



**National Institute for
Health Research**

BEST RESEARCH FOR BEST HEALTH

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 6.2(a)

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

RESEARCH FOR PATIENT BENEFIT (RFPB) PROGRAMME

*Best Research for Best Health*¹ set out a 5-year Research and Development Strategy for the NHS in England. This Implementation Plan provides more details on a key component of that strategy: **RESEARCH FOR PATIENT BENEFIT (RFPB) PROGRAMME**. This document will be regularly updated. The latest version should be used.

Gateway Reference: 6050

Version: 6

Issue date: January 2007

Planned revision & re-issue date: July 2007

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH RESEARCH: RESEARCH FOR PATIENT BENEFIT (RfPB) PROGRAMME

Aim

- The main aim of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB) programme is to support projects in the NHS, including the health services research and public health arenas, based on quantitative or qualitative methods, which aim to:
 - study the provision and use of NHS services
 - evaluate the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of interventions
 - examine the resource utilisation of alternative means for healthcare delivery
 - formally scrutinise innovations and developments

¹ *Best Research for Best Health*: A New National Health Research Strategy. The NHS contribution to health research in England. Department of Health. 2006.

Purpose

- The purpose of introducing this national response-mode funding programme is to fund high quality, investigator-led research of relevance to the NHS.
- This programme will ensure quality, relevance and open access to all researchers across England.
- The NIHR RfPB programme will:
 - support research related to the day-to-day practice in areas identified by health service staff themselves and developed by them with appropriate high quality academic input
 - select proposals for funding on the basis of both the quality of the research and the relevance of research to the broader NHS.

Funding

- Funds of up to £25 million per year will be available for this scheme, building up over the three year NHS R&D transition period.
- Individual grants will provide funds for research projects rather than for setting up or maintaining research units, or new service developments.
- Project grants should be up to 36 months duration with a total maximum cost of £250k including overheads (excluding any Service Support and Excess Treatment Costs).
- Smaller grants may be sought to conduct pilot studies, feasibility studies and systematic reviews where the likely outcome is aligned clearly with the remit of the programme.

Process

- The programme is administered by the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility (CCF).
- Ten Regional Funding Committees have been established covering each Strategic Health Authority area.
- The Programme Director is Professor Celia Davies.
- Funding is divided among the ten Regional Committees on a *per capita* basis but DH may allocate money flexibly to this national programme in the light of experience and according to the numbers and quality of applications received.
- The application process is a single-stage electronic process, preceded by a Registration of Interest.
- The NIHR RfPB Regional Funding Committees will meet three times per year. Dates for the current year are shown below.
- Applications will be accepted at any time and will be considered at the next available Regional Funding Committee meeting.
- All applications will be subject to peer review.

Selection Criteria

- Applications will be judged on the quality of the research proposed and on the significance and potential benefit of that research to the NHS.
- Detailed guidance for applicants, including specific selection criteria, can be downloaded from <http://www.nihr-ccf.org.uk> Please check the web-site frequently for the most up-to-date guidance.

Eligibility

- All researchers in the NHS in England will be eligible to apply. The NIHR RfPB is one of a number of responsive funding streams within the National Institute for Health Research introduced as part of "Best Research for Best Health" and devoted to supporting proposals from research teams based in England.
- Joint applications from NHS researchers with academic partners as co-applicants are particularly welcome and there may be a strong component of service user involvement.
- For joint NHS/university applications, funding will normally be awarded to the NHS partner.

Timetable

The dates for the first three competitions are given below. (These dates are provisional and may be subject to alteration). **All Deadlines occur at 5pm on the day indicated.**

	Competition 1	Competition 2	Competition 3
Deadline for ROI to submit	8 September 2006	5 January 2007	11 April 2007
Submission deadline	20 October 2006	16 February 2007	23 May 2007
Submission outcome	16 February 2007	29 June 2007	5 October 2007

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