



National Institute for Health Research

NIHR HEALTH PROTECTION RESEARCH UNITS

Introduction

The vision of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research.

This document sets out how the NIHR Health Protection Research Units (HPRUs) are contributing to this vision.

Overview

The NIHR established thirteen NIHR Health Protection Research Units in April 2014, following an open competition which was launched in November 2012. Designation and funding for these HPRUs ends in March 2019. The Health Protection Research Units are partnerships between a university and Public Health England.

Aim

The aims of the HPRUs are to assist Public Health England in delivering its objectives and functions for the protection of the public's health by:

- creating an environment where world class health protection research, focused on the needs of the public, can thrive;
- translating advances in health protection research into benefits for patients and the public;
- focusing on priority areas which will have the greatest impact on public health;
- providing high quality research evidence to inform decision-making by public health professionals;
- increasing the volume and quality of multi-disciplinary health protection research in England;
- providing a flexible staff capacity in the event of a major health protection incident;
- retaining a level of responsive research capacity to address emerging health protection research requirements.

Designation and Funding

The HPRUs were selected by open competition during 2012 and 2013 by an expert international panel, using the following criteria:

- the research capability of the partnership;

- the strength of the strategic plan for the NIHR HPRU;
- the strength of the proposed programme of work to be conducted at research theme level;
- the track record in high quality health protection research in areas relevant to the proposal;
- the track record of addressing urgent national needs to deliver emerging health protection requirements;
- the strength of strategic partnerships, including those with PHE and other sectors engaged in public health research;
- value for money.

In order to ensure critical mass, focus and clarity, funding for each HPRU has been awarded to a single university (in partnership with Public Health England). The amount of funding allocated to each HPRU was determined by the scale, nature and quality of the research activity to be conducted by that centre, and is to be used to support excellent health protection research relevant to the needs of PHE. The purpose of the funding is to meet the research costs incurred by the university/PHE partnership in carrying out an approved programme of multidisciplinary research, including the funding of research salaries. The award will also fund legitimate and reasonable indirect costs within the university/PHE.

Eligible costs include:

- research staff engaged in relevant research
- research support staff supporting relevant research
- other, legitimate and reasonable indirect costs, e.g. accommodation, payroll, HR, finance
- patient and public involvement

The performance of each HPRU is monitored and reviewed by the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility. HPRUs 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 time-scale, funding will be withdrawn.

HPRU priority areas

The thirteen HPRUs span the range of PHE's health protection remit. Each HPRU has a substantial portfolio of world class health protection research. Eleven of the HPRUs are focused on topic based priority areas. Two HPRUs are cross-cutting in nature (Evaluation of interventions; Modelling methodology). See table.

3.05 Health Protection Research Units
Version 1 (July 2016)

| Priority area | Lead University in partnership with Public Health England (PHE) | Collaborator(s) |
|---|--|---|
| Blood Borne and Sexually Transmitted Infections | University College London | London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine |
| Chemical and Radiation Threats and Hazards | University of Newcastle upon Tyne | Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust |
| Emergency Preparedness and Response | King's College London | University of Newcastle upon Tyne University of East Anglia |
| Emerging and Zoonotic Infections | University of Liverpool | Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine |
| Environmental Change and Health | London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine | Exeter University University College London |
| Gastrointestinal Infections | University of Liverpool | University of East Anglia University of Oxford Institute of Food Research |
| Health Impact of Environmental Hazards | King's College London | Imperial College London |
| Healthcare Associated Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance | Imperial College London | Wellcome Sanger Institute NWL Academic Health Science Network Cambridge Veterinary School |
| Healthcare Associated Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance | University of Oxford | Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency |
| Immunisation | London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine | |

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|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Respiratory Infections | Imperial College London | Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust Birmingham University |
| Evaluation of Interventions | University of Bristol | University College London Cambridge MRC Biostatistics Unit University of the West of England |
| Modelling Methodology | Imperial College London | |

Further Information

Further information is available on the [NIHR website](#)

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