Research together with experimental development consists of creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the levels and stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications. It is used to confirm and establish facts, reaffirm the results of previous work, solve new or existing problems and also develop and affirm new theories. Nurses play a big role in Clinical research, the role of a research Nurse is a varied and interesting one, combining the caring patient centered aspects and other roles as required by the research protocol. The different roles of the clinical research Nurse are a great contribution to clinical research.

I am proud to be a research Nurse taking part in a study about neurological complications of the infection of plasmodium under the Cerebral malaria (CM) project, which is one of the projects under Global Health Uganda (GHU). Cerebral Malaria (CM) is the most severe neurological complication of infection with Plasmodium falciparum. With over 575,000 cases annually, children in sub-Saharan Africa are the most affected. My roles are a great contribution to this research hence Clinical Research since CM is a great terror not only in sub-Saharan Africa but also other Plasmodium affected areas in the world, my contributions are emphasized below;

In order to acquire the target objectives for my research project that deals with children from age eighteen months to twelve years with clinical features of cerebral malaria, the target population must be identified, it’s my role as a study nurse to identify such participants at triage area, who meet the protocol for the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study. My role is to maximise referrals of potential participants from clinicians, through raising awareness that the study is active and ready to recruit. This means that the base and start of the clinical study starts with me identifying such candidates for the study hence my role in clinical Research.

Clinical research is governed by ethical principles, its my role as the research Nurse to give proper and ongoing well informed consent to the caregivers of the eligible children. This also involves counseling and explaining study procedures to the caregivers of the participants and answering any questions they may have. The authenticity of the research is based on the consent. It also ensures the research done is of quality and in line with ethical principles hence my contribution to clinical research.

Clinical research is based on documentation of findings, it’s my role as a nurse to perform and complete nurses observation charts (Blood pressure, Temperature etc) and other study related documents correctly and accurately. Otherwise without accurate and correct documentation there would be misinterpretation of findings. This is the basis to which true interpretation of findings can be attained in clinical research.

Clinical research takes time ranging from a day to years depending on the nature of the study. This calls for a need to provide and coordinate clinical care. CM study is ongoing from the time of admission of the
participant to discharge and follow up, which takes a period of two years. My role as a nurse is to give the nursing care to the participants, which is driven by study requirements and the collection of research data as well as clinical indications. This is for the benefit and safety of the participant and the clinical research, hence sustainability of life and smooth flow of the clinical research.

Clinical research is based on a number of Study procedures may include administration of investigational drugs, performance of an experimental or investigational surgical or radiological procedure, detailed clinical assessment or phenotyping to characterize the natural history and etiology of a disease, or delivery of a psychosocial intervention. It’s my role as the nurse to perform such study procedures like blood draws, taking participants for Radiological investigations etc according to study protocol.

Most clinical Research not only has the multidisciplinary team of health professionals nurses, doctors and allied professionals at the site, but also external organizations who sponsor, monitor or otherwise involved with the research. Therefore, the research nurse needs to liaise with a variety of different individuals to facilitate the smooth running of the research and optical outcomes. I have to liaise with the laboratory runner to collect samples is time to the laboratory and bring the results back on time hence smooth running of the research.

I adopt the role of advocate for participants, in accordance with the principles of Good clinical practice, particularly in helping to ensure that the participants are adequately informed about all aspects of the study. This involves supporting the participant throughout the study and addressing any concerns they may express, with their interests being of prime importance. The well being of the patients is the most important thing the clinical study and keeps the research on going.

A lot has to be done inorder enable greater involvement of nurses in clinical research. And these include;

Education is a countinous process, it doesnot end at school its important that research Nurses should continously be tautg about research and other new upcoming innovations in clinical research. This can be done through conferences, forums, competitions and also exchange programs and encouragement of nurses to go back to school through sponsorship.

Insentives as amotivation to encourage nurses to participate in research should be put in place. The research nurse doesnot do only ordinary nurse work but also performs other duties as required by the research protocol, this means that the great workload so a token of appreciation should be given in recognition of her hard work these include awards at the end of the year, also making the work conditions favourable like providing lunch, breakfast.

Increase Fundings for the research nurse interms of salary, due to the workload. Increasing salary doesnot only encourage the one currently working but also encourages the young upcoming nurses to take up research as afield of practise. Every human needs and looks for comfort at his or her work place therefore increasing funding makes the nurse comftable to carry on her duties with a lot of satisfaction.
It's important to encourage curriculum of research in nursing education, this starts by emphasizing research topics and encouraging nursing students to take part in research outlining the benefits of the research to the community and the world at large.

The role of the research nurse is highly rewarding, with many opportunities to learn and develop new skills. It is largely autonomous and, both directly and indirectly, patient centered. In many ways, the research nurse and the study participants with whom he or she undertakes the journey, can take pride in the vital role they play, in both the future of medicine and the well-being of future societies.