



News

from the NIHR Research Design Service for the East Midlands

January 2012

Funding Treatment Costs Associated with Research – Key messages

Trudi Simmons, Senior Manager from the R&D Finance and Programmes Team at the Department of Health came to Leicester on 10th November to provide an update to the East Midlands health research community on the attribution and funding of NHS costs associated with research – with particular reference to treatment costs. Over 50 people attended, including representatives from Trust R&D offices, local Universities, Clinical Research Networks, BRUs and PCT commissioning.

Revised DH guidance is due to be released shortly and this will replace ARCO (Attributing revenue costs of externally-funded non-commercial research in the NHS). In advance of the new guidance being made available, these key messages from the session provide useful pointers for researchers and the NHS.

Costs of health related research

The most important principle in costing research studies is to ensure the correct attribution of costs. There are 3 categories of cost associated with research and each is funded in a different way. It is

important to consider the purpose of the activity for proper attribution e.g. a scan undertaken to provide research data and not as part of patient care would be a research cost not a treatment cost. Funders are increasingly aware of the need to scrutinise grant applications to ensure that NHS costings are appropriate and accurate.

Key messages for researchers

- Identify Excess Treatment Costs (ETCs) and Service Support costs and make contact with Trust R&D departments and CLRN at an early stage before grant submission. Good working relationships help ease the path for research.
- Minimise ETCs through trial design.
- Approach the NHS provider organisation, not the commissioners, to support ETCs.
- Be prepared to 'sell' your study – importance, relevance, efficiency gains and cost savings. Could it help meet the NHS QIPP (Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention) agenda?

Cost category	Description	Responsibility for Funding
Research costs	Costs of the research itself that end when the research ends.	Met by grant funders.
NHS Service Support costs	Additional patient care costs associated with the research, which end once the R&D activity in question has stopped, even if the patient care involved continued to be provided.	Met from the DH R&D budget, for NIHR portfolio studies this is usually met by NIHR Research Networks through a number of routes.
NHS Treatment Costs (including any excess treatment costs)	Patient care costs which would continue to be incurred if the patient care service in question continued to be provided after the R&D study had stopped. Excess Treatment Costs (ETCs) are the difference between usual care and experimental care where the experimental care costs are higher.	A clear expectation that these should be met through normal commissioning process (very exceptionally the DH may make a contribution via a subvention), although understanding that sometimes this may not be possible, and researchers should not make assumptions.

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- Get to know how funding systems work in the NHS. It will help in identifying and attributing costs.
- Are there resources already allocated to the Trust that could be used flexibly? For instance CLRN funded research nurses.
- When NHS budgets are exhausted, be prepared to wait until the next financial year for support.
- Do not assume that activity in the NHS must always be an NHS cost – it is the purpose of the activity that matters.
- Do not use the model commercial costings template for non-commercial studies.
- Service support costs cannot be used as a secondary grant fund to supplement research costs.

Messages for NHS organisations

- It is reasonable to delay support for a study if resources are spent in this financial year.
- NHS changes are challenging, but PCTs should continue to sign off study applications and commit to new ETC funding. Successor bodies should pick up outstanding liabilities including ETCs
- NHS organisations should not refuse to fund a study on the NIHR portfolio on the grounds of scientific merit or NHS priority – this will already have been agreed.
- There may be different local solutions to managing the distribution of ETCs. For example South Central Commissioners have agreed to set aside a sum of £250k to be used to fund ETCs for Portfolio studies taking place in the region; this is being administered by the two local CLRNs.

New report – Public involvement in research applications to the National Research Ethics Service (NRES)

A joint study from the National Research Ethics Service (NRES) and INVOLVE looks at the extent and nature of reported public involvement in health and social care research.

It analyses information routinely collected by NRES as part of the applications process for ethical approval of research projects. The study was based on a sample of applications submitted to NRES in 2010.

The report:

- provides a 'snapshot' of public involvement in research and identifies practical actions for funders, sponsors and regulators in ensuring and facilitating further patient and public involvement
- provides some key insights into the extent to which patients and the public are involved in research, and the understanding of researchers and funders of effective involvement

To view and download the report please visit the INVOLVE website http://www.invo.org.uk/All_Publications.asp

Patient and Public Involvement (Ppi) Clinics

New From Oct 2011

Are you developing a bid for applied health research?

If so, you will know that most research funders require that people potentially affected by the conduct of the findings of research have a say in its design and delivery. Achieving this can present challenges and so the Research Design Service for the East Midlands is offering a number of workshops for those who are actively working on a research bid and want to enhance patient and public involvement (PPI).

Workshop description

The PPI workshops are designed to help researchers to plan meaningful and appropriate PPI in their research proposals in order to improve the overall quality of a bid. They will give the researchers an opportunity to consider PPI during bid development and beyond, helping researchers capture this within their applications. The session will include a combination of information giving and group discussion. Each session will last three hours and will have a maximum attendance of eight people.

Learning objectives

1. To learn how the Research Design Service for the East Midlands can support your bid development
2. To learn about the difficulties associated with demonstrating impact of PPI in your research
3. To explore how to incorporate appropriate and meaningful PPI in designing, doing and disseminating your research
4. To learn about research governance procedures and PPI
5. To relate new knowledge about PPI to the requirements of the funding stream
6. To consider the practicalities and challenges of PPI in your research

Nottingham

25th April 2012, 2pm-5pm

Ashton Room, School of Health, University of Northampton, Park Campus, Boughton Green Road, Northampton NN2 7AL
To Book: Contact Lotus De Cort lfa1@leicester.ac.uk

Derby

TBC July 2012, 2pm-5pm

Venue: TBC

To Book: Contact Karen Taylor karen.taylor@nottingham.ac.uk

For more details see the website

<http://www.rds-eastmidlands.nihr.ac.uk>

For general enquiries contact:

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New NIHR funding streams

i4i Challenge Awards

The i4i Challenge Awards is a new NIHR funding stream that aims to bridge the gap between the innovation and development of new medical technology and its adoption into clinical pathways.

Background

Despite clinical evidence for its use, the cost and risk of implementing a new device into clinical pathways can make it difficult to get the product adopted into clinical practice. The NIHR has allocated £15 million over the next three years to the i4i Challenge Awards to help overcome these issues by identifying and supporting the application of emerging platform technologies which hold the potential to have a disruptive impact on clinical pathways.

The first i4i Challenge Awards call for proposals will open on 27 February 2012.

Programme outline

The i4i Challenge Awards will hold one competition per year that will address a particular 'challenge' that is a priority for the NHS.

The programme will seek to identify those medical technologies with the greatest potential clinical benefit, along with how they might be integrated into clinical decision and treatment pathways and how they might be implemented on a large scale.

A typical Challenge Award project will look at technologies that have, in the first instance, been developed to aid the identification, diagnosis, and monitoring of a single disease.

Challenge 1

The first challenge that the i4i Challenge Awards will address is cardiovascular disease – the leading cause of death in England and worldwide.

Cardiovascular disease encompasses a number of conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke and peripheral arterial disease. The high morbidity and mortality rate for patients with cardiovascular disease continues to be a significant burden on resources for the NHS, with the management of such long-term conditions remaining a high priority within both primary and secondary care.

The i4i Challenge Awards are inviting applications looking to implement point-of-care cardiac diagnostic and monitoring devices based on platform technologies for routine use. The programme is looking for disruptive technologies which have the potential to offer both time and cost savings alongside improved diagnosis and monitoring of cardiovascular disease.

Proposals must be based around a working prototype which has the potential for use in wider clinical settings, such as in other clinical specialities or within the community.

Diseases such as diabetes and chronic kidney disease are associated with cardiovascular disease.

Applications to study the implementation of any medical device prototypes that examine the condition of the heart or blood vessels in patients with associated diseases will be considered for this competition.

Funding

Funding awarded will be used to demonstrate the usefulness of the technology in the clinic and its broader applicability.

There is no funding limit for projects – funding amounts are determined by the nature and scale of the research activity. i4i Challenge Award funding will cover up to 100% of eligible project costs.

Projects will be funded for up to three years.

Eligibility

Project teams will be led by an (academic) clinician based in an NHS Trust, in cooperation with commercial and Higher Education Institution (HEI) partners as appropriate.

Lead applicants must be based in England only.

<http://www.ccf.nihr.ac.uk/i4i/Pages/i4iChallengeawards.aspx>

New HS&DR programme

The new NIHR Health Services and Delivery Research (HS&DR) programme was launched on 1 January 2012. The HS&DR programme aims to produce rigorous and relevant evidence on the quality, access and organisation of health services, including costs and outcomes. The programme will enhance the strategic focus on research that matters to the NHS including research on implementation and a range of knowledge mobilisation initiatives. It will be keen to support ambitious evaluative research to improve health services.

FAQs

A set of updated FAQs providing advice and guidance about the new HS&DR programme is available to view at <http://www.netscc.ac.uk/hhdr/>

The programme is now accepting applications to its researcher-led workstream.

Closing date: 15 March 2012

http://www.netscc.ac.uk/hhdr/fundingresearcherled.html?src=alert_125001

Research Capability Funding

A new funding stream will replace Flexibility and Sustainability (FsF) funding from April 2012. The new 'NIHR Research Capability Funding' stream will have a wider range of uses than FsF funds. A summary of the key changes is on the NIHR website: http://www.nihr.ac.uk/infrastructure/Pages/research_capability_funding.aspx

Plus a briefing document: <http://www.nihr.ac.uk/files/pdfs/Briefing%20documents/4.11%20Research%20Capability%20Funding.pdf>



NOTICEBOARD

– NIHR Portfolio Funding Opportunities

NIHR Research Methods Fellowships and Internships

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Trainees Coordinating Centre (TCC) is launching round 3 of NIHR Research Methods Fellowships and Internships to support the development of individuals with expertise in research methods including:

- Medical statistics
- Health economics
- Clinical trial design
- Operational research
- Modelling

NIHR Research Methods Fellowships and Internships form part of the NIHR Research Methods Programme, the purpose of which is to:

- Attract to the NIHR the most talented individuals, especially those who are not currently working in a health-related field; and
- Provide these individuals with the necessary support and training to become specialist methodologists in areas relevant to the NIHR; or
- Expand their research interests into areas relevant to the NIHR.

Applications are invited for funding to host NIHR Research Methods Fellowships and Internships. Applications must include a named NIHR Senior Investigator as either the supervisor or co-supervisor of the Fellow. Where a NIHR Senior Investigator is not a methodologist a named methodologist must be included in the application.

Closing date: 1st February 2012

<http://www.nihrtcc.nhs.uk/>

National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) – Central Commissioning Facility (CCF) Programme Development Grants

Programme Development Grants will provide funding of £20k to £100k (over a period of 6 – 18 months).

Amount of funding available: > £100K

Duration: 1-3 years

Closing date: 26 March 2012

<http://www.rdfunding.org.uk/queries/ListGrantDetails.asp?GrantID=13536>

NIHR Public Health Research (PHR) programme – Commissioned call for proposals

Proposals are invited on the following commissioning briefs:

11/3030 – Newly licensed drivers

11/3040 – Creative enterprises in open access settings

Closing date: 23 April 2012

For more information, application forms and guidance notes, visit the website:

http://www.phr.nihr.ac.uk/fundingopportunities/commissioned.asp?src=alert_NOV11_5

Medical Research Council

The Developmental Pathway Funding Scheme (DPFS) is a new, rigorously-assessed, funding scheme set up by the MRC to help strengthen the translation of fundamental research towards patient benefit. It does not fund discoveries of new causes or risk factors of disease, biomarkers, drug targets, biomaterials or research tools, but takes these as starting points and supports their application to improve healthcare and benefits for patients. The DPFS forms a key part of the MRC's Translational Research Strategy.

Amount of funding available: > £100K
(Estimated total funds: £25,000,000)

Duration: 1 year – 3 years

Closing date: 15 March 2012 (multiple)

<http://www.rdfunding.org.uk/Queries/ListGrantDetails.asp?GrantID=12755>

Physical environment Research Programme to discontinue.

Talks are ongoing at director level about how research in this area is to be funded in the future.

Would you still like to receive this newsletter? Let us know!

We are currently updating our database and would appreciate it if you would take the time to enter just your name and email address into our website to indicate whether you wish to continue receiving the newsletter or would prefer to unsubscribe. So log on now at <http://www.rds-eastmidlands.nihr.ac.uk/> – you can enter your name and email address on the left hand side of the home page – it takes seconds and ensures that you will be kept up to date with research support and research activity in the region!

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