

Guidance Note on the process to be followed when wishing to conduct a research study involving the Trust

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Purpose and Background

Did you know that research in the NHS has to comply with the “[UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research](#)”? This policy framework sets out principles of good practice in the management and conduct of health and social care research in the UK. These principles protect and promote the interests of patients, service users and the public in health and social care research, by describing ethical conduct and proportionate, assurance-based management of health and social care research, so as to support and facilitate high-quality research in the UK that has the confidence of patients, service users and the public.

The UK policy means that all research in the NHS requires:

1. An identified Research Sponsor,
2. Approval from the Health Research Authority (known as ‘HRA Approval’), and
3. Confirmation of capability and capacity from participating NHS Trusts.

The **Sponsor** is the institution or partnership that takes overall responsibility for the initiation, financing, management and monitoring of a study. The Trust may act as Sponsor and a separate guidance note provides details.

‘**HRA Approval**’ is for all project-based research that involves NHS organisations in England. It brings together the assessment of governance and legal compliance, with an independent ethical opinion by a [Research Ethics Committee \(REC\)](#) so that you only need to submit one application

Confirmation of capability and capacity from participating NHS Trusts takes into account whether participating in a proposed research is desirable from a strategic perspective and whether it is possible from both a consideration of the practical requirements and the proposed financial arrangements.

Process to follow if you would like to undertake research at the Trust

1. **If you are wanting to conduct a research project for an educational purpose** such as a PhD, MD, MSc etc, you must ensure that you are aware of any requirements of the award-issuing body.
2. **Check your project is regarded as research** You are advised to check that your project is viewed as ‘research’ from an NHS perspective by using this [tool](#). Queries regarding the outcome and use of this tool can be directed to HRA.queries@nhs.net. If your study is not classified as research then you should discuss it with the relevant service manager (details on the Trust website).
3. **Find out what support is offered by the Research Office** which is given in a separate guidance note.
4. **Inform the Trust’s Research Office** via researchanddevelopment.enh-tr@nhs.net that you wish to conduct research at the Trust. You will be provided with individual guidance. Please note that the Trust can only support research that contributes to the Trust’s research strategy.
5. If you want to submit a **Grant Application or seek Trust Sponsorship** then there are separate guidance notes available.
6. **Seek HRA Approval** Please see guidance via [Integrated Research Application System \(IRAS\)](#).
7. Follow the Trust guidance to **gain confirmation of capability and capacity** which will be emailed to you by the Research Office and on receipt you can start your research.