

Support and Delivery Service

Delivery Framework - Performance Management of Support and Delivery Funding 2021/22

Every NHS organisation is part of the Health and Care Research Wales **Support and Delivery Service**. In order to provide a range of local R&D services, each NHS organisation is in receipt of **Support and Delivery Funding** and should align local R&D strategies to the vision outlined in **The Support and Delivery Service Strategic Framework 2017-2022 and the vision of Health and Care Research Wales** (<https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/about/our-vision-aims-and-objectives>).

This delivery framework sets out how the Welsh Government will performance manage the NHS organisations in Wales in relation to R&D, including performance against national objectives, key indicators and targets.

1. Background

Welsh Government's strategic vision is for Wales to be internationally recognised for its excellent health and social care research that has a positive impact on the health, wellbeing and prosperity of the people in Wales. Our ambition is that Wales is a place where research prospers as a vehicle for health and social care wellbeing. To achieve this, Welsh Government is committed to funding a research infrastructure and capacity that will facilitate improvements to the health, wealth and well-being of the people of Wales.

Over the past year, in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, Wales has played a significant role in an international research effort to both treat and prevent the virus. Throughout this time, an Urgent Public Health (UPH) designation process was established to identify and fast track the highest priority COVID-19 research. Additionally, new approaches to designing, approving and delivering research meant that studies were set-up within days with no reduction in standards which helped raise the profile of research and the importance of priority studies.

As a result of the pandemic, along with UK counterparts, Health Boards and Trusts in Wales reconfigured their services to increase capacity for COVID-19 patients. During this time, research sponsors, funders and investigators took the decision to pause studies already underway in the health and care system which led to a significant reduction in non-COVID-19 research activity. In response to this, a process to manage the recovery of research has been developed by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) with the cooperation of the devolved administrations with the aim of restoring an active portfolio of research balanced with the need to continue to support the COVID-19 research effort¹.

¹ <https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/covid-19-updates>

2. Looking to the future – Recovery Resilience and Growth

Despite the challenges over the past year, the vital research undertaken in Wales and across the UK has provided an opportunity to build on the best practice of the past 12 months to deliver an ambitious COVID-19 recovery plan as well as a vision for the recovery, resilience and growth of clinical research known as The Future of UK Clinical Research Delivery – Saving and Improving Lives².

Partners and stakeholders from across the clinical research community including charities, regulators, industry, academia, patients and the public have identified a high-value environment for clinical research which delivers:

- i. **More patient-centred trials and investigations** – where participation is as easy as possible, with patients recruited ‘where they are’ so that study populations are diverse and to ensure patients are actively involved and in control of their data;
- ii. **Faster, more efficient and more innovative trials** – to ensure the UK remains internationally competitive ensuring access for patients into the most innovative new treatments and technologies; and
- iii. **The digital tools and infrastructure** - to leverage globally leading research expertise and support the UK life sciences sector to convert their innovative research into the next generation of proven treatments, technologies and diagnostics for patients.

The 2021/22 Delivery Framework is therefore aligned with this vision and focused on providing opportunities for Wales to build on and maximise its potential in clinical trials and other research, and in turn contribute to the collective aim of making the UK the leading global hub for life sciences. This includes delivering on the expectation for NHS Wales to engage with industry as a core activity and for NHS organisations to build on existing strengths and consistently deliver research in a competitive, global environment.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-future-of-uk-clinical-research-delivery>

As such, commercial research (defined as research sponsored and funded by industry) is given equal precedence on the Health and Care Research Wales Portfolio³ alongside non-commercial research for the opportunities both categories of research bring to patients and researchers.

3. Strategic setting

Health and Care Research Wales – Support and Delivery Service

In support of the work ahead, an integrated and coordinated research Support and Delivery Service is in place to ensure maximum efficiency, effectiveness and international competitiveness of the research environment in Wales. The functions of this service are delivered through the ten NHS organisation's R&D offices (Local Support and Delivery Services) and the National Support and Delivery Centre. **The Support and Delivery Service Strategic Framework 2017-2022⁴** has 3 aims which focus on the following:

Strategic Aim 1: Public: We will increase opportunities for patients and the public to participate in, and benefit from safe ethical research, regardless of geographical locations.

Strategic Aim 2: Research Community: We will enable Industry and Chief Investigators to set-up studies in multiple sites across Wales in a single access, streamlined and efficient way.

Strategic Aim 3: Staff: We will attract and deploy appropriately skilled, qualified and experienced staff in a consistent way across Health and Care Research Wales, embedding shared values and behaviours.

³ <https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/researchers-support-and-guidance-researchers/what-research-directory-and-portfolio>

⁴ <https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/support-delivery-service>

Welsh Government provides Support and Delivery Funding to each NHS organisation to facilitate their contribution to these strategic aims and to support NHS organisations to meet the national NHS R&D objectives, key indicators and targets as set out in this Delivery Framework

Prosperity for All: The National Strategy

Launched in September 2017, '*Prosperity for All*'⁵ sets out the Welsh Government's clear commitment to well-being objectives which are integral parts of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)⁶. The document sets out the long term priorities of the Welsh Government which include underpinning objectives to ensure Wales is **prosperous, healthy and connected**. The strategy acknowledges that the issues facing Wales can only be tackled through working differently and advocates greater collaborative working across boundaries to deliver Welsh Government priorities. For the NHS in Wales, this builds upon work underway through the Recovery Resilience and Growth programme.

Annual Planning Framework 2021/22

In 2021/22, the NHS in Wales will temporarily move away from the Integrated Medium Term Plans (IMTPs) and see the introduction of an Annual Planning Framework⁷, a natural evolution from the quarterly planning arrangements in place throughout 2020/21.

Like the IMTPs the Annual Planning Framework cites research and development as a key enabler of the priorities over the next year and should therefore play a fundamental role in the planning and delivery of high quality care to the population of Wales.

⁵ <http://gov.wales/docs/strategies/170919-prosperity-for-all-en.pdf>

⁶ <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/?lang=en>

⁷ <https://gov.wales/nhs-wales-annual-planning-framework-2021-2022>

As such, research and development leads should continue to work with planning colleagues to ensure that annual plans align to the growing body of evidence demonstrating that research active organisations provide better care and have better patient outcomes than those NHS organisations that conduct less research⁸.

Furthermore, opportunities for greater development through research provides an enhanced job role which in turn develops leaders and critical thinkers who contribute positively to the environment that they are working in⁹. As we have seen through the pandemic, research is a key driver in providing evidence based improved treatment and care options for patients and should be aligned organisationally to find new and better ways of delivering health and social care outcomes. Additionally, a research active organisation is a distinguishing character of University Health Boards and a key enabler for NHS Wales to deliver '*A Healthier Wales*.' Examples of good practise are set out on page 7.

⁸ Transforming health through innovation: Integrating the NHS and Academia – Academy of Medical Sciences; January 2020 - <https://acmedsci.ac.uk/file-download/23932583>

⁹ Time for research: Delivering innovative patient care in Wales – Royal College of Physicians; July 2019 - [Time for research - Delivering innovative patient care in Wales](#)

Inclusion of Research and Development within Annual Plans - 2021/22

What does good look like?

- Provide visible research leadership, actively integrate R&D into local planning, financial and decision making as well as the innovation, knowledge mobilisation and quality improvement plans and activities
- Have an up to date R&D strategy and evidence based practice culture
- Value and promote research through leading and/or hosting studies, ensuring that all staff recognise and understand the role research plays in increasing and delivering good quality care, embedding in staff recruitment, retention and development activities
- provide equity of access to opportunities that enable participation in research for patients and service users, especially in under-researched populations such as children and young people
- have transparent and efficient mechanisms to allocate resources and recover costs from relevant sources (industry, research grants).

Review of Annual Plans 2021/22

R&D Division, Welsh Government in its review of the Annual Plans for 2021/22 will particularly focus on identifying how NHS R&D Directors have aligned themselves and their R&D departments to other parts of the NHS to promote R&D and maximise the potential for the uptake of findings across their organisations, including, primary care.

NHS Delivery Framework

The NHS Wales Delivery Framework measures the NHS throughout the year on the delivery of services and process that contribute towards the goals of the Public Health Outcomes Framework for Wales, and ultimately the national 'healthier Wales' indicators of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales)

Act (2015) mentioned previously. The relevant performance outcome indicators and measures related to R&D¹⁰ are reported on a quarterly basis and include data reflecting the percentage of Health and Care Research Wales non-commercial and commercial Portfolio studies recruiting to target.

4. FUNDING NHS RESEARCH

National Support and Delivery Funding

Providing specific investment at a national level enables Welsh Government to take an all-Wales approach to achieving Health and Care Research Wales strategic priorities. National Support and Delivery Funding is categorised and ring-fenced for specific activities and where appropriate, the funding will be allocated to NHS organisations based on the outcomes for national competitions or costs related to the following:

- NHS Research Time Award and support for Specialty Leads
- National Support and Delivery Centre
- Local Portfolio Management System
- Excess Treatment Costs
- Centralised Support Costs*

In 2020/21, a new approach to distributing Research Delivery Funding was introduced whereby Support and Delivery Funding is provided based on the costs associated with meeting the needs of research studies being delivered in-year, and directed to where and when those resources are needed and to where and when those costs are incurred. This responsive, more agile funding model will ensure that funding moves to where the research activities are taking place and commensurate with the level of costs incurred. It also supports collaboration across all NHS organisations in support of the one Wales agenda.

¹⁰ Includes activity across both primary and secondary care

The funding also includes a centralised support cost budget for Primary Care, Public Health Wales and Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust which all NHS organisations can access*. Further information about Support and Delivery Funding is provided in the All Wales Support and Delivery Funding Technical Guidance 2021/22.

Support and Delivery Funding will be provided based on the agreed spending plan for 2021/22. NHS organisations are encouraged to draw on other sources of funding to invest in the growth of capacity and capability for NHS research within their organisation. This could include, funding from the NHS organisation to augment the Support and Delivery Funding in support of the local research endeavour.

Other sources includes commercial R&D income from sponsors of commercial trials and non-commercial research costs recovered from grant holders of non-commercially funded studies as well as charitable funds donated by patients and the public to the NHS organisation.

5. FINANCIAL PROBITY

Welsh Government is clear that supporting NHS research yields real benefits for the NHS, its patients, research sponsors and investigators. This is underpinned by Support & Delivery Funding specifically allocated to R&D organisations to facilitate and undertake high quality research in NHS Wales. To assist with this, Welsh Government published the **NHS R&D Finance Policy**¹¹ which covers the details and mechanisms necessary for the management, accountability and distribution of NHS research funding and income in each NHS organisation. In line with the requirement set out in the Welsh Health Circular 2018 (005), all NHS R&D organisations in receipt of

¹¹ <https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/health-and-care-professionals/policy-and-guidance-nhs-organisations>

Support and Delivery Funding are expected to manage their R&D budget within the scope of an approved NHS R&D finance policy as set out in national R&D objectives, key indicators and targets in 2021/22.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

NHS organisations are expected to make strategic decisions to maximise the use of the funding and create a research environment which promotes and encourages high quality Welsh led research within NHS Wales. R&D Directors within NHS organisations are accountable for the NHS R&D funding (including Support and Delivery Funding) within their NHS organisation. It is the responsibility of each R&D Director to maximise the use of this funding alongside other funding streams, such as charitable and commercial funding, to invest in the growth of capacity and capability of research within their organisation. It is therefore the expectation from Welsh Government that R&D Directors have full responsibility for the oversight and submission of spending plans to Welsh Government reflecting their accountability for NHS R&D funding allocated to their organisations.

6. RESEARCH DATA REPORTING and BUSINESS

INTELLIGENCE

In accordance with Welsh Government initiatives, the Local Portfolio Management System (LPMS) for Wales is in place in all NHS organisations as the tool for day to day research management and is the main source of all local research data, including confirmation of capacity and capability. From 1 April 2019, LPMS replaced all other systems and methods for capturing local research related data, providing an unprecedented ability to showcase all research in Wales to the public and research sponsors alike. Robust data for Wales will provide insight into how opportunities can be increased for patients and the public to access high quality research studies in Wales.

On a UK wide platform, work has been completed to link all Local Portfolio Management Systems to the Central Portfolio Management system, resulting in a change in the way research related data is collected for non-commercial and commercial research. Responsibility for uploading activity data is with local study teams for verification by central study teams.

In line with the implementation of LPMS, there is also a requirement that all research studies enter a minimum data set and maintain this within LPMS.

The minimum data set for Wales includes the UK wide minimum data set to ensure consistency with the UK four nations and provides information based on the same criteria for accurate comparison with UK countries which can be monitored on a routine basis.

The minimum data set provides greater flexibility for understanding performance at all points across the study lifecycle at both a site and study level, without the need for duplicating metrics. Welsh Government therefore expects NHS organisations to work closely with all potential users by raising awareness of LPMS in the day to day delivery of studies as set out in the All Wales LPMS SOP¹² to ensure complete, robust and accurate data and to put in place effective mechanisms for responding to queries about activity data from study teams in a timely and responsive way.

¹² All Wales LPMS SOP January 2019

7. SUPPORT AND DELIVERY

Objectives, key indicators and targets

Welsh Government has set national objectives for NHS organisations to guide the effective use of **Support and Delivery Funding** and to help inform the development of local R&D strategies. Welsh Government has also set key indicators to enable measurement of NHS organisations' performance against the national objectives, as well as provided targets that NHS organisations should aim to achieve. These are set out in Annex 1.

Whilst R&D Directors are responsible for ensuring that their NHS organisation makes progress against the national NHS R&D objectives, key indicators and targets, the Support and Delivery Centre also has a role in supporting NHS organisations to meet these. The Support and Delivery Centre is also able to provide advice on NHS R&D funding and assist NHS organisations to meet Welsh Government's requirements.

8. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Welsh Government will performance manage all aspects of Support and Delivery Funding and specifically manage this against national NHS R&D objectives, key indicators and targets.

This includes the ongoing monitoring of non-commercial and commercial research studies to ensure that the management of research related to funding and income is fully compliant with procedures set out in the NHS R&D Finance Policy and transparency can be demonstrated in all research undertaken in the NHS organisation.

Under the direction of Welsh Government, Health and Care Research Wales National Support and Delivery Centre will:

- Monitor NHS organisations' progress against the national objectives, key indicators and targets by monitoring R&D activity;
- Review whether NHS organisations are spending their Support and Delivery Funding in line with the 'All Wales Support & Delivery Funding Technical Guidance 2021/22' through submission of the monthly financial status reports.
- Manage the Health and Care Research Wales Research Directory¹³ and provide research activity data in support of performance monitoring.

Operational guidance

Operational guidance has been developed by the Health and Care Research Wales National Support and Delivery Centre to explain to NHS organisations how the performance monitoring will be undertaken. These guidance documents are available on the Health and Care Research Wales website¹⁴

¹³ <https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/researchers-support-and-guidance-researchers/what-research-directory-and-portfolio>

¹⁴ <https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/health-and-care-professionals/health-boards-and-trusts-research>

Annex 1: Welsh Government NHS R&D Objectives, Key Indicators (KIs) and Targets for NHS Wales

Objective	Key Indicators (KIs)	Target/ Measure	Implementation Date
A Create and support a culture of research aligned to the needs of the local population	A1. NHS research data tabled at the NHS organisation's Board meeting	Minimum of twice a year. Confirmation of data being tabled	2013/14
	A2. R&D representation at the NHS organisation's Board meeting	Confirmation of attendance by R&D Director or alternate if R&D Director unable to attend	2012/13
	A3. An up-to date R&D strategy aligned to the Annual Planning Framework 2021/22 ¹⁵	Annual Plans 2021/22 - showing inclusion of plans for research and link to R&D strategy	2017
B Manage appropriate use of R&D income	B1. Full compliance with all aspects of the NHS R&D Finance Policy evidenced through submission of monthly financial status reports	Confirmation of compliance with WHC (2018) 005) by organisation	2018/19

¹⁵ In 2021/22 the Annual Planning Framework replaces the Integrated Medium Term Plan

Objective	Key Indicators (KIs)	Target / measure	Implementation Date
C To improve the efficiency of processes for study set-up and delivery of research in NHS Wales	C1 Time taken from receipt of Local Information Pack (LIP) to recruitment of first participant into Health and Care Research Wales non-commercial Portfolio studies*	Median number of days	2018/19
	C2 Time taken from receipt of Local Information Pack (LIP) to recruitment of first participant into Health and Care Research Wales Portfolio commercially sponsored studies*	Median number of days	2018/19
	C3 Percentage of Health and Care Research Wales non-commercial Portfolio studies recruiting to target	100% of studies	2015/16
	C4 Percentage of Health and Care Research Wales Portfolio commercially sponsored studies recruiting to target	100% of studies	2015/16
	C5 Percentage of non-recruiting Health and Care Research Wales non-commercial Portfolio studies within NHS organisations	0%	
	C6 Percentage of non-recruiting Health and Care Research Wales Portfolio commercially sponsored studies within NHS organisations	0%	
*Those studies which are planning to recruit less than 1 patient per month are excluded from measure against this KI within the report (unless the patient is recruited within 70 days from receipt of Local Information pack (LIP), in order to promote success in this area).			

