



BEST RESEARCH FOR BEST HEALTH

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 5.6 (previously 6.7) (established)

NIHR RESEARCH CENTRES

*Best Research for Best Health*¹ set out a 5-year Research and Development Strategy for the NHS in England. This Implementation Plan provides more details on one of the key components of that strategy: RESEARCH CENTRES.

The Research Centres plan has been fully implemented.

*Gateway Reference: 6050
Version: 6 (final)
Issue date: August 2007*

NIHR BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRES

Aims

- To drive innovation in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of ill-health.
- To translate advances in biomedical research into benefits for patients.
- To provide a key component of the NHS contribution to our nation's international competitiveness by making the best centres even better.

Purpose

- To support a critical mass of people and infrastructure in Research Centres focused on biomedical innovation and translational research for the benefit of patients.
- To provide substantial levels of sustained funding to create an environment where scientific endeavour can thrive, attract the foremost talent and produce world-class outputs.

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

Nature

Two types of Biomedical Research Centre have been established within our leading NHS/University partnerships:

- Some centres with very substantial portfolios of world-class biomedical research across a range of clinical and research areas;
 - Other centres with a substantial portfolio of world-class biomedical research in a specific clinical or research area. These are either whole organisations that are focused on a single clinical or research area, or a specific clinical or research group within an organisation with a wider remit.
- In order to ensure critical mass, focus, and clarity, funding for each Centre has been awarded to a single NHS organisation (in partnership with academia).

Number

- The number of centres was not determined in advance, but was determined by the quality of the applications in the light of the need not to spread the funding too thinly.
- Although a preliminary analysis indicated that we were likely to fund ten Biomedical Research Centres, a total of eleven have been established.

Selection process

- The centres were selected by open competition.
- Applications were judged by an expert panel with international membership, using clearly defined criteria.
- The process was in three stages:
 - a pre-qualifying questionnaire to identify a short-list of those NHS/university partnerships which had the most substantial portfolios of truly world-class biomedical research;
 - full applications invited from short-listed NHS/university partnerships;
 - site visit and interview of short-listed partnerships.

Selection Criteria

- The criteria were:
 - the quality and volume of internationally-excellent research and researchers;
 - the relevance of the research portfolio to the health of patients and the public;
 - the strength of the strategic partnerships, including those with industry;
 - the strength of the forward plan;
 - value for money.

Eligibility

- All NHS providers in England in collaboration with their academic partner(s) were eligible.

Funding

- The total amount of funding awarded is £100 million *per annum*
- The amount of funding allocated to each centre was determined by the scale, nature and quality of the research activity to be conducted by that centre.
- Funding has been awarded to the NHS partner, and is to be used to support the translation of excellent basic biomedical research (already being undertaken primarily in universities) into excellent clinical research (underway or to be undertaken within the NHS), for the benefit of patients. The expectation is therefore that the scheme will fund the recurrent costs of patient- or people-based translational clinical research in the NHS.
- Eligible costs include:
 - research staff engaged on patient- or people-focused translational clinical research in the NHS;
 - research support staff supporting patient- or people-focused translational clinical 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- or people-focused translational clinical research in the NHS;
 - NHS service support costs of patient- or people-focused translational clinical research (eg pharmacy, pathology, radiology);
 - other, legitimate and reasonable, indirect costs within the NHS (eg, accommodation, payroll, HR, finance).
- Treatment costs associated with research are not covered.
- The award of funding to all centres has been phased, with half-funding in the first year (2007/08) and full funding thereafter.
- This funding is separate from any other NHS R&D funding received by the NHS organisation.

Monitoring and Performance Management

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

Duration

- Funding will be provided for periods of five years at a time.
- During the fourth year (2011/12), another national competition will be held to identify the centres to be funded for the next period.

- Each competition will be open, *ie* existing centres will need to apply together with any new applicants, if they wish to be funded for the next period.
- Whether an applicant has, or has not, previously received funding, as a Biomedical Research Centre will not be a criterion in selecting the centres to be funded for the next five years.

Implementation Timetable

- 25 January 2006 - R&D strategy published confirming intention to establish Biomedical Research Centres;
- 4 April 2006 – invitation published on DH website for NHS/University partnerships to complete a standardised Pre-qualifying Questionnaire.
- 3 May 2006 - deadline for receipt of Pre-qualifying Questionnaires.
- May 2006 - peer review panel identified a short-list of those NHS/University partnerships which, on the basis of the Pre-qualifying Questionnaire, appeared to have the most substantial portfolios of truly world-class biomedical research in England
- May 2006 - invited full applications from short-listed NHS/University partnerships
- 13 October 2006 - deadline for receipt of full applications
- 27 to 30 November 2006 - site visits and interviews with short-listed NHS/University partnerships
- December 2006 - confirmed selected Research Centres
- April 2007 – all centres started with funding at 50% in the first year and full funding thereafter.

Further Information

- Further information on the NIHR Biomedical Research Centres is available at:http://www.nihr.ac.uk/infrastructure/Pages/infrastructure_biomedical_research_centres.aspx

NIHR RESEARCH CENTRES FOR NHS PATIENT SAFETY & SERVICE QUALITY

Aim

- To drive forward improvements in quality, effectiveness and safety of NHS services.
- To translate advances in health services research² 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.

² Including social science and management research

Purpose

- Bring together NHS professionals with other research skills including social sciences and management schools to create a critical mass of internationally recognised expertise and infrastructure focused on research into the safety of services and their delivery and organisation, to promote quality and safety for the benefit of patients.
- To provide substantial levels of sustained funding to create an environment where innovative services can readily be developed and evaluated.

Nature

- The Research Centres for NHS Patient Safety & Service Quality were established within our leading NHS/University partnerships.
- These Centres have substantial portfolios of world-class research across the range of disciplines necessary for research on the delivery of high quality, effective and safe NHS services.
- In order to ensure critical mass, focus, and clarity, funding for each Centre has been awarded to a single NHS organisation (in partnership with academia).

Number

- The number of centres was not determined in advance. It was determined by the quality of the applications in the light of the need not to spread the funding too thinly.
- Although preliminary analysis indicated that we were likely to fund two or three centres, two Research Centres were established and a further two Development Grants were awarded.

Selection Process

- The centres were selected by open competition.
- Applications were judged by an expert panel with international membership using clearly defined criteria.
- The process was in four stages:
 - a pre-qualifying questionnaire to identify a short-list of those NHS/University partnerships which have the most substantial portfolios of research into patient safety and service quality;
 - full applications invited from short-listed NHS/university partnerships;
 - full applications reviewed to identify final short-list;
 - interviews with short-listed organisations.

Selection Criteria

- The criteria were:
 - 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.

Eligibility

- All NHS providers in England together with their academic partner(s) were eligible.

Funding

- The total amount of funding awarded is £2.4 million per annum (including Development Grant funding).
- 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. Individual Research Centre awards were for approximately £1m *per annum*.
- Funding has been awarded to the NHS partner.
- Funding must 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.
- Treatment costs associated with research are not covered.
- The award of funding to both centres has been phased, with half-funding in the first year (2007/08) and full funding thereafter.
- This funding is separate from any other NHS R&D funding received by the NHS organisation.

Monitoring and Performance Management

- The performance of each centre will be monitored and reviewed by annual reports and site visits.
- 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 timescale, funding will be withdrawn.

Duration

- Funding will be provided for periods of 5 years at a time.
- During the fourth year (2011/12), another national competition will be held to identify the centres to be funded for the next period.
- Each competition will be open, *i.e.* existing centres will need to apply together with any new applicants, if they wish to be funded for the next period.
- Whether an applicant has, or has not, previously received funding as a centre will not be a criterion in selecting the centres to be funded for the next five years.

Implementation Timetable

- 25 January 2006 - R&D strategy published confirming intention to establish Research Centres for NHS Patient Safety and Service Quality
- 13 April 2006 - Invitation published on the DH website for NHS/University partnerships to Submit Pre-qualifying Questionnaire
- 24 May 2006 - deadline for receipt of pre-qualifying questionnaires
- June 2006 - peer review panel identified a short-list of those NHS/University partnerships which, on the basis of the pre-qualifying questionnaire, appear to have the most substantial portfolios of truly world-class research on patient safety and service quality in England
- June 2006 - invited full applications from short-listed NHS/University partnerships
- 22 September 2006 - deadline for receipt of full applications
- October 2006 - peer review panel identified final short-list
- 14 -16 November 2006 - interviews with short listed NHS/University partnerships
- December 2006 - confirmed selected Research Centres for NHS Patient Safety and Service Quality
- April 2007 - all centres started with funding at 50% in the first year and full funding thereafter.

Further Information

- Further information on the NIHR Research Centres for NHS Patient Safety & Service Quality is available at :
http://www.nihr.ac.uk/infrastructure/Pages/infrastructure_research_centres_for_nhs_patient_safety_and_service_quality.aspx

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