

Research Governance Support for Hospices

A Pilot Project



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Background

Hospices should comply with governance processes as stated in the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research¹ to ensure delivery of high-quality research. We were awarded a grant from the NIHR to support the pilot of a regional hospice research governance role to support hospices in our region to expand their research activity and enhance governance procedures and practice.

NICE defines research governance as:

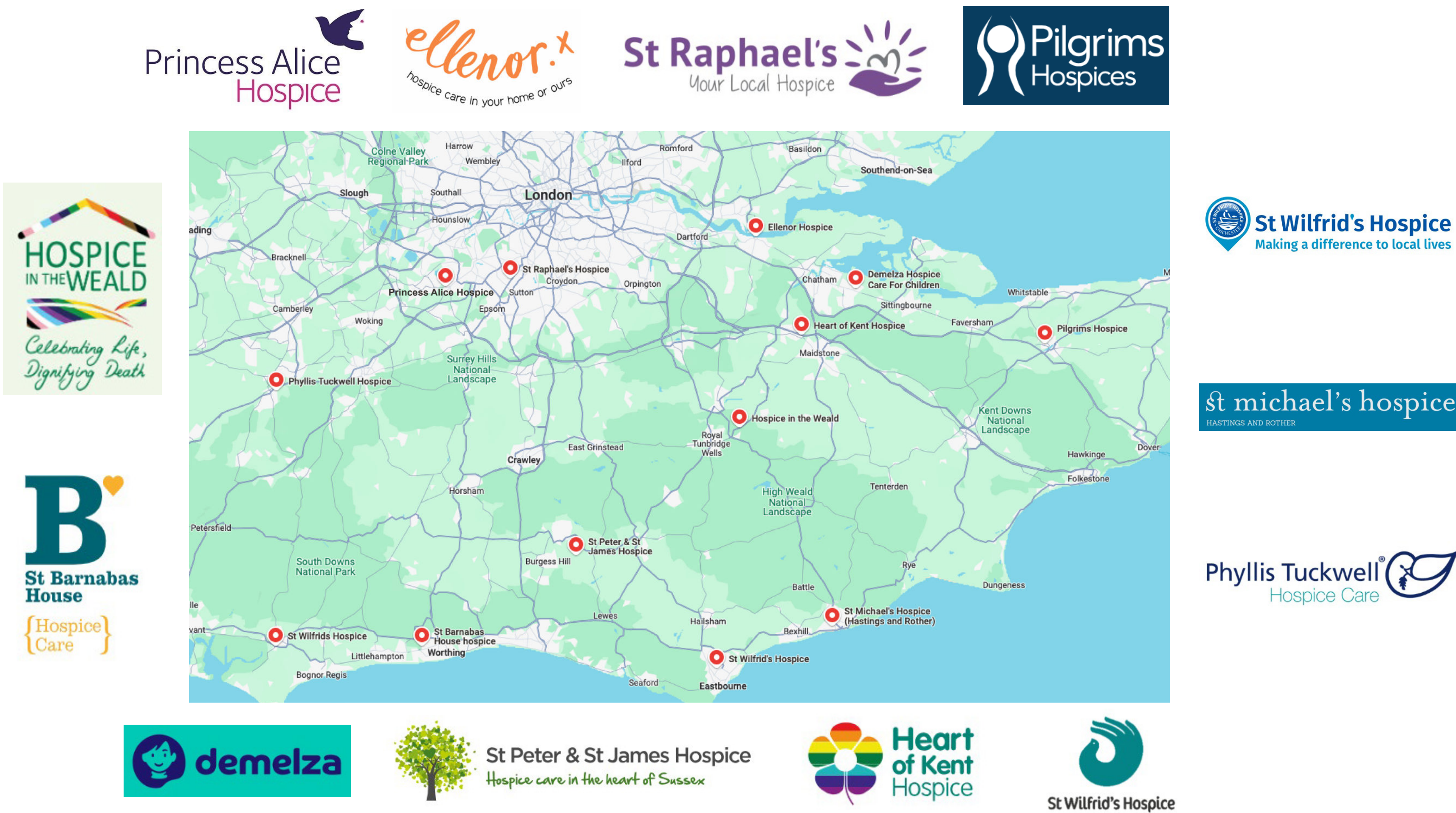
“the broad range of regulations, principles and standards of good practice that ensure high quality research”.²

Aims

- Identify existing research activity and governance processes
- Support development of robust research governance
- Identify mechanisms for ongoing research activity and governance support
- Assess impact of the role

Methods

- 18 hospices in our region were invited to complete an online questionnaire
- A visit by the Research Lead was offered to discuss governance needs/wish list (virtually/in-person)
- Attendance at NHS R&D Forum: Wider Health and Care and Community Working Group³
- Develop relevant research governance support and resources based on results



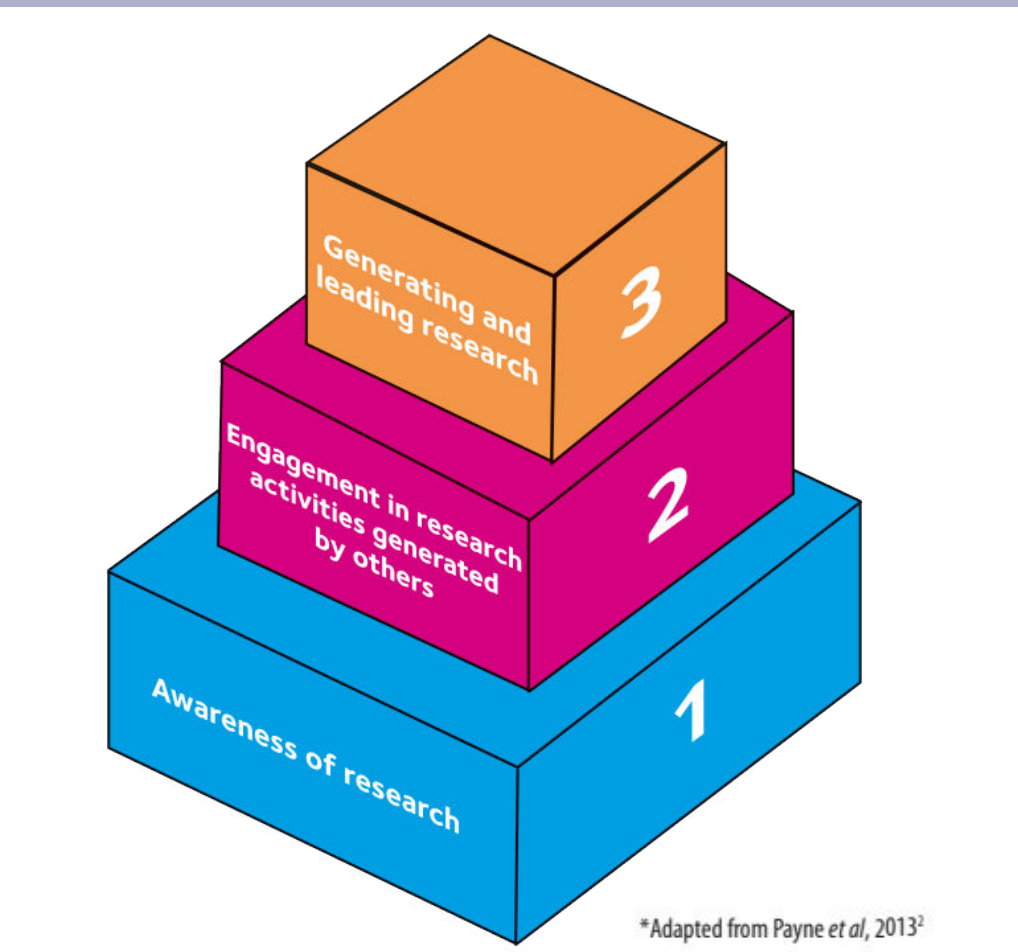
Results

13 out of 18 hospices responded to the questionnaire:

Research Capacity

- 5 (38%) employ dedicated research staff (0.3 to 0.8 WTE)
- 2 of these posts currently unfilled
- 8 hospices include research activity in job role of a clinician (usually consultant, average of 1 hour per week)

Current research activity (according to the Research Framework for Hospices⁴):

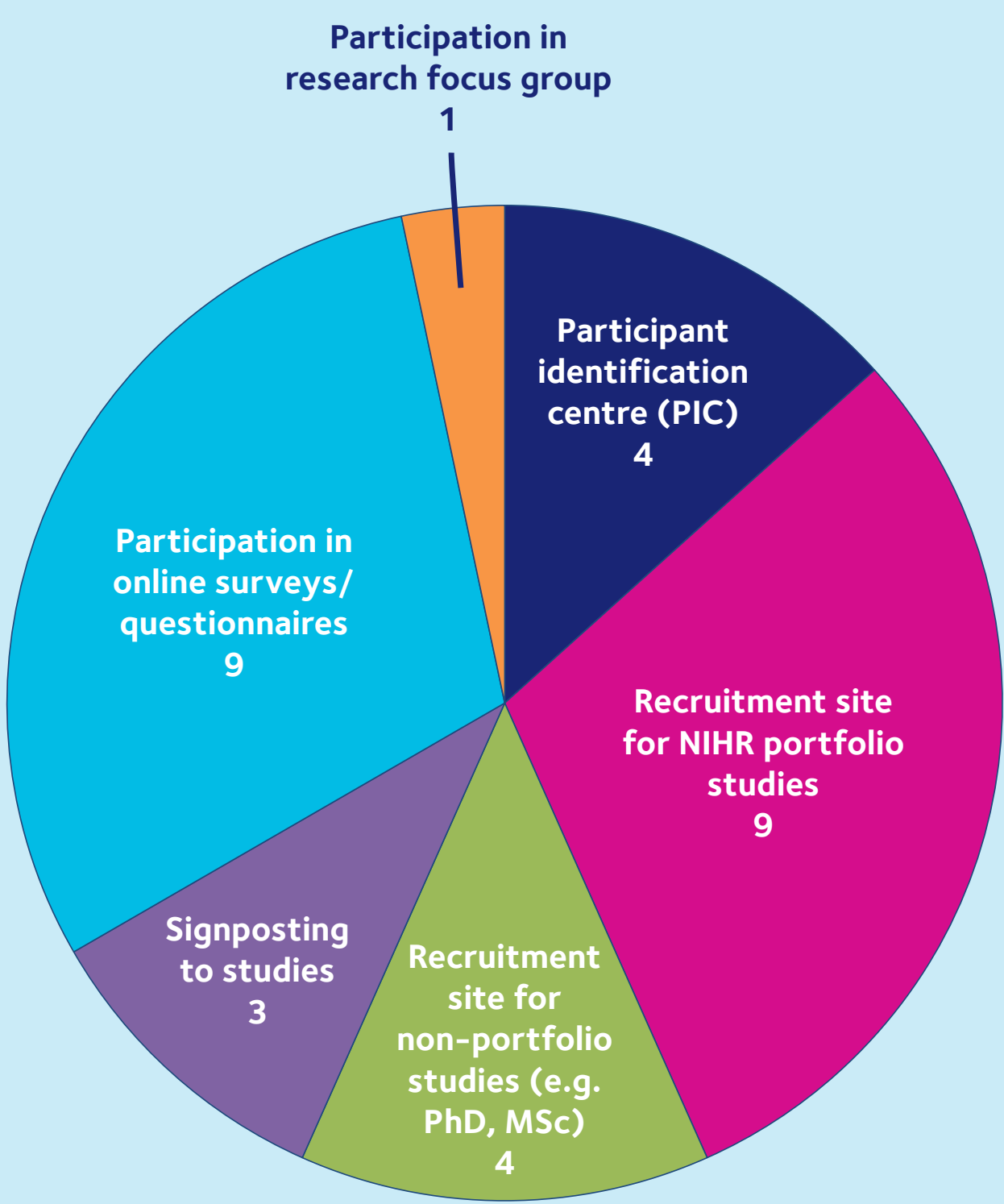


Level 1	1 (8%)
Level 2	8 (62%)
Level 3	4 (31%)

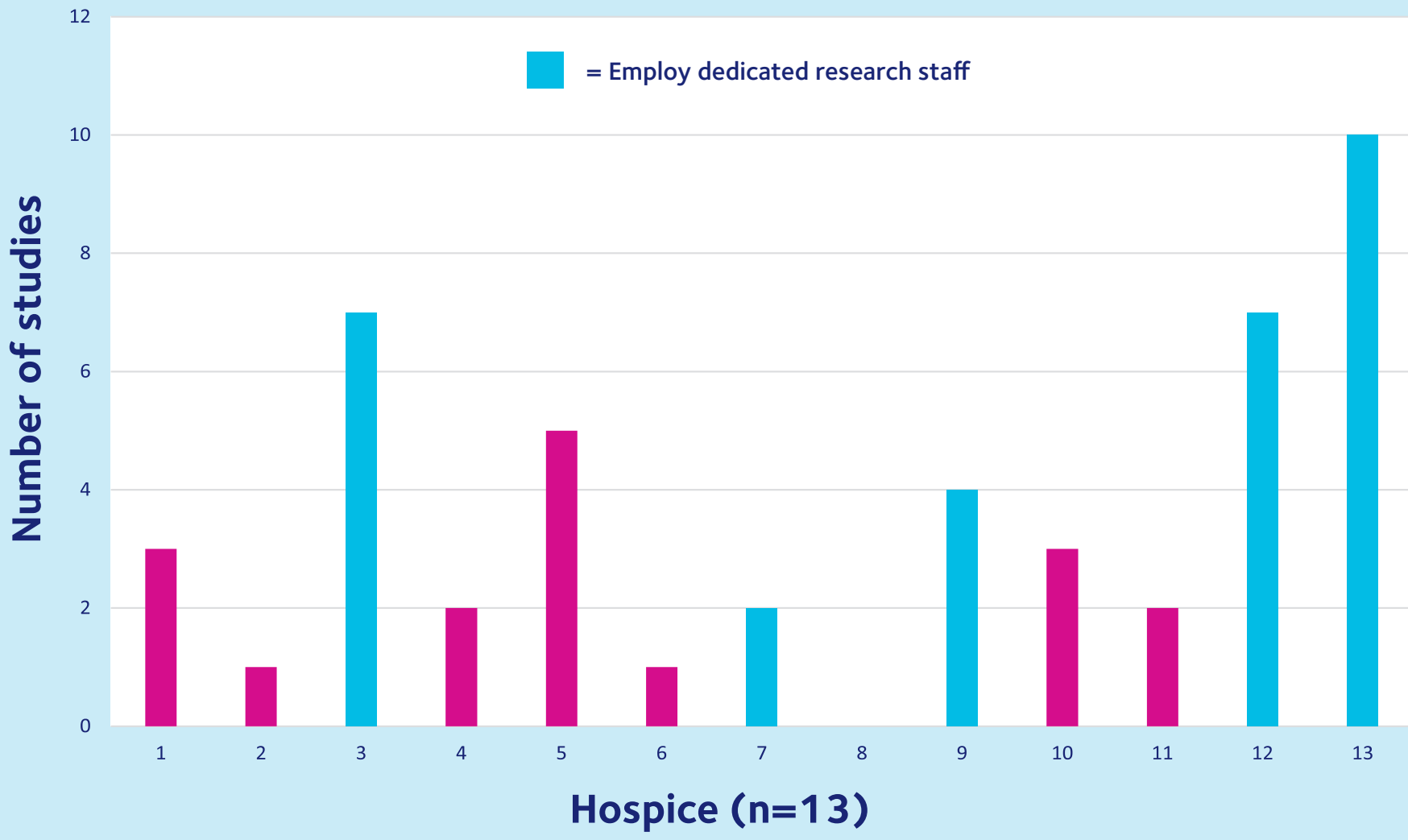
Research governance policies and procedures

Have a research policy	9 (69%)
Have research SOPs	2 (15%)

Type of research participation over previous 12 months



Number of studies hospices participated in over the past 12 months



“It is the carrying out of operational level activity that we struggle with”.

“Don’t want to reinvent the wheel”

“(We need) clear guidance about what processes and procedures... should be for different types of studies”

“Designing a policy”

What would help?

100% would like to join a regional Community of Practice

“We don’t have any dedicated staff resource for research so may be dependent on collaborative options”.

Conclusion

- Hospices in our region are participating in research but most do not employ dedicated research staff and lack time and resource.
- Governance processes vary between organisations.
- A regional Community of Practice has been established in response
- Research governance resources including templates have been created for sharing.

What next?

- Share research governance resources with hospices in our region
- Continued attendance at Wider Health and Care Community Working Group meetings for ongoing collaborative working
- Convene regional Hospice Research Community of Practice meetings twice yearly
- Utilisation of new NIHR Regional Research Governance Lead

Glossary

NIHR	National Institute for Health and Care Research
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
HRA	Health Research Authority
NHS	National Health Service
R&D	Research & Development
WTE	Whole Time Equivalent
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure



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