Information to join NIHR as an advisory group member: Public Health Research (PHR) Programme Research Funding board members

1. Background information

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) commissions and funds NHS, social care and public health research that is essential for delivering our responsibilities in public, health and personal social services. Its role is to develop the research evidence to support decision making by professionals, policy makers and patients, make this evidence available, and encourage its uptake and use. The NIHR funds a range of programmes addressing a broad range of health priorities. The NIHR Public Health Research (PHR) programme funds research to evaluate public health interventions, providing new knowledge on the benefits, costs, acceptability and wider impacts of non-NHS interventions intended to improve the health of the public and reduce inequalities in health. The scope of the programme is multi-disciplinary and broad covering a wide range of public health interventions.

The role of the Research Funding Board (RFB) is to consider the scientific quality, feasibility and value for money of applications submitted to the programme, through the researcher-led and commissioned workstreams and make funding recommendations to the Programme Director.

The PHR programme is managed on behalf of the NIHR by the NIHR Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre (NETSCC) based at the University of Southampton.

What are advisory groups?

To enable delivery of the NIHR research programmes, we support a number of advisory groups. Our advisory groups, including prioritisation panels, funding and editorial boards are comprised of independent individuals with a broad spectrum of knowledge, skills and experience needed to get a well-rounded view of research needs and research assessment. We seek input from patients, members of the public, academics, subject experts, clinical staff, service managers, health and public health professionals. Advisory Groups are essential to our programmes as they provide independent input, assessing research briefs, research proposals and final reports. Advisory groups are the cornerstone to ensuring only the highest quality research is funded and published in our journal series.

How are advisory group members appointed?

Members are usually appointed via open advert for a fixed period of time. Members are not paid, however they can claim reasonable expenses associated with their advisory group work (e.g. travel costs) in accordance with our policy.

Membership is open to people from across the United Kingdom. Members are also placed on our mailing list to receive email updates, newsletters and information about calls for proposals. Of course, members can unsubscribe from our mailing list at any time.
What do advisory group members do?

Our advisory groups serve different functions so the nature of the tasks undertaken varies depending on the purpose of the specific group. The purpose of each group is described in a detailed term of reference. In general terms, members read research briefs, research proposals or final reports and critically assess the documents to help ensure they are high quality, scientifically robust; answer the questions set; represent good value for money; and meet the needs of patients, the NHS and the public.

As a member of one of the PHR programme’s funding boards you will assess research proposals for scientific merit, feasibility, and value for money before making funding recommendations. There is a large volume of application paperwork to be considered by each member. This equates to around 2 days’ work per meeting.

2. Role description, terms and conditions, and person specification

2.1 Advisory group member: responsibilities

1. Act in accordance with the agreed panel/board terms of reference (please see supporting documentation).
2. Regularly attend meetings and be an active member of the group. The PHR funding boards meet three times a year in London and there may occasionally also be additional face-to-face meetings and teleconferences.
3. Acting as a Designated Board Member (DBM) for selected applications, reviewing these in detail with other DBMs, completing an assessment form prior to the meeting, and giving views at the Board.
4. Deciding collectively with the Board which outline applications should be short-listed.
5. Providing guidance to short-listed applications on the views of the Board to guide development of full proposals.
6. Scoring full applications and reaching decisions as to which should be recommended for funding.
7. Providing further guidance and consideration for full proposals that require changes prior to funding or resubmission.
8. Providing feedback points for unsuccessful applicants.
9. Participate in appropriate training, development and support activities.
10. Declare any conflict of interest in accordance with the protocols of the Board and as instructed by the Chair.
11. Maintain the confidentiality of agenda papers, discussion and decisions made.
12. Liaise promptly with programme staff regarding all administrative matters relating to the meeting, e.g. submission of required paperwork, expenses, meeting dates and confirming attendance.
13. Inform NETSCC of any changes to contact details and update member profile regularly (e.g. annually when prompted by programme staff).

2.2 Terms and conditions

Duration of role: The term of office for members will be four years, with an option to extend for a further two years at the discretion of the Board Chair.

Payment: Members are not paid to undertake this role, but can claim reasonable expenses in accordance with our policy.

Support for members: Support is available from NETSCC programme staff at any time.

Attendance: If Board Members are unable to attend a meeting they should still undertake assessment of their allocated applications and ensure that their views are represented at the
If a member is unable to attend three consecutive meetings (unless due to exceptional circumstances) they may be asked to tender their resignation from the Board so that a new member may be appointed.

**Declarations of interests/conflict of interests:** All members are required to declare if they have any interest that might be in conflict with their Advisory Group member role. Members should declare any known conflict of interest (e.g. if an individual is known personally, or if the member could gain financially if the research was funded). If there is a potential conflict of interest, the risk should be raised with the programme staff or meeting Chair immediately.

**Continued Professional Development (CPD):** In discussion with the relevant professional body, members may be able to claim Continued Professional Development (CPD) points. Where appropriate, NETSCC will provide written confirmation of member’s contribution.

### 2.3 Person specification

We would welcome applications from senior researchers with a strong track record in public health research. In particular we are currently seeking input in the areas of:

- Qualitative research
- Health Inequalities.

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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Essential attributes</th>
<th>Desirable attributes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Knowledge and experience of public health research delivered outside NHS settings</td>
<td>Knowledge of peer-review processes.</td>
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<td>Current active interest and knowledge of current affairs relating to health and well-being, public health, and health research</td>
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<td>Up-to-date knowledge of developments within NHS R&amp;D including research methods</td>
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<td>Knowledge of a wide variety of research methodology e.g natural experiments, observational studies, trials including cluster randomised trials.</td>
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<td>Skills</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Confidence to contribute to group discussion</td>
<td>Proven track record of research achievements</td>
<td>Commit to 6 days per year to attend board meetings.</td>
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<td>Ability to refer to professional or work-based experience appropriately in discussion</td>
<td>Experience of reading and reviewing complex and formal written documents.</td>
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<td>Ability to provide constructive feedback</td>
<td>Experience of assimilating a large volume of written information into succinct critical appraisal of the information provided.</td>
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<td>Ability to contribute relevant and succinct information to discussion and confident negotiation skills</td>
<td>Experience of participating in formal meetings.</td>
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<td>Discretion in handling confidential information</td>
<td>Experience of undertaking peer-review.</td>
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3. Application process

To apply for a role you need to undertake the following steps:

1. Review the role description and additional information provided (see Appendix 1: PHR Board terms of reference).
2. Download and complete the short application form and equal opportunities monitoring form (optional).
3. In addition to your application form provide an up to date curriculum vitae (CV) and any additional relevant information such as a publication list.
4. Submit your application by 13.00hrs on Friday 19th October 2012 by email to: AGmembers@soton.ac.uk
5. We will confirm receipt of your application. If you have any queries regarding your application please contact AGmembers@soton.ac.uk in the first instance.
Appendix 1: Research Funding Board Terms of Reference

1.0 Context
1.1 The role of the NIHR Public Health Research programme (PHR) programme is to provide new knowledge on the benefits, cost-effectiveness, acceptability and wider impacts of non-NHS interventions intended to improve the health of the public and reduce inequalities in health in the United Kingdom.
1.2 The overall purpose of the Research Funding Board (RFB) is to advise the Programme Director on the selection of applications for funding.
1.3 The RFB will be tasked with shortlisting outline proposals for further consideration making funding recommendations on full proposals providing further guidance and consideration for full and outline proposals that require changes prior to funding or resubmission.

2.0 Terms of Reference
2.1 To advise the Programme Director on the scientific quality, feasibility and value for money aspects of proposals submitted to the programme through the researcher-led and commissioned workstreams.

3.0 Relationship with the PHR programme and the Programme Advisory Board (PAB)
3.1 The Public Health Research programme is managed by the NIHR Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre (NETSCC), part of Wessex Institute at the University of Southampton.
3.2 NETSCC staff will provide administrative and scientific support for the programme’s activities, including those of the RFB.
3.3 In addition to the RFB, the PHR programme also has a Programme Advisory Board (PAB).
3.4 The role of the PAB is to advise on the prioritisation of possible research in both the researcher-led and commissioned workstreams; specifically through advising on the public health importance of possible research.

4.0 Membership of the RFB
4.1 The RFB consists of not fewer than twenty members and a chair. RFB members will have relevant methodological expertise.
4.2 The term of office for RFB members will be 4 years, with an option to extend for a further two years at the discretion of the Programme Director.
4.3 The RFB meets three times a year for a two-day meeting.
4.4 A RFB meeting is quorate if two thirds of the members are in attendance. Quoracy does not apply to each agenda item, but rather to the overall attendance at the meeting.
4.5 Members are requested to attend each of the RFB’s three annual meetings and are responsible for dealing with the associated paper work of the RFB.
4.6 If an individual member is unable to attend three consecutive meetings they will be asked to resign so that a new member may be appointed.
5.0 Activities of the RFB

5.1 Each member of the RFB will be required to be a Designated Board Member (DBM) for a given number of proposals. Detailed guidance on DBM can be found in a separate document.

5.2 It is the role of the DBMs to read the referees comments and the applicants’ responses and to complete a detailed assessment prior to the meeting and present an overview and commentary to the Board at the meeting.

5.3 Meeting will include the following:
- Strategic discussion of the programme’s objectives and direction
- Discussion and assessment of the full and outline research proposals as commended to the RFB by the PAB from the programme’s two workstreams.

6.0 Voting Procedures

6.1 Proposals will be scored through a voting process.

7.0 Disputes and Complaints

7.1 Disputes and complaints will be dealt through standard NETSCC processes.

8.0 Conflicts of Interest

8.1 Conflicts of interest both real and potential must be declared to the RFB chair. Members with a conflict of interest shall leave the meeting for the discussion of that item. Where there is doubt if a conflict exist these should be discussed with the chair. Full details on conflicts of interest can be found in a separate document.