



AWP MH Partnership NHS Trust Research & Development Department

Staff Briefing

Research is an area of strength in AWP with annual income of over £2.5m. This funding is a combination of income resultant from recruitment to National Institute for Health Research Portfolio Studies, successful grant applications made in association with local universities and from hosting both the Dementias and Neurodegenerative Diseases Network and the Mental Health Research Network.

A proportion of this money is used to support research projects within the trust, providing a network of Clinical Studies Officers (CSO) to facilitate the set-up and recruitment to clinical studies, but also assisting departments in meeting the costs of becoming involved in research.

As well as managing this budget and teams of CSOs, the main role of the AWP R&D Office is to ensure that research projects are designed, approved and conducted to the high standards expected by the Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care 2005 (2nd edition) and the National Research Ethics System.

The office can provide advice on designing projects, seeking funding, network adoption, submission to an NHS Research Ethics Committee, guidance on sponsorship of research, acquiring R&D approval and conducting studies. It should be the first port of call for anyone interested in getting involved in any research.

Research is considered to be core Trust business and the current AWP Research Strategy has these 3 main aims.

1. To develop a culture of research integration into clinical services in AWP;
2. To develop and sustain excellent leadership and collaboration in research;
3. To be outcome focussed in relation to quality, impact, financial sustainability and equity.

DeNDRoN (The Dementias & Neurodegenerative Diseases Research Network)

is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) as part of the UK Clinical Research Network (UKCRN). DeNDRoN is a UK-wide initiative that aims to improve the speed, quality and integration of research in dementias, Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, Huntington's disease and other neurodegenerative diseases, resulting in improvements in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care for patients. DeNDRoN facilitates the development and conduct of clinical trials and other well designed studies in the South West region.

MHRN (The Mental Health Research Network) is also part of the National Institute for Health Research and is an organisation that supports high quality research studies carried out in England. Studies are usually large scale, designed by groups of researchers and based across several trusts. The MHRN works with researchers, mental health professionals, people with experience of mental health problems, their families, and research and development staff based in NHS trusts. The role of the MHRN is to make it easy for clinicians to support research without adding to their workload; the MHRN employs teams of clinical studies officers who work in NHS trusts and help recruit participants to MHRN-supported studies. The MHRN helps researchers organise local permissions and paperwork needed to arrange

collaborations and recruit participants via NHS services. The studies supported by the MHRN all aim to improve NHS services and treatments and the MHRN encourages

people with personal experience of mental health problems to work with the network, and get involved in individual research projects.

BEST in Mental Health (Best Evidence Summaries of topics in Mental Health)

BEST in Mental Health offers a clinical question answering service developed for AWP clinicians, with the aim of overcoming some of the more practical barriers that are faced in the day to day uptake of evidence based practice. Originally a one year pilot project funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), the service was developed in collaboration with the Cochrane Group and the University of Bristol following a successful demonstration project undertaken at the Institute of Psychology, King's College London.

In response to intervention-based clinical questions, and questions concerning diagnostic-test accuracy or service design – in any area of mental health, BEST will search and identify any available high-quality research evidence from systematic reviews, RCTs and clinical guidelines. The evidence is then summarised and critically appraised and returned to the question submitter within 10 working days.

Example question: 'In adults with suicidal ideation (population), how effective is inpatient admission (intervention) compared with community intervention (comparison) in reducing self harm or suicide attempts (outcome)?'

For more information please visit the BEST pages on 'Ourspace', or email the team BESTinMH@awp.nhs.uk