



**National Institute for  
Health Research**

## **BEST RESEARCH FOR BEST HEALTH**

### **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 6.10 (established)**

#### **NIHR SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL CARE RESEARCH**

*Best Research for Best Health*<sup>1</sup> set out a 5-year Research and Development Strategy for the NHS in England. This announced the possibility of a School for Social Care Research, following the successful piloting of a School for Primary Care Research. This Implementation Plan provides details on the proposed NIHR School for Social Care Research.

**The NIHR School for Social Care Research has been fully implemented.**

Version: 4 (final)  
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#### **Aim**

To improve the evidence-base for social care practice.

#### **Purpose**

- To undertake high quality research on social care practice.
- To provide a focus for social care research within the National Institute for Health Research.
- To help to develop capacity in selected areas of disciplinary or methodological strength.

#### **Nature**

- The School for Social Care Research (SSCR) is the second research school to be established within the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), following the successful launch of the School for Primary Care Research.
- The School comprises the leading academic centres of social care research in England. It combines a central *intramural group* of teams or units working in the social care field with a network of *extramural associates* involving specialists in wider areas of disciplinary or methodological expertise relevant to social care.

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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

- The Director General of Research and Development has selected, following consultation, one of the members of the School to be the inaugural Director of the School.

### Selection Criteria

- The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has already judged the quality of the research conducted in English Higher Education Institutions through the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The NIHR minimised unnecessary bureaucracy by using the outcomes of this assessment to identify the members of the School for Social Care Research.
- In advance of the 2008 RAE, selection of the intramural members of the SSCR comprised teams/groups that:
  - a) were currently working on DH-funded long-term programmes of social care research
  - b) **and also** were entered in a relevant Unit of Assessment that achieved a 5 or 5\* within the 2001 RAE process.

### Selection Process

- All established groups of social care research that could meet the above criteria were invited to submit a short statement to that effect.
- The Director General of Research and Development validated these statements and confirmed acceptance to the NIHR School of Social Care Research.
- The intramural membership of the School was confirmed in the light of the results of the 2008 RAE.
- A process for recruiting the extramural associates was developed by the School Executive and Advisory Board. Selection was informed by RAE rankings and approved by the Director General of Research and Development.

### Monitoring and Performance Management

- Appropriate arrangements have been established to advise the Director General of Research and Development on the strategic direction and performance of the School.
- The School Director has produced a Business Plan, which has been agreed with the Director General of Research and Development. The Business Plan will set out the research programme to be conducted by the School and the deployment of the human and financial resources to deliver it.
- The performance of the School as a whole, and of its constituent academic departments, will be reviewed regularly against the Business Plan by the Director General of Research and Development.
- The continuation of an individual academic centre/unit as a member of the School will be dependent on satisfactory performance and future RAE results.

### Funding

- The total amount of funding awarded is £3 million *per annum*. The funding is to cover the recurrent costs of research relevant to social care practice and any

associated support and infrastructure costs. It is divided equally between the intramural group and the extramural associates.

- The amount of funding allocated to each team/unit is determined by the scale and nature of the research activity to be conducted by them.

### **Duration**

- Funding will be provided for five years in the first instance, subject to satisfactory performance.

### **Implementation Timetable**

- June 2008 - call released for academic centres/units to submit a statement confirming their eligibility as members of the School for Social Care Research.
- June 2008 - Director General of Research and Development validated statements and confirmed acceptance of successful applicants.
- June 2008 - Inaugural Director of School selected.
- June 2008 - Advisory Board appointed.
- July 2008 - First meeting of Advisory Board.
- Sept 2008 - Draft business plan produced.
- Sept 2008 - School started in shadow form.
- Jan 2009 - Business plan agreed by the Director General of Research and Development.
- May 2009 - NIHR School of Social Care Research started operation.

### **Further information**

- Further details about the NIHR School for Social Care Research is available at: [www.nihr.ac.uk/research/Pages/programmes\\_school\\_for\\_social\\_care\\_research.aspx](http://www.nihr.ac.uk/research/Pages/programmes_school_for_social_care_research.aspx)

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