| | Research | Audit | Service review |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intent | To generate potentially generalizable new knowledge or hypotheses. | To assess the current standard of care against a specified target. | To define or improve the current standard of care. |
| Question | Tests hypotheses / clearly defined questions where there is no or limited research evidence. | Are we reaching a specified, evidence based standard of care? | What standard do we achieve? Can we improve efficacy or efficiency? |
| Aims | Compares interventions. Typically involves new treatments, indications or populations. | Relates to interventions already in use. | Relates to interventions already in use. May include local introduction of an intervention used elsewhere with an established evidence base. May compare processes. |
| Burden | May require data or samples additional to those for routine care. | Uses existing data but may require questionnaires or inconsequential interventions. | Uses existing data but may require questionnaires or inconsequential interventions. |
| Methodology | Allocation/randomisation permitted. | No allocation or randomisation. | No allocation or randomisation. |