



**National Institute for  
Health Research**

## **BEST RESEARCH FOR BEST HEALTH**

### **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 4.1d**

## **BUREAUCRACY BUSTING: THE RESEARCH PASSPORT AND STREAMLINED HR ARRANGEMENTS**

*Best Research for Best Health*<sup>1</sup> set out a 5-year Research and Development Strategy for the NHS in England. This Implementation Plan provides more details on one element of the systems underpinning the National Institute for Health Research. Implementation Plan 4.1a summarises the actions we are taking to streamline research management. Plan 4.1d gives more detail about the contribution of the Research Passport, in streamlining the management of honorary research contracts and related HR processes. This document will be regularly updated. The latest version should be used.

*Version: 6*

*Issue date: January 2010*

*Planned revision & re-issue date: July 2010*

### **Aim**

- To improve the research environment by making it quicker and easier to begin agreed studies, by harmonising and simplifying the process of issuing or recognising honorary research contracts.

### **Nature**

A streamlined approach to issuing honorary research contracts (HRCs):

- A mechanism for non-NHS staff to obtain an HRC when the research they propose to carry out is undertaken alongside NHS care.
- The document provided by NHS R&D offices and NIHR networks to be completed by researchers and their substantive employer.
- Lists the pre-engagement checks the employer has carried out.
- Provides assurances from the employer about the researcher.
- On completion, is taken to other NHS organisations, removing the need for duplicate checks.

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<sup>1</sup> *Best Research for Best Health: A New National Health Research Strategy. The NHS contribution to health research in England. Department of Health. 2006.*

- Potential for minimising duplication, reducing delay and removing inconsistencies in the application process.

Using the same principles, the NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) is also streamlining arrangements for NHS staff involved in NHS research outside of their employing NHS organisation.

## Implementation

- The Research Passport drew on exploratory work in Manchester.
- With support from a working group of the UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC), DH and the NHS R&D Forum developed a suite of draft guidance notes in consultation with NHS Employers.
- The NHS R&D Forum ran a national pilot in the NHS, completed in March 2007. The pilot included Scotland and Wales.
- The final evaluation report was completed in May 2007. The Executive Summary is available on the UKCRC website at [www.ukcrc.org/pdf/Executive\\_summary.pdf](http://www.ukcrc.org/pdf/Executive_summary.pdf).
- Originally designed for non-NHS staff, this work also developed streamlined processes for NHS staff wishing to undertake research in other NHS organisations.
- From July to September 2007, the NHS R&D Forum and Department of Health amended the documentation, and undertook further work with the higher-education sector on the implications for research employers' business processes.
- DH adopted the guidance and issued it formally in 2007.
- The DH and its UKCRC partners held an event in October 2007 to introduce the Research Passport.
- The NIHR Comprehensive Clinical Research Network (CCRN) has adopted the streamlined HR arrangements as a standard working practice of its Local Research Networks (LRNs), and are actively promoting their use with NIHR partners.
- The UKCRC partners monitor issues that emerge during and following implementation of the Research Passport and streamlined HR arrangements, to inform revisions of the guidance. Supplementary guidance on the Vetting and Barring Scheme was issued in October 2009. NIHR CRN CC has commissioned a revision of the FAQs to take account of issues that have emerged to date, for publication by spring 2010.
- The NIHR CRN CC HR Good Practice Resource Pack is to be reviewed in 2010.

## Further information

Further details about the Research Passport is available on the NIHR website at [www.nihr.ac.uk/systems/Pages/systems\\_research\\_passports.aspx](http://www.nihr.ac.uk/systems/Pages/systems_research_passports.aspx)

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