



National Institute for Health Research

PATIENT SAFETY TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRES

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 Patient Safety Translational Research Centres are contributing to this vision. Information about other elements of the NIHR clinical research infrastructure can be found in companion documents.

Overview

The NIHR established the first round of two NIHR Patient Safety and Service Quality Research Centres (PSSQs) in 2007. Designation and funding for these PSSQs ended in July 2012. Following a new competition to designate and fund NIHR Patient Safety and Translational Research Centres (PSTRCs) in 2012, £14 million was allocated to two PSTRCs (Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust/ University of Manchester and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust/ Imperial College London). Designation and funding for these PSTRCs ended in July 2017.

The Secretary of State for Health announced in May 2016 that a new, open competition to designate and fund the next round of NIHR PSTRCs would be launched. On 13 February 2017, then Public Health and Innovation Minister Nicola Blackwood announced the funding and designation of three NIHR PSTRCs from 1 August 2017. The two existing NIHR PSTRCs will continue and a new NIHR PSTRC has been established through a partnership between Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Leeds. A total of £17m will be invested in these three Centres over the five-year period from August 2017.

The focus of the NIHR PSTRC scheme is to pull advances from basic research which *could be* of relevance to patient safety, into early translational and pilot / feasibility clinical, applied and health services research which *is* of relevance to patient safety. The NIHR PSTRC scheme aims to ensure that the research supported addresses existing patient safety challenges and patient safety challenges that will be prominent in health and care over the next 5-20 years, across a range of health and care sectors (including primary, secondary, tertiary, mental health and care sectors). NIHR PSTRC-supported research should also include geographic areas where the burden of patient safety and needs are greatest; which may include patients/populations **not** served directly by the host NHS organisation. Key patient safety challenges are likely to reflect the ageing population, increased complexity of care, polypharmacy, multimorbidity, self-management and patient control of their own care, transitions between care settings, and the increasing role of digital technologies.

AIMS OF THE SCHEME

The scheme aims to provide NIHR PSTRC designation and funding for NHS/University partnerships that have a very substantial portfolio of world-class translational research into patient safety.

The aims of the NIHR PSTRCs are to:

- **drive forward improvements** in the domain of patient safety and safety of NHS health and care services
- **pull advances** from basic research which *could be* of relevance to patient safety, into early translational, and pilot / feasibility clinical, applied and health services research, which *is* of relevance to patient safety
- provide a key component of the NHS contribution to our nation's **international competitiveness for broader economic gain**.

To achieve these aims we will:

- support a **critical mass of people and infrastructure** in Centres focused on **patient safety early translational research** and developing clinical, applied and health services patient safety research;
- provide **substantial levels of funding** to create an environment where **innovative safety systems** can readily be developed and evaluated, attract the foremost talent and produce world-class outputs; and
- provide the infrastructure to bring together NHS professionals with other research disciplines including social sciences and management sciences to create a **critical mass** of internationally recognised **expertise and infrastructure** focused on **pulling advances** in basic research into early translational, clinical, applied and health services patient safety research to promote **safety for the benefit of patients, the health & care system and for broader economic gain**.

The key characteristics of NIHR PSTRCs are therefore:

- existing **research excellence**
- existing **critical mass**
- track record of excellence in collaborative research **partnerships**, including with industry and charities, with a range NHS sectors and mainstream academic organisations
- ability to translate scientific advances and to pull through to deliver **tangible benefits for patients, the health and care system and for broader economic gain**

Selection and Funding

The PSTRCs were selected by open competition in 2016. Applications were assessed by an independent selection panel using the following criteria:

- The **quality and volume** of internationally excellent translational research which is relevant to patient safety

- **Existing research capacity and capability**, and plans for increasing capacity including through the provision of training and development
- The **track-record** of the NHS/University partnership in conducting world class early translational research in patient safety
- The **track-record** of the NHS/University partnership in **pulling advances** from basic research into early translational, clinical, applied and health services patient safety research this research into benefits for patients, the health and care system and for broader economic gain
- The **strength of the strategic plan**
- The **relevance of the research portfolio** to the health of patients and the public
- The **strength of strategic partnerships** including those with other NIHR-funded research infrastructure, charities, industry, other health sectors, and other health and care providers and organisations
- **Value for money**

Funding commenced in August 2017. 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. Funding has been awarded to the NHS partner and can only be used to support the recurrent costs of patient-focused research. Eligible costs include:

- Research staff engaged in patient safety translational research in the NHS.
- Research support staff supporting patient safety translational research in the NHS.
- Communications, linkage and partnership costs involved in the development and translation of innovative patient safety research in NHS practice.
- Research training, leading to a higher degree by research, e.g. MPhil, MD, PhD, for staff, of all disciplines, engaged in patient safety translational research in the NHS.
- NHS service support costs of patient safety research in the NHS.
- Other, legitimate and reasonable, indirect costs within the NHS, e.g. accommodation, payroll, HR, finance.

The performance of each centre is monitored and reviewed by annual reports and site visits by the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility. 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 time-scale, funding will be withdrawn.

NIHR Patient Safety Translational Research Centres - Research Themes

The flagship centres are partnerships between NHS organisations and academia. In total, £17 million has been awarded for three PSTRCs, over five years from August 2017.

PSTRC Name	Name including host organisation and academic partner	Research themes
NIHR Greater Manchester Patient Safety Translational Research Centre	NIHR Patient Safety Translational Research Centre at Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust/ University of Manchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety Informatics • Medication Safety • Safer Transitions • Safety in Marginalised Groups
NIHR Imperial Patient Safety Translational Research Centre	NIHR Patient Safety Translational Research Centre at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust/ Imperial College London	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer systems across the continuum of care • Partnering with patients for safer care • Avoiding deterioration and delays in the care of patients with complex needs • Enhancing the safety of medication and technology • Improving diagnostic accuracy and decision-making • Ensuring value for money in patient safety
NIHR Yorkshire and Humber Patient Safety Translational Research Centre	NIHR Patient Safety Translational Research Centre at Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust/University of Leeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient involvement in patient safety • Workforce engagement for safety • Safe Use of Medicines • Digital innovations for patient safety

Further information

Further details about PSTRCs are available on the [NIHR Website](#).

Department of Health Lead:

Dr Tony Soteriou
Deputy Director, Research Infrastructure and Growth
Science, Research and Evidence Directorate
Department of Health