School for Primary Care Research

Increasing the evidence base for primary care practice

Bristol, Cambridge, Keele, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Southampton and University College London
Established in 2006, the NIHR School for Primary Care Research is a partnership between nine leading academic centres for primary care research in England. Bringing together academics and practitioners from across the country, the School collaborates on cutting edge, topical primary care studies that have an impact both at policy level and in general practices around the country. Our partners are based in primary care departments at the Universities of Bristol, Cambridge, Keele, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Southampton and University College London.

In addition to conducting high profile research, we attract the best new researchers into our capacity programme and offer trainees support and networking opportunities through an extensive training and events programme.

Our mission is to increase the evidence base for primary care practice, and to develop research capacity in primary care.

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2006

The NIHR is established and sets up the School for Primary Care Research with the Universities of Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Manchester, Oxford.

Working groups include mental health, vascular, infection, diagnosis and monitoring, child health, cancer, complementary and alternative medicine, patient safety, behavioural medicine, clinical databases, clinical trials, medical education, health service delivery and policy, genetics and patient and public involvement.

2007

SPCR supports PRIMER (Primary Care Research at Manchester Engagement Resource).

2009

School publication receives Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) paper of the year award for research on the risk of ovarian cancer in women with symptoms in primary care.

Research on stroke prevention in elderly people informs NHS policy.

2010

School renewal includes new members Keele, Nottingham, Southampton and University College London.

NICE Heart Failure Guidelines and NHS policy influenced by heart failure and diagnosis research (ECHOES study).

2011

School bibliometric analysis for quality and originality of primary care research across the UK, United States, Australia, Canada, Germany, and the Netherlands, shows UK researchers among the best performers.

Hypertension systematic review leads to updates of the NICE Diagnosis of Hypertension Guidelines.

BAFTA trial guides NHS policy on stroke prevention in atrial fibrillation and changes to QOF indicators.

Increasing evidence

The mission of the NIHR School for Primary Care Research is to increase the evidence base for primary care practice, and to develop research capacity in primary care.
Multimorbidity research influences development of new NHS outcomes framework indicators.

Evidence from study on self-care and non-communicable diseases influences WHO guideline development.

North American Primary Care Research Group (NAPCRG) Pearls awarded in recognition of high impact research publications.

Research results are used by NICE in review of depression indicators.

International BEME (Best Evidence Medical Education) Collaborating Centre is established.

RCGP Fellowship and John Fry Award presented to researcher for contributions to science and practice.

Media coverage on BBC for advances in prostate cancer research and interview for research on the NHS Care Data database system.

NICE supports IT based pharmacist-led intervention (PINCER) and the Patient safety toolkit is hosted on the RCGP website.

NIHR awards £22M to maintain School’s research programme to 2020. New School members Cambridge and Newcastle are welcomed.

Informing practice

With renewed NIHR funding over the next five years, the School aims to increase and improve research awareness in the sector, provide strategic leadership to support the development of primary care research, and contribute to ongoing efforts to build research capacity.

The School endeavours to expand the evidence base for effective practice by conducting research that increases the volume and quality of reliable and relevant evidence, and by creating an environment where first class applied research can be designed and delivered.

Our research complements other NIHR funding streams and work undertaken in NIHR funded infrastructure units. Studies encompass primary care and general practice, with some research at the interface between primary and secondary care. Researchers work within the parameters of the following primary care themes: Prevention and diagnosis; Non-communicable disease and ageing; Acute care; Organisation and delivery of care; Research innovation and new technologies.
Involving patients and the public

The involvement and engagement of patients and the public is a central component of research funded by the School. Our work draws on the lived expertise of patients and the public, incorporates their perspectives and responds to their challenges. Researchers are encouraged to support and co-ordinate patient, public and engagement innovations, activities and developments and all research must demonstrate the involvement of patients and the public by including a clear and robust PPI/E approach and Plain English Summary.

www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/PPI

Building research capacity

The School has a research capacity programme that aims to train future leaders in primary care research. Our unique collaboration between academic centres in England provides a setting where trainees can benefit from the leadership of researchers at the top of their fields and across all member departments. We aim to build research capacity in primary care by providing multidisciplinary training and development opportunities, nurturing trainees from a range of professional backgrounds who will contribute to the wealth of research in the future. Our highly competitive awards are designed to complement existing fellowship schemes offered by the NIHR Training Co-ordinating Centre (TCC) and other funding agencies such as the MRC and Wellcome Trust. Information about these awards can be found on our website: www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/trainees

Trainees present at international conferences in Lisbon, Berlin and New York.

Australian Association for Academic Primary Care (AAPC) Best Young Researcher Presentation awarded to trainee for work on transient ischaemic attack (TIA).

£10M awarded to confirm training and capacity programme until 2020.

Member of the British Empire (MBE) is awarded to former SPCR trainee for services to general practice.

The School’s mentoring scheme was developed in 2013, alongside the Society for Academic Primary Care (SAPC) scheme and the Primary Healthcare Scientists group (PhoCUS), to provide support and interdisciplinary engagement to early/mid-stage primary healthcare scientists from any background discipline other than medicine.

2010

NIHR funds new School Capacity and Development Programme.

Sixteen Doctoral, GP Career Progression (GCP), ST3 and post-doctoral Fellows join the School.

2013

RCGP’s Yvonne Carter Outstanding New Researcher of the Year awarded to trainee for work on the use of communication technologies for health service delivery.

Trainees present at international conferences in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Taipei, Mexico.

2014

Australian Association for Academic Primary Care (AAPC) Best Young Researcher Presentation awarded to trainee for work on transient ischaemic attack (TIA).

Trainees present at international conferences in Lisbon, Berlin and New York.

2015

Member of the British Empire (MBE) is awarded to former SPCR trainee for services to general practice.

£10M awarded to confirm training and capacity programme until 2020.

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