

Health and Care Research Wales

Doctoral Fellowship Award

Guidance notes for applicants

About these guidance notes

This document contains information and guidance to applicants submitting a **FULL** proposal to Health and Care Research Wales Doctoral Fellowship Award.

It is important that you read these guidance notes fully before starting to complete the application form to ensure that you provide the correct information.

We have endeavoured to cover all necessary information relating to the application form through these resources. Incorrectly completed applications may be rejected.

Contents

Contents	2
Part 1: Background information	3
1. Introduction to the call.....	3
Part 2: Guidance for submitting your application form	9
Section A: Applicant details	10
Section B: Project summary	11
Section C: Project details.....	15
Section D: Employment history.....	27
Section E: Research Team.....	27
Section F: Research achievements, skills and experience	28
Section G: References.....	30
Section H: Suggested reviewers.....	30
Section I: Acknowledgement	30
Section J: Supporting Documents.....	30
Section K: Review and submit	31
Annex	33
Social Care Research Guidelines: 'What is Social Care Research?'	33

Part 1: Background information

These guidance notes contain information relevant to both the Doctoral Fellowship. Please read the guidance carefully to ensure that you are following information relevant information.

1. Introduction to the call

Doctoral Fellowship

This integrated scheme provides opportunities for health and social care researchers to undertake a PhD by research with full salary replacement. The scheme is for pre-doctoral researchers employed within Higher Education Institutes or staff employed by NHS or social care organisations wishing to undertake a PhD by research in a health or social care topic. Applications should be submitted by the prospective PhD student with support from a PhD supervisor noted in the relevant section of the application form.

Funding can be requested to cover directly incurred salary costs (no overheads or indirect costs allowable) of the applicant for 3 years' full-time funding, or 4 or 5 years' part-time funding, their PhD tuition fees, and the costs of an appropriate research project and training and development programme.

The Doctoral Fellowship funds PhD projects which provide robust evidence that address the health and/or social care needs of the public, service users, carers and the wider population and/or the organisation and delivery of efficient and effective health and social care services in Wales. This scheme does not support basic research or work involving animals or their tissue. Applications for Global Health research are out of remit.

This is a **one-stage** application process. An applicant may only submit **one** application to this call per round. Eligible applications considered within remit and competitiveness will first go through a shortlisting panel, with the highest scoring applications being called for interview by the Panel.

1.1 Call remit

The Doctoral Fellowship Award aims to support talented individuals to undertake research leading to the completion of a PhD and to support capacity building in health or social care research in Wales.

The Fellowship offers funding for directly incurred salary costs (no overheads or indirect costs allowable) for 3 years' full-time funding, or 4 or 5 years' part-time funding, PhD tuition fees, and the costs of an appropriate research project and training and development programme.

Applications are invited from pre-doctoral researchers employed within Welsh Higher Education Institutes or staff employed by NHS or social care organisations in Wales wishing to undertake a PhD by research in a health or social care topic. Applicants must demonstrate that they are/will be based within Wales; proposed plans should include a clear focus on Wales which extends beyond the agreement of a Welsh organisation to host the applicant. Proposals for PhD by Publication and Professional Doctorates are not in the remit of this scheme.

Projects that are undertaken under this scheme are expected to have public and patient and/or service user benefit as well as clear relevance to Welsh Government policy priorities (see 1.2 Need and importance).

1.2 Need and importance

The Fellowship scheme offers funding opportunities across a broad range of health and social care-related topics. While all applications meeting the general terms of the call are eligible, Health and Care Research Wales places an emphasis on policy, practice and public need. All applicants will need to make a strong case for the need for and importance of their research proposal. This will include:

- a clear description of the health or care need they are addressing
- the placing of the research proposed in the appropriate policy or practice context
- a justification of the importance of that need, in terms of the scale of the problem and/or likely impact on those with the health or care are need
- a demonstration of a gap in the research evidence
- a demonstration that the methods proposed are suitable for answering the research question

1.3 Eligibility

- Applications for a fellowship term of up to 3 years (100% Whole Time Equivalent (WTE), 4 years (75% WTE) or 5 years (60% WTE) in duration will be accepted - see criteria below. If the application is successful, a contract for the delivery of the research will be placed with the host organisation and all funds for the research will be issued to that organisation.

Applicants must satisfy the following criteria:

- applicants must be based at an institution or organisation in Wales at the time of applying (or be in receipt of a job offer such that they will be based at a host institution in Wales at the time the Fellowship starts)
- applicants will need to be able to undertake their PhD on a full-time basis over 3 years (100% Whole Time Equivalent (WTE)), or part-time over 4 years (75% WTE) or 5 years (60% WTE). The cost of the whole award will not exceed £300,000
- applicants must be supported by a named PhD supervisor
- applicants must be in a position to commence activities by 1 October of the relevant year of the award
- applications must have the support of the Host Institution
- where already registered for a PhD (or MPhil with transfer to PhD), applicants should not have been registered for more than 12 months at 100% WTE by the time the award starts
- applicants must be entirely funded for the duration of the award through the Doctoral Fellowship
- applications must include a clear and comprehensive training and development programme
- applicants applying for a full-time Fellowship who are active clinicians or practitioners can dedicate an appropriate proportion of time to ensure maintenance of clinical or practice competencies

1.4 Structure and Timetable

The assessment process is as follows:

- all applications are initially reviewed to check they are within the programme and call remit and to identify any that are clearly not competitive*
- applications are prioritised by the Shortlisting Panel based on the assessment criteria for funding (Section 1.5)

- shortlisted applicants will be called for interview where they will be asked to provide a short presentation and answer questions from the Panel
- the Panel makes funding recommendations to Health and Care Research Wales

* 'Not Competitive' means that a proposal is not of a sufficiently high standard to be taken forward for further assessment in comparison with other proposals received, because it has little or no realistic prospect of funding. This may be because of scientific quality, cost, scale/duration, or the makeup of the project team.

Summary of the Doctoral Fellowship Award application process**:	
The key dates for applicants are provided in the table below.	
Stage in process	Date
Competition launch	17 October 2024
Submission deadline	16:00 hours – 15 January 2025
Shortlisting Panel	March 2025 (date tbc)
Interview Board	May 2025 (date tbc)

**Please note: these dates may be subject to change

1.5 Assessment criteria for funding

Applications will be subject to examination to ensure fit with the scheme's remit and eligibility conditions. All applications deemed to be eligible will be reviewed for policy relevance and significance. This will include an assessment of the application's relevance to broader Welsh Government policy and an assessment of the need and importance section. Applicants not progressing beyond this initial triage will be informed in writing at this stage.

Applications passing the triage stage will be reviewed by the Health and Care Research Wales Shortlisting Panel that will assess the all-round quality and merit of the application, the applicant, and the proposed host research environment. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview with the Panel.

The Panel will make funding recommendations to Health and Care Research Wales (Welsh Government). Health and Care Research Wales (Welsh Government) will make the final funding decisions, considering the strength of Panel recommendations and available resources. These decisions are final and are not open to appeal.

Health and Care Research Wales Faculty expects to inform all applicants of the outcome in June 2025.

1.6 Data protection statement and equality monitoring form

We have an obligation to keep data secure and to use it appropriately. To fulfil our obligations under law and as a result of our partnership with the Welsh Government, Health and Care Research Wales adopts various procedures to use and protect data. This will impact on how we deal with you as an applicant and your Co-applicants.

Privacy Notice

The Welsh Government Grant Privacy Notice states how the Welsh Government will use the information provided at application stage. It is available here: <https://gov.wales/privacy-notice-welsh-government-grants>

Data Security – Data About You

Personal information will be held by Health and Care Research Wales in a network that is available only to Health and Care Research Wales staff. Your details and those of your Co-applicants will be retained in order to facilitate the running of the Health and Care Research Wales funding schemes. If your application is successful at any stage of our process, your name and organisation details may appear on the Health and Care Research Wales website. In addition, once funding has been agreed and the contract signed, your details may appear in other Health and Care Research Wales literature as a grant holder and will be passed to Welsh Government for inclusion in any of their publicly available databases of research projects. If you have any questions, please contact us at: Research-Faculty@wales.nhs.uk

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the data protection legislation, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer:

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

CARDIFF

CF10 3NQ

Email Address: Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk

How to find out more

The Privacy Notice will be effective from 4 January 2023 and you can view it at Privacy notice: Welsh Government grants | GOV.WALES. The Grants Privacy Notice makes sure we continue to comply with privacy law and regulation.

If you have any question or require any further help please contact us at DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales

Equality monitoring

We take seriously our duty under the Equality Act (2010) to offer and make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities applying to our research funding schemes, and to ensure that our Panel members are aware of our responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and thus the need to treat all applications fairly. If you would like to discuss reasonable adjustments to the application process, please contact Research-Faculty@wales.nhs.uk before the application deadline.

The Faculty Awards Management System will require all applicants to complete an Equality Monitoring Form. The questions and more information on how we will handle the data are provided [here](#).

Part 2: Guidance for submitting your application form

The application form should be completed using the Health and Care Research Wales Faculty Awards Management System. Please note that the research team (PhD supervisor, nominated Head of Department, sponsor and finance officer as a minimum) will be required to confirm participation during the application process, and the sponsor will be required to sign off the completed application form, before it can be submitted. Therefore, sufficient time should be factored in for them to respond before the submission deadline.

Please do not send additional information as this will not be assessed.

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact Health and Care Research Wales using the email address below. The Application Form should be submitted **(including signatory agreement via the system)** using the Health and Care Research Wales Faculty Awards Management System by **16:00 on Wednesday 15 January 2025**.

Contact us

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact; Research-Faculty@wales.nhs.uk

You will need to include all the appropriate supporting roles for the application into the Research Team page. As a minimum you will need to provide contact information for the following supporting roles:

- PhD supervisor
- The Nominated Head of Department or Senior Manager
- The Sponsor
- The Nominated Administrative Authority or Finance Officer

Please ensure that you read the relevant documentation thoroughly before starting your application.

Section A: Applicant details

Please supply your title, name, work contact details, your current job title, profession and specialty area. Contact between Health and Care Research Wales and the applicant will usually be by email, so please ensure you provide a current and regularly accessed work email address.

Please refer to **specialty areas** listed below:

- Ageing
- Adult Social Care
- Anaesthesia, Perioperative Medicine and Pain Management
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Children and Young People
- Children Social Care
- Critical Care
- Dementias and Neurodegeneration
- Dermatology
- Diabetes
- Ear, Nose and Throat
- Gastroenterology
- Genomics and Rare Diseases
- Haematology
- Health Services Research
- Infection
- Kidney and Urinary Tract Disorders
- Liver
- Mental Health
- Metabolic and Endocrine Disorders
- Musculoskeletal Disorders
- Neurological Disorders
- Ophthalmology
- Oral and Dental Health
- Primary Care
- Public Health and Prevention
- Reproductive Health
- Respiratory Disorders
- Social Care
- Stroke

- Surgery
- Trauma and Emergency Care
- Other

Please provide the contracting organisation name and department and your highest academic qualification.

The employing organisation will usually be the organisation with which the Research and Development Division in Welsh Government will enter into a formal contract should your application be successful. Please confirm the type of contract you hold with them (fixed term or permanent) and the email address of the Line Manager.

If the proposed contracting organisation is different to the current employing organisation, applicants should be in receipt of a job offer such that they will be employed by the contracting organisation in Wales at the time the Fellowship starts. In this circumstance, the type of contract you will hold with them (fixed term or permanent) should be confirmed, and the email address of the Line Manager.

Section B: Project summary

B1 Research title

(Limit: 200 characters)

The project title should clearly and concisely state the proposed research. Any abbreviations should be spelled out.

B2 Research area

Research area relates to the UKCRC Research Activity Codes which classify types of research activity. This dimension of the Health Research Classification System (HRCS) has 48 codes divided into eight overarching code groups which encompass all aspects of health-related research activity ranging from basic to applied research. The [Research Activity Codes](#) are modelled on the structure of the Common Scientific Outline, a cancer research specific classification system developed by the International Cancer Research Partners.

Please refer to **research areas** listed below:

- Underpinning research
- Aetiology
- Prevention of disease and conditions
- Detection screening and diagnosis
- Development of treatments and therapeutic interventions
- Evaluation of treatments and therapeutic interventions
- Management of diseases and conditions
- Health and social care services research

B3 Project start date

Please note this should be 1 October 2025, whether this is a working day or not. Alternative start dates will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

In planning the Fellowship start date, you will need to take account of the necessary contracting and recruitment time and any ethical approval you may need prior to starting your research.

Health and Care Research Wales is committed to timeliness of research and rapid initiation of studies following panel assessment. Please note that should you be successful with your proposal we will expect your fellowship to commence on the 1 October 2025.

If you find that your circumstances change during the assessment process and you may need an exception to the start date (for example, if you will be taking leave of any kind) you **must inform Health and Care Research Wales as soon as you are aware of this**. Health and Care Research Wales reserves the right to withdraw the funding offer should the applicant fail to inform them of any changes in circumstances in a timely manner.

B4 Project end date

Your Fellowship can be undertaken on a full-time basis over up to 3 years (100% WTE), or part time over up to 4 years (75% WTE) or up to 5 years (60% WTE). Shorter fellowships are also encouraged.

B5 Total award costs requested

You should enter the figure calculated in your Budget and Justification spreadsheet here. You should complete the separate Budget and Justification document and attach it as part of your application.

For guidance on how to complete the financial costs of your application, please see the financial guidance.

Please note, applicants wishing to collaborate with the SAIL databank should **ensure they engage SAIL sufficiently in the development of their application**. You should cost in the necessary data analyst or training time as a specified direct cost. **This is also applicable if you are planning to engage with Clinical Trials Units or Health and Care Economics Cymru.**

If you require NHS costs (As set out by [AcoRD guidance](#)), you must ensure they have been approved.

It is expected that the cost of the whole award will not exceed £300,000.

B6 Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) requested

This should be specified as 100%, 75% or 60%.

B7 Scientific abstract

(Limit: 3500 characters)

Please provide a structured expert summary which outlines the background to the research, the aims of the work, including the question to be addressed by this research, the plan of investigation and a summary of the potential benefits to the public and/or to service users.

This should also include any additional points required to support statements made in the above sections, and any key references required to justify the points made (e.g., in the use of particular outcome measures or methods of analysis). This section of the application will be used as an overall summary and, therefore, should be a stand-alone section. Any abbreviations used elsewhere in the proposal should be defined here.

B8 Summary (in plain English)

(Limit: 3500 characters)

Content

When writing your summary please include the following information (where appropriate):

- Aim(s) of the research
- Background to the research, specifically what is the problem being addressed and why this research is important
- Design and methods used
- Public involvement
- Dissemination

The importance of a plain English summary

A plain English summary is a clear explanation of your research, free from jargon and acronyms. The plain English summary is not the same as a scientific abstract - please do not cut and paste this or other sections of your application form to create the plain English summary.

Many reviewers use this summary to inform their review of your funding application. They include clinicians and researchers who do not have specialist knowledge of your field as well as policy makers and members of the public. If your application for funding is successful, the summary may be used on the Health and Care Research Wales and other websites.

A good quality plain English summary providing an easy-to-read overview of your whole study will help:

- those carrying out the review (reviewers and shortlisting and interview panel members) to have a better understanding of your research proposal.
- inform others about your research such as members of the public, health professionals, policy makers and the media.
- the research funders to publicise the research that they fund.

It is helpful to involve service users/carers/members of the public in developing a plain English summary.

Please note that the clarity of the plain English summary is assessed as part of the public reviewer assessment. If your plain English summary is considered poor, this may affect the funding decision. **If your application is considered strong enough in other ways to be funded but your plain English summary is poor, you will be asked to resubmit your plain English summary prior to funding approval.**

Further guidance on writing in plain English is available online at [Involve Make it Clear](#)

B9 If already registered for a PhD (or MPhil with transfer to PhD) please state the start date and the WTE (whole time equivalent) you have been working on this.

Section C: Project details

C1 Reasons for applying

(Limit: 2000 characters)

Please indicate why you wish to apply for the Fellowship Award, providing justification for why this award is the right one for you at this point in your career. For applicants who have already commenced their PhD please provide details of what you have achieved so far.

C2 Contribution of PhD supervisor

(Limit: 2000 characters)

Please describe how the PhD supervisor will support you through the course of the fellowship, providing high-quality mentoring and supervision. They should be familiar with the research topic and methodology being used in the project and a track record in PhD supervision. Please provide details of their track record.

Please note that funding will not support any payment to the supervisor.

C3 Training and development programme

(Limit: 2000 characters)

Please give details of the training and development programme that you will put in place for the duration of this award. Please set out any training that will be provided by your host Institution and any training and development that will be externally accessed.

C4 Application type

(Limit: 50 characters)

Please state the type of application you are submitting; primary or secondary research. If applicable you should also state if your application is for a pilot or feasibility study.

C5 History of application

(Limit: 2000 characters)

Please state 'Yes' or 'No' and indicate whether this application, or a similar application, has previously been submitted to Health and Care Research Wales and/or is currently under review with another funding body.

We are keen to know if the proposal has been submitted elsewhere, and you must be as open about this as possible. This includes, but is not limited to, any facts that, should they come to light at a future date, would embarrass either the programme or the individual who withheld the fact (e.g. if a member of the team holds a patent or has a financial interest within the research area). You should name and provide dates and outcomes of these.

Failure to disclose accurately or fully will be considered by the programme as academic misconduct and treated seriously.

C6 Research plan

(Limit: 25000 characters)

Describe the proposed research plan, providing descriptions of the overall research design, sampling strategies, methods of data collection and analysis. It is vital to add as much detail as possible on design and methodology, including justification of sample size. Please give details of any relevant work that has already commenced in the preparation of this research proposal.

Health and Care Research Wales wish to encourage both qualitative and quantitative research designs, and the panel recognises that these need to be presented in different ways. If appropriate, please include a copy of any questionnaires or other documents that you have prepared to be used as part of your study.

You are required to include a one-page Research Plan or Flowchart indicating a schedule for the completion of work, including the timing of key milestones and deliverables. Your Research Plan or Flowchart **must** be prepared in portrait format or it may be difficult for the panel to view the required information in order to assess your application. There is space to provide a list of citations referenced later in the form.

Broadly, the detailed research plan should follow the format set out as follows:

Background and rationale:

Please provide evidence explaining why this research is important and how you expect to add to the body of knowledge with reference to current policy and practice **in Wales**. Please also explain the size and nature of the problem to be addressed and explain how findings may be exploited and implemented. You may provide a brief literature review, including, if appropriate,

reference to previous or ongoing work which relates to that being proposed. Applicants should be aware of ongoing research in this area and comment on any other research which might be deemed to overlap with the contents of the proposal.

The rationale should aim to detail the:

- likely benefits of the proposed research to service users and the public
- implications for the further development of health and social care or integrated social care and health practice
- potential impact on local decision-making and improvements in service delivery

Background and rationale evidence:

In addition to searching main bibliographic databases and research registers, applicants should check the list of existing research funded by [Health and Care Research Wales](#).

Please describe the existing evidence base for this research and demonstrate why this means your research is important now, both in terms of time and relevance.

The proposed standard for what constitutes a satisfactory review of the existing evidence to inform new primary research is as follows:

- citing a relevant Cochrane Review (or)
- if no Cochrane Review exists, then citing another systematic review that is published in a peer reviewed journal (or)
- if no published systematic review is identified, then the research applicants should **present the findings** of a systematic review that the applicant has undertaken for the purposes of the application

Importantly, if the applicants undertake and present the findings of their own review of the existing evidence undertaken systematically then they must provide sufficient details of the methodologies employed to allow the review to be replicated.

Research plan:

Outline the design of your research including the methods you plan to use; the target organisations, staff groups/professions, service user group or disease area to be studied; and brief details of the team involved in undertaking the research. Please ensure your fieldwork and methods are clearly connected to the aims and objectives and research questions you outlined earlier.

Design and theoretical/conceptual framework:

Please provide a brief statement on the type of study design to be used, and the theoretical framing, concepts and models to be used.

Target population:

Define the population from which the study sample receives the intervention concerned (or the control intervention where appropriate) e.g., women over 60, people with learning disability, people with advanced cancer.

Inclusion/exclusion criteria:

Please provide a detailed explanation of the inclusion/exclusion criteria.

Setting/context:

Please describe the service setting or context in which the study will take place (such as the organisation or service type).

Search strategy (in the case of fellowships involving evidence synthesis):

Provide details of the body of existing evidence that will be covered and access arrangements (e.g. use of databases, hand-searching, communication with authors, etc.).

Sampling:

Please describe for all projects your approach and rationale for sampling or selecting research sites and subjects. For quantitative studies, if appropriate, state the required sample size, giving details of the estimated effect, size, power and/or precision employed in the calculation where applicable. You should also provide estimations of recruitment and retention rates where relevant.

Data collection:

Please describe the data you plan to collect. Depending upon your study design and methodology, you may need to explain what data collection instruments or measures you plan to use, and whether you will be using instruments already developed and tested elsewhere or instruments which you develop as part of this project. For example, where cost or outcome data is to be collected, you need to make clear and justify your approach to defining and measuring the costs or outcomes in question. You should make clear the link between the data collected and the research questions outlined earlier.

Data analysis:

Please describe how you plan to analyse the data you have collected. Depending upon your study design and methodology, you may need to explain what quantitative statistical methods you plan to employ, your methods for qualitative data analysis, and your approach to combining data from multiple methods or sources.

Success criteria and barriers:

Please set out the measurements of success you intend to use, the barriers to the proposed research and how you intend to mitigate against them.

C7 Need and importance

(Limit: 3500 characters)

This section must include the following details.

Please explain how your proposed research is within the remit of the Fellowship Awards, how your application addresses need and importance and how it will support policy development or decision making.

You should include a clear explanation of the main (single) research question and the ways in which the proposed design will address that question. You are welcome to highlight any other aspects of the design that you would like to bring particular attention to, in order to explain how it is within remit and how it will address need and importance and/or support policy development or decision making. Please remember that the Fellowship Awards are relevant to the public and service users' health and social care. Studies involving healthy volunteers and animals are not within the remit of the programme.

C8 Research environment

(Limit: 2000 characters)

Please describe the HEI Host Department's research environment in terms of track record, critical mass, and capacity.

C9 Equality, diversity and inclusion

(Limit: 2000 characters)

It is a requirement of Welsh Government grant terms and conditions that funded organisations apply a policy of equal opportunities as employers, as users of volunteers, and as providers of services, regardless of race, gender/gender identification, sexual orientation, religion and belief, age or any disability. Please confirm that your organisation operates such a policy which you will implement in all your research project activities, should it be funded.

Additionally, under the Equality Act (2010) the Welsh Government has a public sector equality duty to ensure that due consideration is given to groups with 'protected characteristics' across its policies. Protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Every person eligible to take part in research should be offered the same opportunity of taking part in that research regardless of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Ethnicity - link (for example) to the toolkit for increasing participation of ethnic minority groups in health and care research:
<https://ethnicealthresearch.org.uk/resources/increasing-diversity-in-research/>
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Geographical location
- Socioeconomic status
- Access to health or social care

Applicants should demonstrate how these factors have been considered and addressed in their proposal, including steps taken to ensure the research sample is representative of the population the study is targeted at. Applicants need to explain who they are planning to recruit to ensure inclusivity of study participants and justify and explain any exclusions, for example by completing an Equality Impact Assessment. Costs associated with inclusivity, which may include, but are not limited to justified translation of research participant material into other relevant languages, would be expected and where appropriate should be included in the budget and justification spreadsheet under 'Other Direct Costs'. Additionally, applicants should demonstrate that all potential recruiting locations have been considered and the research is deliverable to those areas.

Helpful links:

- <https://www.learningforinvolvement.org.uk/content/resource/how-to-incorporate-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-in-patient-and-public-involvement/>

C10 Public involvement and engagement – active involvement and engagement plan and approach

(Limit: 2000 characters)

Health and Care Research Wales expects involvement of service users, carers or the wider public in the research it supports. You are encouraged to consider whether the scientific quality, feasibility or practicality of a proposal can be improved with public involvement.

Health and Care Research Wales expects the active involvement of the public in the research it supports, including research undertaken as part of an individual training award. Health and Care Research Wales recognises the nature and extent of active public involvement is likely to vary depending on the context of each study or award.

Health and Care Research Wales believes public involvement and engagement have a key role to play in improving the quality, relevance and utility of research. As such we are committed to the implementation of the [UK Standards for Public Involvement](#) in research. Our focus is on supporting meaningful public involvement and engagement activity that makes a difference to the quality and impact of research. Please ensure you are clear about the nature and extent of the public input into your proposed work.

By **public involvement** we mean an active partnership between members of the public and researchers in the research process, rather than the use of people as 'subjects' of research. Public involvement means research being carried out *with* or *by* members of the public rather than it being something that is done **to**, **about** or **for** them. Examples of public involvement include: involvement in identifying research priorities; assisting in the design and management of a research project; being a co-applicant on a research grant or a joint grant holder; carrying out specific research activities; being members of a project advisory or steering group; disseminating research findings.

By **public engagement** we mean any activity that enables the public to interact with research, especially activities that provide a two-way exchange of ideas and views and where information and knowledge about research is provided and disseminated. Examples of engagement include: science festivals open to the public with discussions on research; open days at a research centre where members of the public are invited to find out more; raising awareness through media such as television, newspapers and social networks; public dissemination of the findings of a research study.

Both these types of activity are different from **participation**, which refers to people taking part in a research study through being recruited to a clinical trial or other research study as a 'subject' to receive a treatment, for example, or complete a questionnaire or participate in a focus group as part of a research study.

For reference purposes, please note that by 'public' we mean users of health and social care services and carers of those who use those services.

The Health and Care Research Wales website provides detailed information about involving members of the public in research. In this section it is important you describe in as much detail as possible how service users and the public have been involved in the development of the application as well as plans for involvement in the proposed research. Please note this section does not refer to the recruitment of service users or members of the public as participants in the research.

Health and Care Research Wales has issued guidance for researchers on public involvement in research and the paying of service users actively involved in research. These are available from <https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/public>

In completing this section:

When describing Public Involvement, applicants should outline their plans stating:

- the aims of active involvement in this project
- a description of the service users, carers or members of the public to be involved and how they are to be identified
- a description of the methods of involvement

If members of the public were actively involved in identifying the research topic and preparing this application or if active involvement is planned, please give more details including:

- how it will benefit the research
- the reasons for taking this approach
- arrangements for training and support
- justification of the costs to support involvement

Where appropriate, when describing the ways in which you have involved the public prior to the application:

- provide names of individuals and/or groups
- outline the activities they have been involved in
- explain how this involvement has, or has not, influenced or changed this research application

Further information is available on the [UK Standards for Public Involvement](#).

C11 Expected outputs and dissemination plans

(Limit: 4000 characters)

What are the expected outputs of research/impact and please describe your plans for disseminating the findings of this research?

It is expected that as part of the long-term research and/or implementation strategy, all research funded by Health and Care Research Wales through the Welsh Government should be able to demonstrate it is capable of generating outcomes that are likely to contribute to public and service user benefit in Wales.

In addition to traditional publication routes, please indicate also how any findings arising from the research will be disseminated so as to promote or facilitate uptake by users. This may well include plans to submit papers to peer reviewed journals, but it will be particularly important to identify additional forms of presentation that will maximise impact on stakeholders.

Describe also how you will engage with service user groups, health and social care planners, practitioners and/or policy makers, where appropriate. **We expect when pilot or feasibility studies are proposed a clear route of progression criteria to the substantive study will be described here.**

Please also provide information about plans for sharing the findings of the research with the research participants and service users/members of the public who were involved in the research project.

C12 Intellectual Property - background

(Limit: 4000 characters)

It is essential that any intellectual property (IP) which may arise from Health and Care Research Wales funded research is recognised, captured and utilised in the most appropriate way, to ensure that the potential benefits of the research are realised effectively for service users and the taxpayer.

Health and Care Research Wales takes a broad definition of IP which might include research outputs such as new or improved software, training materials, manuals, checklists, scales, protocols, questionnaires, toolkits, guidelines or similar, service innovations or new service delivery models. Such new developments of IP are known as 'foreground IP'. In addition, the proposed research is likely to build on IP generated previously by others or yourself as an Applicant. This is known as 'background IP'. IP may be protected via a number of methods

including copyright, trademarks or patents. Taking this into account we can assume that much of the research funded by Health and Care Research Wales is likely to generate or modify IP.

This section of the application form asks you to consider the background IP on which this application is based, and the nature of any foreground IP likely to be generated.

You or your institution may hold the relevant background IP. The term 'background IP' refers to the IP available at the start of your research project - which is being used in delivery of this project. Background IP may have been developed through earlier research projects which you may or may not have been involved. If the research you propose will use background IP, you will need to ensure you have reached agreement to use the background IP. This may require licences, collaboration agreements and/or sub-contracts (e.g. you require a licence to use the EQ5D questionnaire for research purposes). If so, you will need to tell us about these arrangements in your application and provide a copy of these agreements if you are successful in obtaining funding for your proposed research.

If unsure, please seek advice from your host organisation and/or supervisor.

C13 IP - Production and management

(Limit: 4000 characters)

We anticipate that most research will develop new or improve existing IP (e.g. by modifying or enhancing an existing intervention, developing data analysis techniques, developing new software etc.). In this section we would like you to detail the potential areas for IP development. Where appropriate, please link this back to any background IP that you have previously mentioned. Indicate why you think the new IP is novel over what is already known/in existence. We understand that at this stage your ideas may be tentative. Please note IP produced may or may not have a commercial value, but we would anticipate all projects will produce IP that has wider benefit.

It is important to demonstrate in your application that you have plans and competent staff in place to manage any new (or existing) IP.

C14 Conflicts

(Limit: 2000 characters)

Please declare any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest that you or your supervisor/academic mentor may have, including any facts that, should they come to light at a future date, could lead to a perception of bias or embarrass either the programme, Health and Care Research Wales or the individual who withheld the fact (e.g. if a member of the team holds (or expects to hold) a patent or has a financial interest within the research area).

Please include any relevant personal, non-personal and commercial interest that could be perceived as a conflict of interest, examples include (this list is not all encompassing), secondary employment, consultancy, financial or commercial gain (pensions, shareholdings, directorships, voting rights), honoraria, etc. In a case of commercial sector involvement with the application or the study, please state clearly the relationship to ownership of data, access to data, and membership of project oversight groups. If in doubt, you should err on the side of disclosure.

C15 Management and governance - research timetable

(Limit: 2000 characters)

Please provide a concise summary of the research plan, in the form of a monthly project timetable showing the scheduling of all key stages in the project, their expected durations, and the timing of key milestones throughout the project including the production of outputs.

This timetable will be an important aspect of the monitoring framework during the life of the project.

C16 Management and governance - research management and governance arrangements

(Limit: 2000 characters)

All project proposals should include details of how the project will be managed and governed. For projects involving a number of institutions or component parts, effective project management is essential to ensure the work is completed within the planned timeframe.

C17 Management and governance - ethical issues

(Limit: 3000 characters)

Please discuss all potential ethical considerations raised by your project and explain how you will address these. This should include discussion of vulnerable groups and issues relating to accessing data where such considerations are relevant.

Please note that time to obtain ethical approval should be incorporated into the project timetable.

If there are no ethical considerations in relation to the project being proposed, please state this in your answer and provide a brief explanation of why you believe this is the case.

C18 Wider context - CTU involvement (If applicable)

(Limit: 1500 characters)

If a Clinical Trials Unit is to be involved, please provide the Unit name, registration number and explain the involvement of the CTU at all stages of your research, including design and follow up, should the trial be funded.

Clinical Trials Units are regarded as an important component of many trial applications and can advise and participate throughout the process from initial idea development through to project delivery and reporting. However, they may not be essential for all types of studies. If you feel this is the case, please justify the reasons on your application.

In addition, [UKCRC CTU Network](#) provides a searchable information resource on all registered units and CTU ID numbers in the UK and lists key interest areas and contact information.

Where you have indicated CTU involvement a letter of confirmation from the Director should be supplied for a submission to be complete. The supporting letter should be attached with your application submission.

C19 Is the research multi-centred?

(Limit: 1000 characters)

Please state if the research will take place in more than one centre, yes or no. If yes, please list suggested sites and outline discussions/agreements held at site level to date.

C20 Wider context - links to other organisations

(Limit: 5000 characters)

Where appropriate, you are expected to engage with relevant Health and Care Research Wales infrastructure groups. This will include any proposed engagement with SAIL databank and Health and Care Economics Cymru. We are keen to learn about the benefits you have identified as a result of such collaboration. Please provide as much detail as you can.

Section D: Employment history

Please provide details of your previous employment relevant to the application.

Section E: Research Team

Please note that the research team (PhD supervisor, Head of Department, sponsor and finance officer as a minimum) will be contacted from the Faculty Awards Management System via email to confirm their participation in the application, and the sponsor for additional signatory sign off. Therefore, you should ensure that sufficient time is provided for signatory sign off before the submission deadline.

E1 PhD supervisor

Please enter the proposed PhD supervisor's name, email address, role and organisation.

There is no maximum limit of PhD supervisors however please note funding restrictions in the Finance Guidance.

Your supervisor will be asked to provide a statement of support outlining how support will be provided to the applicant during the award, and how they will continue to support the research ambitions of the applicant beyond the term of the award.

E2 Nominated Head of Department or Senior Manager

Please enter the nominated Head of Department or Senior Manager for your host organisations, name, email address, role, organisation and organisation address.

E3 Sponsor

Please enter the sponsor's name, email address, role, organisation and organisation address. The sponsor is the representative of whoever is 'sponsoring' the research project and will hold the contract if funding is awarded.

Please note, that if the sponsor is different from the current employing organisation, this sign off confirms that a substantive contract of employment will be put in place with the host organisation should the applicant be successful.

E4 Nominated Administrative Authority or Finance Officer

Please enter the nominated Administrative Authority or Finance Officer for your host organisations, name, email address, role, organisation and organisation address.

E5 Other Supporting roles

Please add the name, email address, role, organisation and address of any other supporting roles which have not already been listed.

At the time of adding the necessary supporting roles required to approve your application you are advised to inform the Health Board/Trust R&D office of the site most likely to be the lead site for your proposed research. The aim is to help speed up the permissions process should your application be successful. Please note this will not apply to all proposals.

E6 Other involved organisations

Please list any other organisations that will be involved with the project and their role.

Section F: Research achievements, skills and experience

(Limit: 1000 words)

This section is based on the Royal Society's [Résumé for Researchers | Royal Society](#) narrative CV format. It is aimed at providing the panel with an overview of your achievements, skills and experiences within your current clinical or practice role and in relation to four domains relevant to developing a research career, namely contributions to (1) knowledge generation; (2) development of individuals and teams; (3) research community and (4) broader society. You may decide how to distribute these across the modules. You should also include a brief personal statement.

Personal statement

Summarise what you do and your overarching goals and motivation for the activities in which you have been involved. You can mention career breaks, secondments, volunteering, part-time work and other relevant experience (including in time spent in different sectors).

Contributions to the generation of new ideas

How you have contributed to the generation of new ideas relevant to your clinical or practice area and the key skills you have developed in that process, any relevant training or development (including placements or work-based activities) you have undertaken in the last two years to

progress your research skills and experience or specific research expertise, how you have communicated about these ideas both written and verbally, any funding you have won and any awards that you have received, relevant selected outputs (explaining why they are of relevance) for example clinical or practice developments, publications, educational products, policy publications, evidence synthesis pieces and conference publications.

Contributions to the development of others

Highlight expertise you provided which was critical to the success of a team or team members including project management, collaborative contributions, and team support. It can include your teaching activities, workshops or summer schools in which you were involved (for undergrads, grads and post-grads as well as junior colleagues), and the supervision of students and colleagues. It can be used to mention mentoring of members in your field and support you provided to the advancement of colleagues, be it junior or senior. You can also highlight the establishment of collaborations, from institutional (maybe interdisciplinary) to international and describe where you exerted strategic leadership, how you shaped the direction of a team, organisation, company or institution.

Contributions to the wider research community and the wider innovation community

Describe various activities you have engaged in to progress the research community. Mention commitments including editing, reviewing, refereeing, committee work and your contributions to the evaluation of researchers and research projects. Mention the organisation of events that have benefited your research community. Highlight contributions to increasing research integrity, and improving research culture (gender equality, diversity, mobility of researchers, reward and recognition of researchers' various activities). Mention appointments to positions of responsibility such as committee membership and corporate roles within your department, institution or organisation, and recognition by invitation within your sector.

Contributions to broader society, contributions to broader research or innovation-users and audiences, and towards wider societal benefit

Include examples of societal engagement and knowledge exchange. Include engagement with industry and the private sector. Mention engagement with the public sector, clients and the broader public. It can be used to highlight positive stakeholder feedback, inclusion of patients in processes and clinical trials, and other impacts across research, policy, practice and business. Mention efforts to collaborate with particular societal or patient groups. It can be used to highlight efforts to advise policy-makers at local, national or international level and provide information through the press and on social media.

You can use sub-headings (personal statement, knowledge generation, development of individuals and teams, research community and broader society) to structure this section but it is not mandated.

Do not include details of your previous employment history as this is covered in Section E of the application.

Section G: References

List all references cited in the application, using either the Vancouver or Harvard referencing conventions.

Any questionnaires or other documents that you have prepared to be used as part of your study should be available on request.

Section H: Suggested reviewers

You should provide details of two to three specialty experts who would be able to provide an independent assessment of your proposal. Please note that the reviewers must not be from your host institution, or those of your academic mentor. In addition, you should not have recently (within the last five years) collaborated with any of the nominated reviewers. It is permissible to nominate overseas experts.

Nominated reviewers who are acceptable to Health and Care Research Wales may be approached shortly after the submission deadline. If they are willing to assist, they will be supplied with a copy of your proposal, an assessment form and guidance notes, and will be given a two to three-week period to complete their review.

Section I: Acknowledgement

I1 Agreement to the terms and conditions

In confirming your role as Applicant in this application you confirm that the information given in this form is complete and correct and you take full responsibility for the accuracy of this submission. You confirm your PhD supervisor and Supporting Roles mentioned on this application have been given access to the application and accepted their role in this submission. You shall be actively engaged in, and in day-to-day control of, the project. You confirm you understand progress reports will be required by the funding programme and no substantive variation in the scheme as outlined in the application will be permitted without prior reference to the funding programme.

Section J: Supporting Documents

Please attach these supporting documents to your application form.

J1 Budget and justification

Please use the template provided for the detailed budget breakdown, there is separate guidance for its completion. This is a required document.

J2 Research plan or flowchart

Please attach a research plan or flowchart illustrating the study design and the flow of participants. This should be submitted in Microsoft Word and in portrait format and be one side of A4. This is a required document.

Applicants should describe complex interventions and controls as accurately and fully as possible within their diagram. If proposing an RCT, we advise you to refer to the [CONSORT statement and website](#) for guidance. Alternatively, you may find the [EQUATOR Network website](#) useful or the [ACCEPT paper](#) (Charlesworth *et al.* BMC Medical Research Methodology 2013, 13:78).

The file should be submitted with your application form. Please ensure that the plan or flowchart is clear and that any text is concise.

J3 Letters of support

Please note that where you have indicated engagement with a Clinical Trials Unit, we require a letter of support from your Unit and this must be provided with your application.

If your proposed research project is dependent on the support of a different organisation to the host institution, a letter of support is required from the relevant R&D lead outlining their support of this application.

Health and Care Research Wales will not accept letters of support from Welsh Government officials. If these are included, they will be removed prior to assessment of the application.

All letters of support should be written on headed paper and signed by the appropriate signatory.

Section K: Review and submit

You must submit your application form, with the attached budget and justification document and any other supporting documents by the stated deadline via the Health and Care Research Wales Faculty Awards Management System.

Please note that the research team (PhD supervisor, nominated Head of Department, sponsor and Finance Officer as a minimum) will be required to confirm participation during the application process, and the sponsor will be required to sign off the completed application form, before it can be submitted. Therefore, sufficient time should be factored in for them to respond before the submission deadline.

We will not enter into negotiations for extensions and the deadline will be strictly observed. You should therefore plan your application carefully including allowing sufficient time for signatories to confirm their support.

K1 Submission checklist

- all relevant sections of the form must be completed via the Faculty Awards Management System
- all signatories must confirm their participation/support via the Faculty Awards Management System, with the sponsor providing final sign off
- Budget and Justification spreadsheet (Required)
- Research Plan or Flowchart (Required)
- letter of support from Clinical Trials Unit/ SAIL/Health and Care Economics Cymru or R&D Department (if required). All letters of support should be written on headed paper and signed by the appropriate signatory.

Reminder: Attachments not listed above will not be considered by the programme.

Annex

Social Care Research Guidelines: 'What is Social Care Research?'

Introduction

In 2014, Health and Care Research Wales reviewed definitions of social care from a range of UK and international sources. A one-day workshop was also convened to develop guidelines on the question of 'What is Social Care Research?' The workshop involved a range of stakeholders from England and Wales including research academics, social care practitioners, and members of the public.

The results of the workshop were collated and condensed into a number of key areas. These were distributed to a subset of workshop attendees for further comments and feedback until a consensus was reached.

It is important to consider the following as guidelines and not a definition of social care research. It is inevitable that some research projects, especially those conducted at the interface of social care and health, will be difficult to categorise as clearly belonging to one category or the other.

Guidelines

For Health and Care Research Wales to consider research to be 'Social Care Research', the research should broadly focus on at least one of the following:

- The provision of care, support, and personal assistance in the context of interpersonal relationships, whether formal or informal, in relation to: activities of daily living, maintenance of independence, social interaction, enabling the individual to play a fuller part in society, assisting individuals to manage complex relationships, and assisting the individual to access or receive services from a care home or other supported accommodation or to take advantage of educational facilities.
- The provision of: advice; practical assistance in the home; assistance with equipment and home adaptations; visiting and replacement care; meals; or facilities for occupational, social, cultural and recreational activities outside the home.
- The provision of: protection or social support services for children or adults in need or at risk, or those with social needs arising from illness, disability, age or poverty.
- The social needs of people receiving social care, and the services or initiatives addressing those needs, including: prevention of deterioration; promotion of physical or mental health; improving opportunities and life chances; strengthening families; and protecting human rights.

- The organisational systems, infrastructures, care settings, and/or personnel involved in the management and leadership, commissioning, provision, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of care and support services, and/or the interface between; or impact of the above on related systems such as healthcare, education, housing, and the criminal justice system.
- National and/or local policies that affect the ethos, commissioning, organisation, provision, monitoring and evaluation, and delivery of care and support services.
- The improvement of social and community cohesion (rather than the individual).

Useful questions that can help inform whether a research project is Social Care Research include:

- What is the research question?
- Why is the research required?
- What is the purpose of the research and who or what might benefit? (Eligible examples could be: service users; service providers, carers; social care practitioners; professionals and non-professionals; patients; academics; and family).
- What are the social (care) outcomes?
- What is the relevance of the application to Welsh Government social care policy?
- Who might read the research results? (e.g. social care practitioners, policymakers, or academics).