

CASE STUDY:

Harnessing Collaboration for Mental Health Research: ACTA's Crucial Contribution to the Growth of MAGNET



Through funding from the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF), ACTA formed the Special Interest Group for Network Managers (SIGNet). This group serves as a vital platform to exchange knowledge, expertise, and resources among Clinical Trial Networks (CTNs), with the Mental Health Australia General Clinical Trial Network (MAGNET) being one of its prominent beneficiaries. This case study delves into the instrumental role ACTA's SIGNet played in shaping MAGNET's development and progress.



ACTA's Resources and SIGNet

ACTA offers an array of resources through SIGNet, catering to the diverse needs of CTNs. These resources include funding strategy guidance, communications and marketing strategy support, advice for establishing new CTNs, operational self-assessment tools, and a CTN Costings Table developed jointly by ACTA and SIGNet members. This wealth of resources has empowered MAGNET and other CTNs to strengthen their operational capacities and strategic planning.



Interactive Problem Solving

One of SIGNet's key strengths lies in its fostering of open dialogue around challenges. Members have the opportunity to discuss issues they're encountering, both during the meetings and offline, facilitating peer-based problem-solving. Topics of discussion have ranged from consumer engagement in trials and funding strategies to governance conflicts, reflecting the broad range of issues tackled within this collaborative platform.



The SIGNet Meeting Experience

Before every SIGNet meeting, members complete a CTN Reporting Template, providing updates on CTN activities, identifying networking opportunities, and suggesting topics for future meetings. SIGNet meetings highlight topics relevant to members, such as Teletrials, choice of business entity for new CTNs, and ACTA updates, thereby promoting collective learning and problem-solving. For example, MAGNET's practice significantly changed after the August 2022 meeting on Teletrials, demonstrating the transformative potential of these gatherings.

ACTA'S INFLUENCE ON MAGNET

ACTA's consistent support through SIGNet, coupled with MAGNET's active participation, has greatly influenced MAGNET's trajectory. The resources, advice, and peer support offered by ACTA have significantly contributed to MAGNET's transformation into a fully operational CTN focused on mental health research.



'It is helpful to see issues other CTNs face and being able to discuss them in an open forum'

Dr Ayla Barutchu, Executive Officer, MAGNET
18th November 2022

CONCLUSION

The growth and success of MAGNET stand as a testament to the significant impact of ACTA's SIGNet initiative. By offering an open platform for knowledge exchange, resource sharing, and collaborative problem-solving, ACTA has not only facilitated MAGNET's journey but also created a robust foundation for its ongoing contributions to mental health research. The relationship between ACTA and MAGNET highlights the transformative potential of such collaborative initiatives in shaping Australia's clinical trial landscape.