.

Qualifications

Candidates should have bachelor's and PhD degrees, **at least one of which** should be in a relevant discipline such as Psychology, Social Sciences, Business, Organisational Psychology, Human Factors, Quality/Safety Management, Public Health, or Health Sciences.

Knowledge & Experience (Essential & Desirable)

The candidate should have knowledge and/or experience in the following areas:

- Patient safety, organisational learning, safety/quality management, quality improvement and/or risk management (Essential)

- Research and Research Ethics (Essential)

- Publication in international peer review journals (Essential)

- Participatory Action Research / Action Research (Desirable)

- Understanding of healthcare and health systems (Desirable)

- Report writing for different stakeholders (Desirable)

- Establishing and building collaborative networks with researchers, professionals and knowledge users, funding agencies and other key stakeholders (Desirable)

- Organisational psychology/behaviour, Human Factors (Desirable)

- Working in industry-based organisational research / embedded research (Desirable)

- Working in a collaborative multi-disciplinary environment (Desirable)

- Public speaking (including delivering presentations and facilitating workshops) to large and influential audiences; (Desirable)

- Familiarity with the research process including proposal development, funding mechanisms, project management, dissemination, and publication (Desirable)

- Interest in developing and leading research proposals (Desirable)

Skills & Competencies

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills [Essential]

- Excellent facilitation skills [Essential]

- Conducting literature reviews, research and report writing (Essential)

- Co-ordination of project activity and information (Essential)

- Conducting systematic reviews or realist reviews (Desirable)

Further Information for Applicants

URL Link to Area	https://www.tcd.ie/cihs/
URL Link to Human Resources	https://www.tcd.ie/hr/

Centre for Innovative Human Systems

The products and services we take for granted in the 21st century are the outputs of complex human systems. Transport, healthcare, security, education, finance, the internet, politics. Vast, complex, interdependent systems of individuals, organisations and technologies interact to innovate, design, develop, finance, regulate, certify, produce, test, localise, market, sell and deliver these to us. At the core are people, designing, operating, managing and improving the system to produce results.

As consumers and citizens we are rarely conscious of these systems until they let us down. Sometimes this is in small ways – an app keeps crashing, our weekly shop is not delivered, the bus is late. But their failures can be chronic - treatment delays in healthcare, or catastrophic, such as when a train derails.

Over the past 30 years, the Centre for Innovative Human Systems (CIHS) has been focussed on bringing together a range of perspectives to develop better ways of describing, understanding and effectively changing these systems and processes. Psychology, Business and Organisation, Engineering and Computer Science, and Health Sciences all contribute to the work of the Centre.

The CIHS provides a variety of offerings in Research, Education/Training and Consultancy. Our team of highly experienced and dedicated researchers, use their skills and experience to address the real challenges faced by diverse sectors, to produce solutions that put people front and centre.

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

Trinity is Ireland's premier university, with a proud tradition of excellence stretching back to its foundation in 1592. The oldest university in Ireland, and one of the oldest in Europe, today Trinity sits at the intersection of the past and the future and is ideally positioned as a major university in the European Union. Our 47-acre campus is located in the heart of Dublin city centre and is home to historic buildings dating from the University's establishment, as well as some of the most cutting-edge teaching and research facilities in Ireland. Students at Trinity benefit from a unique educational experience across a range of disciplines in our three faculties – Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences; Engineering, Mathematics and Science; and Health Sciences. The pursuit of excellence through research and scholarship is at the heart of

a Trinity education, and our researchers have an outstanding publication record and strong record of grant success.

Trinity has developed [18 broad-based multidisciplinary research themes](#) that cut across disciplines and facilitate world-leading research and collaboration within the University and with colleagues around the world. These internationally recognised themes include such diverse areas as Cancer, Immunology, Telecoms, Identities in Transformation, Nanoscience, Neuroscience, and Making Ireland. Researchers from across the University work together in innovative ways to develop new and exciting approaches to their research and explore the frontiers of knowledge in the 21st century. In creating these dedicated research themes, Trinity's researchers are able to become a more powerful force on the global stage, successfully competing for large-scale grants and attracting top students and faculty to the University. Trinity is home to Ireland's first purpose-built Nanoscience research institute, CRANN, which opened in January 2008. This state-of-the-art facility houses 150 scientists, technicians, and graduate students in specialised laboratories, fostering creative innovations that have seen Trinity's researchers make significant breakthroughs.

The Trinity Long Room Hub for Arts and Humanities Research Institute is the University's flagship institute for research in the Arts and Humanities, providing a world-class environment for cross-disciplinary collaborative projects. The Long Room Hub provides a central location through which the University's internationally respected Arts and Humanities research can become more visible, demonstrating its relevance for contemporary and future societies. Researchers from across the University regularly participate in debates on topical issues facing the world today. As well as operating an International Visiting Research Fellowship programme, the Long Room Hub also hosts major EU-funded Digital Humanities projects.

One of the most instantly recognised parts of Trinity's campus is the famous Old Library, home to the historic Book of Kells as well as other internationally significant holdings in manuscripts, maps, and early printed material. Trinity's Library is the largest research library in Ireland and is an invaluable resource to Trinity's students and research community. Built up over the four centuries of the University's existence, the library's collections have benefitted from its status as a Legal Deposit library for the past 200 years, granting Trinity the right to claim a copy of every book published in Ireland and the UK. At present, the library's holdings

span approximately 4.25 million books, 22,000 printed periodical titles, and access to 60,000 e-journals and 250,000 e-books.

Trinity attracts top students from Ireland and abroad and prides itself on the consistently high standard of student admitted to the University every year. These students are drawn to Trinity for the excellence of our research-led teaching and for the quality and prestige a degree from this University confers. Trinity has also pioneered accessibility to education in Ireland, becoming the first university in the country to reserve 15% of its undergraduate places for students from non-traditional learning groups. Trinity is the top-ranked European university for student entrepreneurship and Europe's only representative in the world's top-50 universities.

Our alumni have gone on to shape the history of Ireland and of Western Europe in a wide range of fields. These include such notable figures as Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde, William Rowan Hamilton, Edmund Burke, William Stokes, Denis Burkitt, Louise Richardson, Lenny Abrahamson, and Anne Enright. Three of Trinity's graduates have been awarded Nobel prizes: Ernest Walton for Physics in 1951; Samuel Beckett for Literature in 1968; and William Campbell for Physiology / Medicine in 2015. Trinity also counts the first female President of Ireland among its alumni in Mary Robinson, as well as other notable former Presidents Douglas Hyde and Mary McAleese. At Trinity we are justifiably proud of our tradition, and we strive to uphold this excellence as we face the demands of the 21st century.

Ranking Facts

Trinity is the top ranked university in Ireland. Using the QS methodology, the University is ranked 104th in the world and using the Times Higher Education World University Rankings methodology Trinity is 117th in the world.

Overall

- Trinity is Ireland's No.1 University in the QS World University Ranking, THE World University Ranking and the Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai).

- Trinity is ranked 104th in the World, and 36th in Europe, in the 2018/2019 QS World University Ranking.

- Trinity is ranked in the Top 120 for Graduate Employability in the QS 2018 Rankings.

- Trinity is in the Top 50 most innovative universities in Europe according to Reuters.[1]

- Between 2010 and 2015, Trinity was ranked the top university in Europe for entrepreneurship according to Pitchbook's independent analysis.[2]

Internationalisation

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[1] http://www.reuters.com/article/us-innovative-stories-europe-idUSKCN0Z00CT
[2] http://pitchbook.com/news/reports/2015-2016-pitchbook-universities-report

- Trinity is ranked 52nd in the world in the THE World University Ranking for international outlook.

Research Performance

- Of the 981 institutions included in the THE World University Rankings for 2017, Trinity is in the top 15% internationally for research performance.

- Trinity is ranked in the top 15% internationally by QS for citations.

In the QS World University Subject Rankings:

- Trinity is ranked in the top 50 worldwide in four subject areas according to the QS World University Subject Rankings 2018. The University is ranked in the top 100 globally for 20 subjects overall.

- Trinity's Top 50 subjects include Nursing (25th), Classics (28th), English (28th) and Politics (43rd).

- Trinity is ranked in the top 100 for each of the following 16 subjects: History, Languages, Philosophy, Theology, Computer Science, Biology, Medicine, Pharmacy, Chemistry, Geography, Materials Science, Education, Law, Social Policy, Sociology and Sport.

- The University is ranked in the top 100 for three broad subject areas: Arts & Humanities (57th), Life Sciences & Medicine (87th), and Engineering & Technology (89th).

Research Themes

Ageing
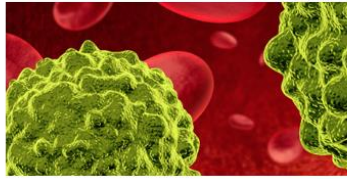
Cancer

Creative Arts Practice

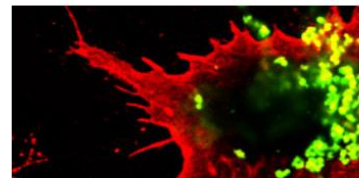Creative Technologies

Digital Engagement

Digital Humanities

Genes & Society

Identities in Transformation

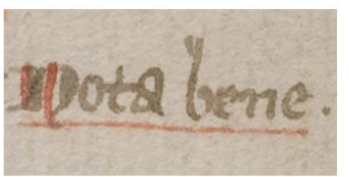Immunology, Inflammation & Infection

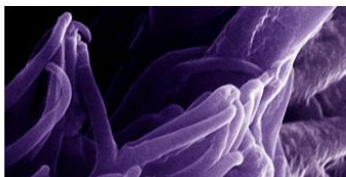International Development

International Integration

Making Ireland

Manuscript, Book and Print Cultures

Nanoscience

Neuroscience

Telecommunications

Smart Sustainable Planet

Next Generation Medical Devices

The Selection Process in Trinity

The Selection Committee (Interview Panel) may include members of the Academic and Administrative community together with External Assessor(s) who are expert in the area. Applications will be acknowledged by email. If you do not receive confirmation of receipt within 1 day of submitting your application online, please contact the named Recruitment Partner on the job specification immediately and prior to the closing date/time.

Given the degree of co-ordination and planning to have a Selection Committee available on the specified date, the University regrets that it may not be in a position to offer alternate selection dates. Where candidates are unavailable, reserves may be drawn from a shortlist. Outcomes of interviews are notified in writing to candidates and are issued no later than 5 working days following the selection day.

In some instances, the Selection Committee may avail of telephone or video conferencing. The University's selection methods may consist of any or all of the following: Interviews, Presentations, Psychometric Testing, References and Situational Exercises.

It is the policy of the University to conduct pre-employment medical screening/full pre-employment medicals. Information supplied by candidates in their application (Cover Letter and CV) will be used to shortlist for interview.

Applications from non-EEA citizens are welcomed. However, eligibility is determined by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and further information on the Highly Skills Eligible Occupations List is set out in Schedule 3 of the Regulations https://www.djei.ie/en/What-We-Do/Jobs-Workplace-and-Skills/Employment-Permits/Employment-Permit-Eligibility/Highly-Skilled-Eligible-Occupations-List/ and the Ineligible Categories of Employment are set out in Schedule 4 of the Regulations https://www.djei.ie/en/What-We-Do/Jobs-Workplace-and-Skills/Employment-Permits/Employment-Permit-Eligibility/Ineligible-Categories-of-Employment/. Non-EEA candidates should note that the onus is on them to secure a visa to travel to Ireland prior to interview. Non-EEA candidates should also be aware that even if successful at interview, an appointment to the post is contingent on the securing of an employment permit.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Trinity is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to employment policies, procedures and practices which do not discriminate on grounds such as gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or membership of the travelling community. On that basis we encourage and welcome talented people from all backgrounds to join our staff community. Trinity's Diversity Statement can be viewed in full at https://www.tcd.ie/diversity-inclusion/diversity-statement.

Pension Entitlements

This is a pensionable position, and the provisions of the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 will apply in relation to retirement age for pension purposes. Details of the relevant Pension Scheme will be provided to the successful applicant.

Applicants should note that they will be required to complete a Pre-Employment Declaration to confirm whether or not they have previously availed of an Irish Public Service Scheme of incentivised early retirement or enhanced redundancy payment. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Irish Public Service employment.

Applicants formerly employed by the Irish Public Service that may previously have availed of an Irish Public Service Scheme of Incentivised early retirement or enhanced redundancy payment should ensure that they are not precluded from re-engagement in the Irish Public Service under the terms of such Schemes. Such queries should be directed to an applicant's former Irish Public Service Employer in the first instance.

Application Procedure

Application Procedure
Applicants should submit a full Curriculum Vitae to include the names and contact details of 2 referees (including email addresses), to:
Name: Paula Hicks **Title: Centre Administrator, Centre for Innovative Human Systems** **Email Address: phicks@tcd.ie** **Contact Telephone Number: +353 (0)1 896 8596**

Appendix: EQUIPS Work Programme

The network is organised in three concurrent strands:

1. **Enabling**. This strand comprises a range of concrete activities and resources designed to establish the network and enable it to function – events, information resources, building capability and addressing capacity.

2. **Understanding and informing**. This strand comprises three activities designed to inform the development and continuous improvement of the network – 1. developing, monitoring, and adjusting priorities and strategies, 2. identifying barriers and enablers, and 3. analysing and evaluating the functioning of the network itself.

3. **Focussing**. This strand comprises clusters of stakeholders organised around priority research topics. Most of the clusters will be defined as the Priorities and Strategies task determines these topics. Two "starter" clusters have been identified where there is already a clear need for and critical mass of research and knowledge user interest – Systems & Process Design and Implementation & Evaluation.

Activity strand 1 – Enabling QPSR

TASK 1.1 Events and engagement opportunities

Objectives

The cornerstone of any network is opportunities for network members to meet and engage meaningfully. This task will design a programme of events to build the network in quantity and quality and to support the work of the other tasks and strands. The programme has not fully been designed in advance as it needs to be informed by the emerging network, monitored, and iteratively adjusted to ensure that it is supporting its objectives.

TASK 1.2 Information & Interactive Resources

Objective: to promote efficient access to information and engagement for and effective dissemination of EQUIPS

The network website will host and populate information resources required by the network. It is envisaged that this will include:

TASK 1.3 Knowledge Translation

Objective: To support integrated knowledge translation (iKT) in EQUIPS

Informed by the Conceptual Framework of QPS Research developed in task 2.1, this task will focus on filling gaps in the supports for integrated knowledge translation of QPS research in Ireland. This will include:

- Close engagement with PPI collaborators and co-applicants
- Highlighting gaps in the capacity for iKT for task 1.5
- Promoting training in knowledge translation for EQUIPS stakeholders, in conjunction with task 1.6, building on the training available on www.hseland.ie and elsewhere in the network
- A research brokerage forum, in conjunction with task 1.2, where researchers, practitioners, patients and public can engage with stakeholders through the life cycle of research projects and are supported in ensuring translation

TASK 1.4 Community building

Objective: To build an EQUIPS community rather than just a network

For EQUIPS to be a community rather than just a network, the "hard" elements of websites, webinars, knowledge resources, etc. need to be complemented by a positive culture of learning and collaboration. It will require trust, respect, openness, sharing. It needs to develop a collaborative rather than a competitive culture.

Tasks

This task focuses on developing this community through:

- Actively building connections across and within stakeholder groups
- Providing opportunities for collaboration in tasks, focus groups, clusters
- Sharing resources, information, opportunities, expertise
- Eliciting, listening to and helping to address challenges faced by stakeholders. This will partly be done through tasks 2.1, 2.2, 1.5 & 1.6
- Identifying peripheral members and promoting their integration – e.g. junior researchers, practitioners from small organisations with limited research exposure, patients and public who are unsure that their voice will be heard, minorities
- Building a social element into network events
- Modelling trust, openness and inclusion by network, strand and cluster leaders

TASK 1.5 Capacity

Objectives: To document and explore solutions to capacity challenges for QPS research in Ireland

Tasks

The question to which this task will address itself is what are the capacity constraints that limit QPS research in Ireland and how can they be addressed.

Some of the anticipated barriers relate to:

- Funding for QPS research, and research of specific types
- Access to data
- QPS Researchers
- Knowledge users with time and motivation to engage
- Diversity of knowledge users across disciplines, locations, services
- Number and diversity of PPI participants and agreed policies on their payment
- Access to time- and resource- efficient ethics approval processes

The task will draw in input from task 2.2. which will identify the key barriers to QPS research. This will be done through a survey of the network complemented with focus groups and targeted interviews.

This will lead to a report articulating a strategy for building the capacity for QPS research in Ireland to be completed in the first year. This will inform the activity of this task. It is envisaged that few of the capacity issues will be directly within the control of EQUIPS so the task will largely involve influencing and lobbying other organisations to address the constraints. An updated strategy (in M54) will report on the success of these efforts and recommended next steps.

TASK 1.6 Capability

Objectives

- Identify training and development needs to support EQUIP
- Build capability and knowledge in QPS research
- Build the EQUIPS community through shared training and development events.
- Building and strength, links with QPS-focused international research networks.
- Building a community of EQUIPS supervisors and mentors to support postdoctoral students and practitioners

Background

These training and development activities will be aimed at academics, healthcare staff, postgraduate students, and patients/service users and members of the public who will be working with the network to facilitate learning and improvement and support the conduct of robust, high-quality research. It is envisioned that the task will be delivered in a variety of ways, including via seminars, on-line lectures, workshops and short courses. The network will also promote the placement of PhD candidates and researchers in projects nationally/internationally with collaborators.

Tasks
Training/support needs mapping
An online survey to establish expertise available in the network to populate the members directory (task 1.2) and will elicit perceived training needs and priorities.

Education/Training programme
Working closely working with the network Manager/Co-ordinator to plan and deliver training and develop a training schedule for the network, liaising with network members to coordinate delivery of training events.

On-going identification of training and development needs
Given the network will evolve over time and respond to findings from the *Understanding and Informing* stream, the task will involve working across the network to agree training and development priorities and establishing connects with national and international experts to support education and development.

Activity Strand 2 – Understanding & Informing QPS Research

TASK 2.1 Priorities & Strategies

What constitutes as "QPS research" has yet to be formally defined and agreed in the Irish context. This generally lacks clarity due to overlaps between measurement for improvement, accountability, and research (9, 10). Over the past decade, patient safety research in Ireland has focused on incident epidemiology, culture, and human factors. Further developments are required to demonstrate cost-effective interventions and methodologies that will positively impact the safety and wellbeing needs of patients, staff and organisations. The network seeks to align incident healthcare needs with academic thinking and research in a collaborative setting.

The Covid19 pandemic has increased challenge to perceptions of how quality and safety is conceptualised and enhanced (12). Drawing on the increased recognition of the importance of organisational culture, 'safety' is no longer predominantly defined in terms of incidents rates but in how well institutions and teams learn, engage in QI, and manage capacity (13). 'Quality' once viewed as a property of care received by patients, is now viewed as a co-created relational concept, required to meet the safety, efficiency and equity needs of patients, staff, and organisations alike (12). Due to these shifts, the field is broadening to include other disciplines: implementation science, design-thinking, health economics, behavioural science, and is drawing attention to quality and safety as population health issues.

Objectives:
- To develop a shared EQUIPS understanding of the definition and objectives of QPS research in Ireland

- To develop a shared principled approach to identifying QPS research priorities

- To identify those priorities in the Irish context

- To profile QPS work in the Irish healthcare system and identify synergies, duplications, and opportunities for better alignment

- To identify research strategies - models and methodologies - for QPS research to best enable understanding of the issues, their causes and the development and implementation of effective and cost-effective initiatives.
- To develop a research agenda to deliver on this strategy
- To develop means for ongoing management, refinement, and communication of the EQUIPS research agenda and priorities within the network and externally among stakeholders

TASK 2.2 Barriers & Enablers

Objectives

Identify the barriers and facilitators to quality improvement and patient safety research in Ireland. Disseminate this to EQUIPS and wider audiences

Background

 This task will provide an understanding of the research context and factors which will facilitate or hinder research progress in quality improvement and patient safety research. This knowledge is crucial to progressing national goals in this area. This task will consist of two phases, each of which is delineated below.

Method

Phase 1. Qualitative evidence synthesis. A systematic review of qualitative studies on barriers and facilitators to conducting QPS research. A review protocol will be registered via PROSPERO (International Prospective Register of Systematic Reviews) to ensure transparency and rigour of the review process. The Theoretical Domains Framework (Michie, et al., 2014) will be used to theme the identified barriers and facilitators. The research leaders for this task have considerable systematic review experience, having published >20 reviews on a range of topics.

Phase 2. Focus groups with stakeholders. A series of focus groups with relevant stakeholders- (patients, regulators, patient safety and risk managers, healthcare workers, and researchers) to identify barriers and enablers to quality improvement and patient safety research in Ireland. 10 and 12 participants per stakeholder group. Data analysis will be completed using deductive content analysis, with data mapped to the Theoretical Domains Framework (Michie, et al., 2014). The research leaders are also experienced in conducted focus group studies on a range of topics (e.g. barriers and facilitators of hand hygiene compliance; Lambe, et al, 2020).

TASK 2.3 Network Analysis, monitoring & evaluation

Objective To define and monitor and evaluate EQUIPS against agreed quality criteria and to inform improvements in the network

This is the "conscience" of the network. To ensure the network is doing what it is supposed to do, and doing it well, we need to:

- Collaboratively define criteria and metrics for the network
- Monitor the network against those criteria
- Understand the drivers of those criteria, so that we can inform improvements to the network

Key criteria to be considered:

- Penetration of the network to the relevant community
- Decentralization of interactions in the network
- Quantity and quality of stakeholder engagement
- Equity, diversity and inclusion
- Effectiveness of networking events and tools
- Cost-effectiveness
- Quality of engagement, sense of community, identity
- Culture of the network – trust, respect, psychological safety
- Productivity
- Environmental impact

Tasks

EQUIPS workshop to elaborate and agree on a vision of what the network should be like and related quality criteria

Definition of a methodology for ongoing evaluation of the network against those quality criteria and elucidating the functioning of the network and the drivers of those criteria

Iterative application of the methodology

Activity Strand 3 – Focussing QPSR

Cluster 1 Systems & Process Design

Rationale

QPS has traditionally been dominated by a reactive approach focussed on learning from adverse events. It is increasingly recognised that significantly enhancing QPS requires a proactive approach through the deliberate design of systems and processes to meet QPS objective. By prioritising the generation and utilisation of knowledge (e.g., both formal in terms of Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) developed by its Clinical Design Teams (CDTs) and the informal/tacit knowledge of healthcare practitioners, patients and the public) guided by principles rooted in socio-technical systems and co-design thinking, we can optimise our capacity to influence and enhance healthcare outcomes.

Objectives

- Deploy a Co-Design and Socio-technical Systems approach to understanding and improving systems and processes
- Identify active researchers, healthcare practitioners and PPI partners across Ireland with an interest in understanding and improving healthcare systems and processes
- Build engagement in the cluster
- Co-produce an agreed programme of work to advance research Systems and Process Design – methodologies, case studies, etc.
- Seek research opportunities and funding for this programme
- Start implementation of the programme

Tasks

- T1: Identification of researchers and practitioners interested in systems and process design. This will begin with discussions within the EQUIPS network and extended networks of the network participants. Snowball methods will be used to identify other researchers and practitioners connected to those initially identified. Those identified will be invited to join the cluster.
- T2: Initial meeting to agree terms of references such as preferred communication methods and dissemination platforms, frequency and purpose of meetings and scope of collaboration
- T3: Co-produce a programme of work and timeframe that builds on current state of the art and identifies key priority areas (informed by task 2.1) (e.g., review current HSE practice in design of clinical care pathways; review state of the art in design processes and training support).
- T4: Seek opportunities and funding for the programme. This will include practitioners and PPI partners keen to engage on projects, academics and students with motivation, capacity, and capability to carry out the research and, as required, funding for the research.
- T4: Collate a systems design sandbox of existing resources (in collaboration with Strand 1) (e.g., study designs, design methodologies, studies of successful QI and safety patient projects, findings around good practice and barriers in different context, key research themes etc).

- T5: Build links to international groups who deploy socio-technical systems thinking for healthcare systems design
- T6: Overall delivery and management of cluster activities and linkages to other activities of the network.
- T7: Develop a QPS research cluster model (in collaboration with 3.2) to guide the development of further clusters in strand 3.

Cluster 2 Implementation & Evaluation

Rationale

QPS improvement is difficult and requires a unique combination of skills to make implementation work. QI interventions in healthcare are complex and require co-design and pragmatic local adaptation to context. As a result, evaluation is also difficult, with shifting denominators of patients receiving different intervention exposures as the intervention is refined: the required study designs are significantly different from those used in traditional effectiveness research. There have been advances in our understanding of the best study designs to use when evaluating QI interventions. Ireland, like other countries, has significant barriers that hinder successful implementation (e.g. poor health information systems, varied integration of services within and across sectors, rigid professional boundaries and bureaucratic barriers to release of resources).

Ireland has a growing competence in implementation methods among research groups and to a lesser extent practitioners. These include the ESPRIT research group at UCC the Health Implementation Science and Technology group in UL, the Health Behaviour Research Change group at the UG and the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research, Education, Innovation in Health Systems (IRIS) at UCD and the Centre for Innovative Human System (CIHS) in TCD. This competence is yet to achieve its full potential QPS. A recent systematic review identified 43 QI studies implemented and evaluated in Ireland between January 2015 and April 2020.[1] However only a small subset of these studies had a significant focus on implementation methods. Instead, traditional 'push' methods such as poster campaigns were used to highlight awareness of new protocols that had not been co-designed with patients or frontline clinicians. It is time therefore to consolidate expertise in implementation in a national cluster of academics and practitioners, sharing expertise and the results of their work amongst themselves and with the primary knowledge user.

Objectives
- Deploy a Co-Design approach to understanding implementation and evaluation of QPS
- Identify active researchers, healthcare practitioners and PPI partners across Ireland with an interest in understanding and improving healthcare QPS implementation and evaluation
- Build engagement in the cluster
- Co-produce an agreed programme of work to advance research Systems and Process Design – methodologies, case studies, etc.

- Seek research opportunities and funding for this programme
- Start implementation of the programme

Tasks

- T1: Identification of researchers interested in implementation and evaluation of solutions in Irish healthcare using. This will begin with discussions within the EQUIPS network and extended networks of the network participants. Snowball methods will be used to identify other researchers and practitioners connected to those initially identified. Those identified will be invited to join the cluster.
- T2: Initial meeting to agree terms of references such as preferred communication methods and dissemination platforms, frequency and purpose of meetings and scope of collaboration
- T3: Co-produce a programme of work and timeframe that builds on current state of the art and identifies key priority areas (informed by task 2.1) (e.g., review current HSE practice in implementation and evaluation; review state of the art).
- T4: Seek opportunities and funding for the programme. This will include practitioners and PPI partners keen to engage on projects, academics and students with motivation, capacity, and capability to carry out the research and, as required, funding for the research.
- T4: Collate an implementation and evaluation sandbox of existing resources (in collaboration with Strand 1) (e.g., study designs, design methodologies, studies of successful implementation and evaluation projects, findings around good practice and barriers in different context, key research themes etc).
- T5: Build links to international groups working at the interface of quality improvement and implementation science (e.g THiS Institute at University of Cambridge).
- T6: Overall delivery and management of cluster activities and linkages to other activities of the network.
- T7: Develop a QPS research cluster model (in collaboration with 3.1) to guide the development of further clusters in strand 3.

Cluster 3+

These clusters will be set up in response to the outputs of 2.1 and informed by the research cluster model developed in clusters 1 & 2