

# Health and Care Research Wales

## Support and Delivery Learning and Development Scheme: Targeted Call

Guidance notes for applicants

*Closing date for applications*

17.00 on Friday 15 August 2025

# Guidance for the Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Learning and Development Scheme applications

## Purpose

The Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Learning and Development Scheme provides financial support for Support and Delivery staff who are planning to undertake specialist training / professional development in line with development priorities outlined below, where the training requirement has been identified and agreed by the staff member and their line manager.

*The 2025/26 call is a targeted call designed to enable Support and Delivery staff to develop their compassionate leadership skills.*

## Support and Delivery Development Priorities

1. NHS Wales is committed to supporting a **Compassionate Leadership** approach in all NHS organisations in Wales. Aligned to demonstrating Compassionate Leadership behaviours is adopting a Coaching and Mentoring approach to teamwork, management and leadership. The Learning and Development Scheme will support Support and Delivery staff to undertake training to develop their coaching and mentoring skills through the suggested courses outlined below, or similar:
  - a) Coaching and Mentoring qualification such as ILM level 3, 5 or level 7 (applicant to identify appropriate provider)
2. Developing strong leadership skills is fundamental to effective delivery of research services. The Learning and Development Scheme will facilitate the development of evidence-based leadership knowledge and skills through funding an accredited leadership and management qualification. Courses could include:
  - a) the ILM Leadership and Management qualification, level 5 or level 7 (applicant to identify appropriate provider)

## Things to note:

- Applications are welcomed from staff at all levels within Support and Delivery
- The total amount able to be requested per application is not expected to exceed £2500, including VAT
- Applicants to this call are required to identify the course and provider they wish to pursue ahead of submitting their application. Should you have any difficulties identifying the right course option for you, please do get in touch via the team who will be able to advise via the training inbox: [Research-Training@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Research-Training@wales.nhs.uk)

- Any application for funding will need to show a strong rationale for the chosen course. All applicants will be required to make a subsequent application or booking to the specific course outlined in their application once funding is agreed through the Learning and Development Scheme
- All course places will need to be confirmed, and an invoice issued to Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Centre, by 01 December 2025

### Eligibility to apply for a Learning and Development Scheme award

The Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Learning and Development Scheme aims to promote equality of opportunity for staff working in NHS R and D Offices, Research Delivery staff employed by the NHS and Support and Delivery Centre staff. Applicants applying to the Learning and Development Scheme therefore must demonstrate:

- they work within a Support and Delivery organisation and are managed directly or indirectly (via their line manager) by: an R and D Director/ R and D Manager within an NHS R and D Office *OR* the relevant Head of Research Delivery *OR* the Head of Research Support and Operations.
- if based in an NHS Organisation, applicants must ensure they are part of the Health and Care Research Wales Spending Plan according to local funding status. Advice on this can be sought from those in the senior positions highlighted above.

NHS and university staff working on research studies who are managed separately from the Support and Delivery management structure are not eligible to apply to the Learning and Development Scheme.

Applicants should normally expect to complete their course of study with a higher education institution in Wales / Welsh course provider where a course is available. Applicants will have to fully justify their request to study with a provider located outside of Wales.

## Application Procedure

1. Complete the Learning and Development Scheme Application Form. If applicable, please include a link to the course webpages which detail the course you have selected
2. Obtain an email from your line manager stating that they confirm they have read the guidance, support your application and are willing to provide you with the study leave necessary to complete your studies (a template is provided in Appendix 1)
3. Email the completed form, your CV (using the template provided) and your line manager confirmation email (copying in the senior support and delivery manager) to [Research-training@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Research-training@wales.nhs.uk) by 17.00 on Friday 15 August 2025

## The Assessment Process

All applications will be initially reviewed to ensure they meet the call's eligibility requirements by the Research Training team. Any applications deemed not eligible will not proceed for review.

All eligible applications will be reviewed by a small panel of senior Support and Delivery Centre staff during August. All applications will be considered by the panel who will score the applications based on the information in the supporting statements. The panel scoring criteria is detailed in Appendix 3.

Applicants will be informed by email of the outcome of the application no later than the 5 September.

Funding will be awarded to support all course fees applicable for the financial year 2025/26. Funding will not be awarded for courses that start after 31 March 2026.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive brief written feedback as to why the application was unsuccessful and will be able to use the feedback to re-apply to future calls.

## Support from the line manager

The support of the line manager is mandatory in the panel's consideration of an award. Line managers should send an email alongside the submission of the application form. A template email is provided in Appendix 1.



## Certificate of Confirmation

Each recipient of a Support and Delivery Learning and Development Scheme award will be required to complete and return a Certificate of Confirmation which includes:

- Acceptance of the Support and Delivery Learning and Development Scheme award
- Confirmation that the course will be undertaken (or at least, started) during the financial year 2025/26 and an invoice for the full course costs will be issued by 01 December 2025
- Declaration of any other funding awards towards the course of study being received
- Acceptance of the Terms and Conditions of the award as laid out in this guidance document (Appendix 2)
- Acceptance that Health and Care Research Wales reserves the right to withdraw agreed funding if the Terms and Conditions laid out in Appendix 2 are not met

All applicants will need to abide by their local NHS organisation's Study Leave policy.

## Invoice arrangements

Payment will be made directly to the study institution on receipt of an invoice sent to: [research-training@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:research-training@wales.nhs.uk)

## Invoice address:

Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Centre  
Floor 4  
Crown Building  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

Recipients of an award must ensure correct invoicing details are held by the receiving institution finance department, informing them that Health and Care Research Wales will be acting as sponsor. Failure to comply will prevent timely payment of course fees.

Under normal circumstances, Health and Care Research Wales will not be able to exceed the amount awarded. If the actual award expenditure is below the total award offered, Health and Care Research Wales will retain the balance (the funds are only available for purposes specified on the application form and are not transferable). If the funding is higher than originally applied for (for example, an increase in fees) the award panel will review each case individually, balanced with availability of resource. To avoid either situation, applicants are strongly encouraged to research the financial request thoroughly and ensure invoices are issued in a timely manner.

## Appendix 1: Template email from Line Manager

As [applicant's] line manager I confirm all of the following:

- This training / professional development request is part of the applicant's current PADR / will be included in the applicant's PADR at the next opportunity (delete as appropriate)
- This applicant is included as part of your Health and Care Research Wales NHS Fund Spending Plan
- This application would be funded if sufficient funding was available within our own departmental/organisation's budget
- This application will contribute to the achievement of the Health and Care Research Wales strategic aims and objectives as highlighted by the applicant
- I have discussed the time commitment with the applicant and agreed to release the time needed to attend and complete the programme of study by agreeing study leave and/or backfilling of the staff member's time

(Any further information to support the application should also be included)

## Appendix 2: Terms and conditions

### Non-completion of course of study

It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that the correct procedure for applying for study leave and funding support is followed.

Award holders should inform their line manager in the first instance of any circumstances which may affect completion of the proposed study. A short statement, signed by the line manager, should be submitted to the award panel. Each individual case will be assessed by the panel to support the candidate to complete their course of study and amend the term of the Learning and Development Scheme award. Should an individual fail to complete the planned course of study without informing their line manager or giving sufficient notice then Health and Care Research Wales reserves the right to withdraw or recover costs of the award in line with existing NHS finance policy.

Award holders who fail to attend their designated course sessions may be liable for the course fees and cancellation fees where applicable.

With regard to funding any further studies or exams undertaken as a result of failure, the local study leave policy must be followed. However, this must be discussed with the line manager and any decision to continue with the studies/exams will be considered on a case by case basis. There is no funding set aside for resits, these will be considered in exceptional circumstances only.

### Evaluation of and support for Support and Delivery Learning and Development Scheme Awards

Successful applicants will be required to submit a short final report, and for longer periods of study a schedule of progress reports will be agreed. Reports will confirm the actual course of study completed and course outcome. The report must include a reflection on the original statement submitted as part of the application to evaluate whether learning needs were met.

All Learning and Development Scheme award holders will be provided with opportunities for peer networking and support within the Support and Delivery Learning and Development award holders cohort.

## Award holders who leave the employment of Support and Delivery organisations

If an award holder leaves the employment of a Support and Delivery organisation, Health and Care Research Wales reserves the right to withdraw agreed funding. Such examples will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure award holders are not penalised for moving to a health and social care research partner organisation. In exceptional circumstances, cost recovery of an award may be sought. Such circumstances may include employees moving outside the UK or leaving employment altogether. Cost recovery of the award in such exceptional circumstances would be applied in line with existing NHS finance policy.

### Appendix 3 - Support and Delivery Learning and Development Scheme - Panel scoring criteria 2025

Application criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
<p><b>1. The applicant has described how the course outcomes will meet their personal development needs.</b></p> <p>The applicant should specify clear personal development needs they are seeking to develop and make direct links to how these will be achieved within their chosen course of study. This may include knowledge and skills to enhance self-awareness, interpersonal skills, study skills, decision-making skills, confidence, critical thinking, reflection, writing skills, teamwork, mentoring etc.</p> <p>This may also include leadership and management development when not explicitly required for current role.</p> <p>The applicant should demonstrate an awareness that development of self is an important outcome of learning.</p>	<p><b>(9-10)</b></p> <p>Clear personal development needs identified.</p> <p>Clear connection between the course and identified needs.</p> <p>Demonstrates full awareness of the need to develop self as part of learning.</p>	<p><b>(6-8)</b></p> <p>Clear personal development needs identified.</p> <p>Links identified needs to the chosen course of study.</p> <p>Demonstrates some awareness of the need to develop self as part of learning</p>	<p><b>(3-5)</b></p> <p>Some attempt to identify personal development needs and / or discuss in the context of the chosen course of study.</p> <p>Demonstrates basic awareness of the need to develop self as part of learning.</p>	<p><b>(0-2)</b></p> <p>No personal development needs identified or consideration of how the course may facilitate this.</p> <p>Does not demonstrate awareness of the need to develop self as part of learning.</p>
<p><b>2. The applicant has described how the course outcomes meet their professional development needs in terms of enhancing effectiveness in their role.</b></p> <p>The applicant should specify clear professional, role-specific knowledge and skills they are seeking to develop and make direct links to how these will be achieved within their chosen course of study. This may include research methodology, statistics and data analysis, research governance, quality assurance, clinical skills, project skills, finance skills etc.</p> <p>This may include leadership and management development when explicitly required for the current role.</p> <p>The applicant should demonstrate an awareness that role-specific development is an important outcome of learning.</p>	<p><b>(9-10)</b></p> <p>Clear professional development needs identified.</p> <p>Clear connection between the course and identified needs.</p> <p>Demonstrates full awareness of the need to develop role-specific knowledge and skills as part of learning.</p>	<p><b>(6-8)</b></p> <p>Clear professional development needs identified.</p> <p>Links identified needs to the chosen course of study.</p> <p>Demonstrates some awareness of the need to develop role-specific knowledge and skills as part of learning.</p>	<p><b>(3-5)</b></p> <p>Some attempt to identify professional development needs and / or discuss in the context of the chosen course of study.</p> <p>Demonstrates basic awareness of the need to develop role-specific knowledge and skills as part of learning.</p>	<p><b>(0-2)</b></p> <p>No professional development needs identified or consideration of how the course may facilitate this.</p> <p>Does not demonstrate awareness of the need to develop role-specific knowledge and skills.</p>

## Appendix 3 - Support and Delivery Learning and Development Scheme - Panel scoring criteria 2025

<p><i>3. The applicant has described how the course outcomes contribute to their future career aspirations.</i></p> <p>The applicant should specify what their future career aspirations are and make direct links to how the chosen course of study will contribute to these.</p> <p>This can include either short-term or long-term aspirations and relate to aspirations within the applicant's current role and/or relate to future roles.</p>	<p>(9-10)</p> <p>Clear statement of future career aspirations</p> <p>Clear connection between the course and future career aspirations.</p>	<p>(6-8)</p> <p>Clear statement of future career aspirations with links to the chosen course of study.</p>	<p>(3-5)</p> <p>Some attempt to identify future career aspirations and/or discuss in the context of the chosen course of study.</p>	<p>(0-2)</p> <p>No attempt to identify future career aspirations or consideration of how the course may facilitate this.</p>
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