



National Institute for Health Research

PATIENT SAFETY AND SERVICE QUALITY RESEARCH CENTRES

Introduction

The vision of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research.

This document sets out how the NIHR Patient Safety and Service Quality Research Centres are contributing to this vision. Information about other elements of the NIHR clinical research infrastructure can be found in companion documents.

Overview

The NIHR has created two NIHR Patient Safety and Service Quality Research Centres (PSSQs) within our leading NHS and University partnerships to drive progress on innovation and translational research in biomedicine into NHS practice. As centres of international expertise, the Centres bring together NHS professionals with a wide range of research disciplines. Their focus is to investigate ways to improve the safety, quality and effectiveness of the services that the NHS provides to its patients. The substantial levels of sustained funding which they receive creates an environment in which scientific endeavour can thrive, attract the foremost talent and produce world-class outputs, hence contributing to the nation's international competitiveness as a major component of our knowledge economy.

Aims

- To drive forward improvements in quality, effectiveness and safety of NHS services.
- To translate advances in health services research¹ and patient safety research into benefits for patients and the public.
- To provide a key component of the NHS contribution to our nation's international competitiveness by making the best centres even better.

Selection and Funding

The PSSQ Research Centres were selected by open competition in 2006. Applications were judged by an expert panel with international membership using the following criteria:

¹ Including social science and management research

- The quality and volume of internationally excellent research and researchers on patient safety and service quality (and directly related, relevant research).
- The relevance of the research portfolio to the health of patients and the public.
- The strategic partnership with other organisations outside the NHS and mainstream academic partner applicants.
- The strength of the forward plan.
- Value for money.

Funding commenced in April 2007. The amount of funding allocated to each Centre was determined by the scale and nature of the research activity to be conducted by that centre. Funding has been awarded to the NHS partner and can only be used to support the recurrent costs of patient-focused research. Eligible costs include:

- Research staff engaged on patient safety and service quality research in the NHS.
- Research support staff supporting patient safety and service quality research in the NHS.
- Research training, leading to a higher degree by research (eg MPhil, MD, PhD), for staff, of all disciplines, engaged on patient safety and service quality research in the NHS.
- NHS service support costs of patient safety and service quality research in the NHS.

The performance of each centre is monitored and reviewed by annual reports and site visits by the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility. Centres, which are not performing at the required standard, will first be put on notice, and if the required standard is not achieved within a defined time-scale, funding will be withdrawn.

Centres

The flagship centres are partnerships between NHS organisations and academia.

NHS Patient Safety and Service Quality Research Centres

NHS Organisation	Academic Partner	Specialism
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust	Imperial College London	Safety, quality, resilience and reliability of technology; effective use of information technology; the role of NHS managers and staff in enhancing patient safety.
King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	King's College London	New and emerging health technologies; the organisation and management of health services and staff to reduce risk.

Via this scheme, we are also funding Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust with development grants for five years.

New open competition for NIHR funding from August 2012

A new open competition for funding NIHR Patient Translational Research Centres launched in July 2011. The competition process will complete by spring 2012, and details are available on the NIHR website.

Further information

Further details about PSSQs are available on the [NIHR website](#).

Department of Health Lead:

Dr Louise Wood

Deputy Director, NHS Research Infrastructure and Growth

Research & Development Directorate

Department of Health

Email: R&D@dh.gsi.gov.uk