



**National Institute for  
Health Research**

## **BEST RESEARCH FOR BEST HEALTH**

### **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 6.1 (established)**

### **OVERVIEW OF NIHR RESEARCH PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES**

*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 an overview of one of the key strands of that strategy: NIHR RESEARCH PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES.

**This plan has been fully implemented. Research Units have been moved to Implementation Plan 6.6.**

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The Department of Health's research strategy '*Best Research for Best Health*' announced a new portfolio of National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) research programmes. Outlined below are the main objectives of this element of the strategy, plans for implementation of the new NIHR research programmes and a brief description of the main changes to existing NHS R&D programmes.

#### **Objectives**

Strengthen and focus the funding mechanisms through which we commission research.

- Expand and develop relevant and flexible programmes of research addressing the broad range of health research priorities.
- Target NIHR health research funding to resolve uncertainties and address areas of unmet need.
- Allocate NHS health research funding in a transparent manner based on quality and relevance.

To achieve these objectives by the end of 2009 the NIHR has:

- Developed a range of research funding mechanisms to ensure that NIHR funds important, relevant and high quality health research that is inadequately supported by other funders, but is essential for delivering our public services.

<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.

- Expanded and strengthened NIHR existing R&D programmes.
- Introduced a new Research for Patient Benefit responsive funding programme.
- Introduced Programme Grants for Applied Research for the NHS in areas of high priority to the NHS.
- Introduced the Public Health Research programme to evaluate interventions to improve public health.
- Introduced the Health Services Research programme to support health service research projects that are not currently being funded by the existing NIHR, DH and MRC programmes.

### **Funding**

- The NIHR has increased annual expenditure on NIHR research programmes with the move through the three-year NHS R&D funding transition period.

### **Process**

- The NIHR has used a variety of funding mechanisms, each appropriate to the needs of the individual research programmes.
- The guiding principle has been to improve the quality, relevance and focus of research in the NHS by distributing funds in a transparent manner after open competition and rigorous peer review.

### **Implementation Timetable**

- There has been a seamless transition from previous funding systems to the new NIHR programmes, with research continuing during the introduction of the new strategy.
- Full details of the range of research programmes is available at [www.nihr.ac.uk/research/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.nihr.ac.uk/research/Pages/default.aspx)
- Implementation plans for all research programmes are available at [www.nihr.ac.uk/about/Pages/about\\_implementation\\_plans.aspx](http://www.nihr.ac.uk/about/Pages/about_implementation_plans.aspx).

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