East and North Hertfordshire **NHS**

NHS Trust

Guidance Note on the process to be followed when submitting Research Grant Applications

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Purpose and background

The purpose of this document is to describe the process to be followed by Trust staff wishing to submit an application for external funding of a research study i.e. a grant application. This is to ensure that the Trust is aware of all external funding applications for research, that staff can be supported in developing their grant application and that the resources have been adequately considered in the application. External organisations include

- Charities (including the Trust Charity),
- Commercial organisations,
- National funding bodies (including the National Institute for Health Research) and
- Individual funders.

Process to be to submit an Trust-authorised Research Grant Application

1. Grant applications involve considerable amount of effort and support is available from the Research and Development (R&D) Office. Please work with the Research and Development Office from an early stage as this will make it easier for you.
2. Before you can submit your grant application you will need to undertake the following two step process:
   - Step 1 - an initial registration of intent (as soon as you know you might wish to submit a grant application),
   - Step 2 - the final pre-submission approval, before you can actually submit
   Both Step 1 and Step 2 forms to be sent to the generic email Grantapplications.enh-tr@nhs.net.
3. When you have an idea for research use the Research Grant Application Checklist (Appendix 1) to help you think about whether you want to seek external funding and how to access support via the East of England Research Design Services (see Appendix 2).
4. If you want to prepare an application for funding then it will need to be costed to ensure that the relevant costs are included in the grant application. You need to contact the Research and Development Manager as soon as possible as costing is a complex and lengthy process. If you are seeking Sponsorship then include the costs for this and see the separate "*Guidance Note on the process to be followed when requesting the Trust to act as Research Sponsor*".
5. The proposed research is likely to have a number of implications which need to be assessed before you submit your grant application, including:
   a. **research governance and financial** – please discuss with the R&D Manager.
   b. **research support** - these will need to be reviewed by the Lead Research Nurse and the R&D Manager
   c. **service delivery impact** – please ensure that this has been assessed and you have agreement from the relevant service manager within your department.
   Once you have submitted your initial registration of intent you will be sent the relevant guidance notes and contact details. Unfortunately the Associate Director of R&D cannot approve your application unless it has prior authorisation form the R&D manager and the Lead Research Nurse.
6. The final grant application will need to be authorised by the Trust via the signature of the Associate Director of Research and Development. **Please request this (step 2 form) and allow 2 weeks between your request and receiving a signature.**
7. Unauthorised applications may not be appropriately costed and the Trust may not support the research even if the grant is successful
8. The applicant must notify the Research Office of the outcome of the award within 2 weeks of receipt of notification from the funding body by sending an email to Grantapplications.enh-tr@nhs.net.

The Associate Director of Research and Development requires 2 weeks to review all applications and that they will only be considered if they have prior approval of the Lead Research Nurse, the Research Development Manager and Clinical Director as evidenced via the form in Appendix 3.

Appendix 1: Research Grant Application Checklist

You may get a research idea at any stage and wonder what to do with it - the following may help.

1) What to do first
- You will need to do a literature (background) search to find out what other research has been done in similar areas, or if the idea is for a new product/device, to find out what is already available.
- Talk to colleagues about your idea - do they think it's worth doing?
- Patient and public involvement is needed for grant applications, and will need to be developed more as your application progresses.
- Think about whom you can collaborate with - if you are inexperienced in research, you will need to collaborate with more experienced people - these may be within or outside of the Trust.
- Write down your ideas. Help is available, but if you want to be successful in research you will need to learn the skill of writing good applications.
- Think about who you will need to involve, and what you will need (funding, equipment)
- If your idea is for a new device/product, do not talk to any commercial companies without first discussing with the Associate Director of Research and Development Phillip.smith5@nhs.net

2) Things to be aware of
- It takes time to develop a good application, and only the very best get funded.
- You will need the right team in order to carry out any research; this is one of the key things funders look for.
- Start small; there are local funding schemes available that allow you to undertake preliminary or feasibility work, or to backfill clinical time.
- If you have an idea for a larger (and expensive) study, you will need to talk to experienced colleagues and get their help and advice.
- People who succeed are those who take time to prepare the application, get the right people involved (relevant expertise) and have regular team meetings to discuss the project. You should not be the only person to have seen your idea before applying for funding.

3) Support and Advice
- Talk to colleagues and the clinical teams in your department. You will need their support in order to carry out any research.
- **Contact the East of England Research Design Service (RDS) for methodological support** in developing NIHR and some other applications is available via East of England Research Design Service. You may approach the RDS at any stage of development of a research proposal: from simply wanting to discuss an initial idea through to requesting input on a specific issue relating to a well-developed proposal. The earlier you approach them, the more comprehensive their advice can be. They prefer you to make an initial on-line request for support via their website: www.rds-eoe.nihr.ac.uk. You may, however, also make contact in person, telephone, email or post.

4) Particular attention needs to paid to costing of research proposals
National Guidance "**Attributing the costs of health and social care research**[1]"has been produced which describes how research in the NHS is funded via three streams (given below). This is complex and specialist advice from the Research Office is recommended.
- **Research Costs** - the costs of the R&D itself that end when the research ends. They relate to activities that are being undertaken to answer the research questions.
- **NHS Treatment Costs** - the patient care costs, which would continue to be incurred if the patient care service in question continued to be provided after the R&D study had stopped.
- **NHS Support Costs** - the additional patient care costs associated with the research, which would end once the R&D study in question had stopped, even if the patient care involved continued to be provided. As a Trust we will work with the NIHR CRN: Eastern Study Support lead to ensure that the types of research support funding are calculated and attributed in accordance with national guidance.
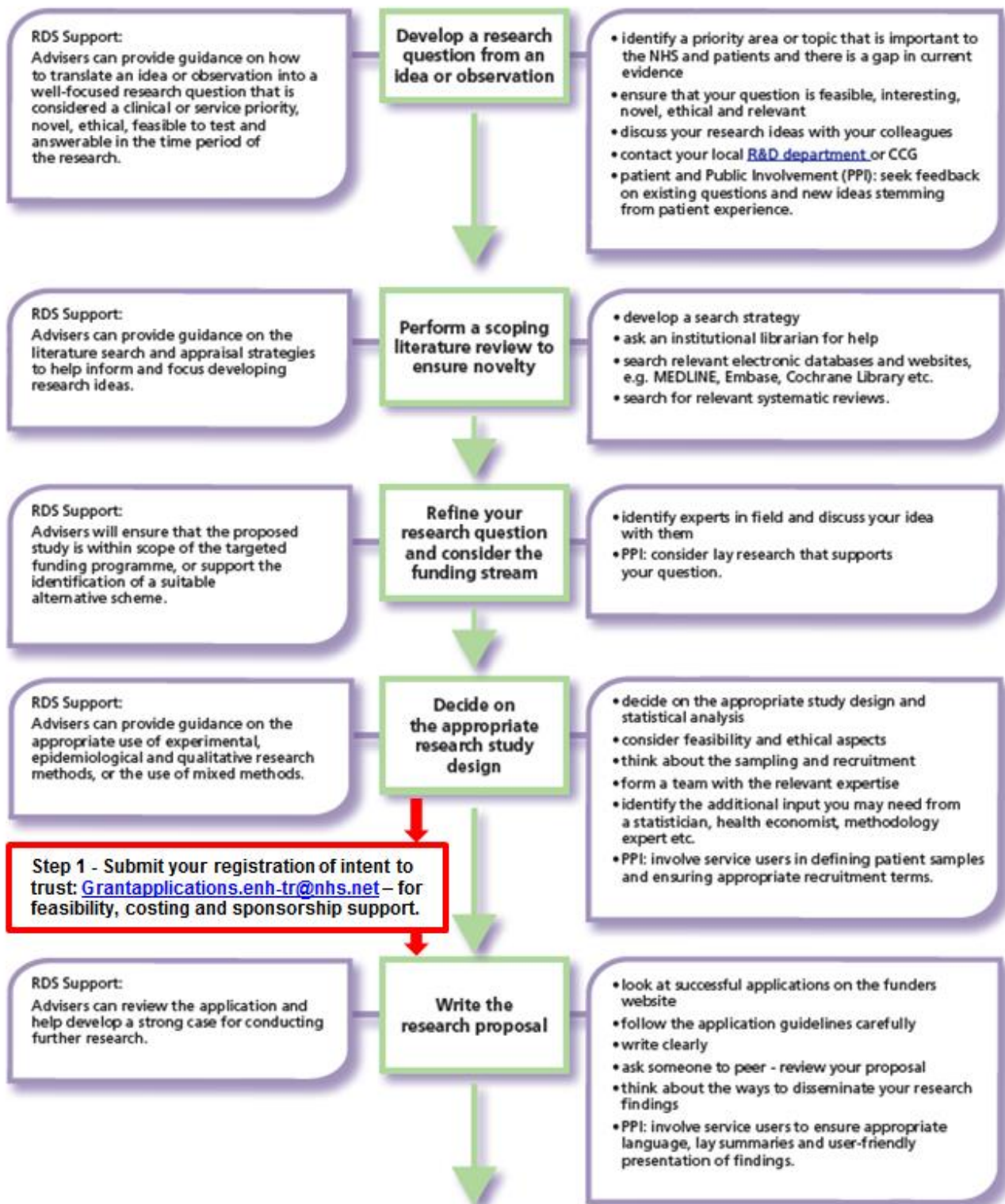
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[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-attributing-the-costs-of-health-and-social-care-research
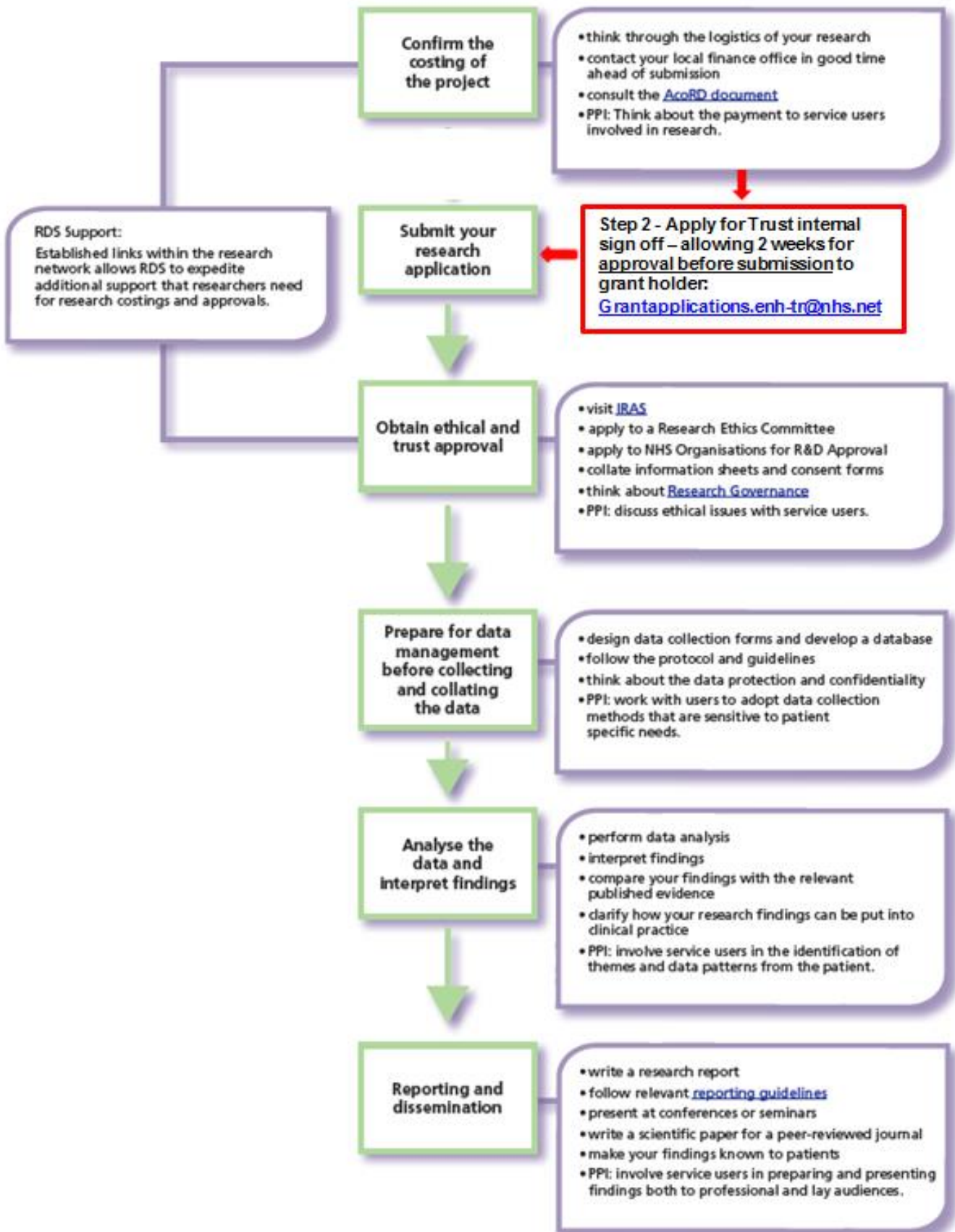
- **Scope** The RDS is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to assist researchers preparing research proposals for submission to national, peer-reviewed funding competitions for applied health or social care research. Priority will be given to supporting proposals to be submitted to an NIHR scheme.
- **Nature of support provided** RDS staff have the knowledge and expertise to advise on a wide range of research-related issues, including in particular all aspects of research design and methodology. We can also advise on issues such as involving patients and public, identifying resources and dissemination plans. Although one RDS adviser will take the lead in coordinating support, other RDS staff may become involved to bring complementary skills, and we have a wide range of other contacts in academic and clinical disciplines to facilitate any necessary additional input where required.
- **Eligibility** We provide support to NHS, social care researchers and other researchers who are working in partnership with the NHS. RDS services are free of charge, but it is useful to give some examples of situations where we are not able to provide support free of charge:
    - the development of projects for which there is no intention to submit a grant application to a recognised funder as described above
    - doing the research; if required this would need to be costed into the project grant bid, and it would also depend upon available research capacity and interests of host institution
    - formal supervision or informal support for students
    - requesting support to conduct unfunded analysis on data already collected.
    - It should also be noted that it is only within RDS remit to support applications to national peer-reviewed funding agencies.
- **Mutual Understandings** You can expect to gain access to a professional service in a timely manner. If eligible, you can expect the following from the RDS:
    - professional advice about aspects of developing a grant application and practical support for such development, free of charge; advice will be given to all projects that have potential to achieve funding and advice will be provided throughout the submission process
    - face-to-face meetings at a mutually convenient time and venue and/or other forms of communication as appropriate
    - support in co-ordinating the process of proposal development, as required
    - advice on drafting relevant sections of proposals, as required
    - support in identifying and approaching other potential lay and professional collaborators, as required
    - support in identifying a suitable NIHR funding stream and advising on their application processes; if not eligible for NIHR funding we would try to provide advice on other potential funding bodies depending on local knowledge
    - support for obtaining appropriate user and carer involvement in project development
    - in the case of unsuccessful applications, support with deciding what to do next
    - all discussions regarding the proposal to be treated with appropriate confidentiality.
- **In return, the RDS expects that you will:**
    - inform the RDS of the funding committee's decision.
    - In return, the RDS expects that you will:
    - use the RDS only for eligible purposes
    - carefully consider proffered advice, discussing as necessary
    - ensure that the research team includes input from NHS staff and lay person(s)
    - where RDS staff are invited, and agree, to be grant co-applicants, include appropriate costs in the grant to cover any work they will undertake in the conduct, analysis and reporting of the project
    - accurately reflect the nature of RDS involvement and support in the relevant section of the grant application; RDS staff can provide you with a reminder of input given by the RDS
    - provide the RDS with a copy of any completed, submitted application in which RDS support has been involved

Research process with support from RDS highlighted

This is derived from information provided via the East of England RDS and is based on guidance provided by RDInfo. (2008) RDDirect Research Process Flowchart. URL: http://www.shoulderdoc.co.uk/documents/research_flowchart.pdf (accessed on 20 July 2013). The flowchart is presented in a simplified version with the aim of providing a general idea of the research process. In reality, there are various feedback loops and iterations (e.g. revising the question and the design based on the input from the collaborators, RDS and the Trust's Research Office.

RDS Support:
Advisers can provide guidance on how to translate an idea or observation into a well-focused research question that is considered a clinical or service priority, novel, ethical, feasible to test and answerable in the time period of the research.

Develop a research question from an idea or observation

- identify a priority area or topic that is important to the NHS and patients and there is a gap in current evidence
- ensure that your question is feasible, interesting, novel, ethical and relevant
- discuss your research ideas with your colleagues
- contact your local R&D department or CCG
- patient and Public Involvement (PPI): seek feedback on existing questions and new ideas stemming from patient experience.

RDS Support:
Advisers can provide guidance on the literature search and appraisal strategies to help inform and focus developing research ideas.

Perform a scoping literature review to ensure novelty

- develop a search strategy
- ask an institutional librarian for help
- search relevant electronic databases and websites, e.g. MEDLINE, Embase, Cochrane Library etc.
- search for relevant systematic reviews.

RDS Support:
Advisers will ensure that the proposed study is within scope of the targeted funding programme, or support the identification of a suitable alternative scheme.

Refine your research question and consider the funding stream

- identify experts in field and discuss your idea with them
- PPI: consider lay research that supports your question.

RDS Support:
Advisers can provide guidance on the appropriate use of experimental, epidemiological and qualitative research methods, or the use of mixed methods.

Decide on the appropriate research study design

- decide on the appropriate study design and statistical analysis
- consider feasibility and ethical aspects
- think about the sampling and recruitment
- form a team with the relevant expertise
- identify the additional input you may need from a statistician, health economist, methodology expert etc.
- PPI: involve service users in defining patient samples and ensuring appropriate recruitment terms.

Step 1 - Submit your registration of intent to trust: Grantapplications.enh-tr@nhs.net – for feasibility, costing and sponsorship support.

RDS Support:
Advisers can review the application and help develop a strong case for conducting further research.

Write the research proposal

- look at successful applications on the funders website
- follow the application guidelines carefully
- write clearly
- ask someone to peer - review your proposal
- think about the ways to disseminate your research findings
- PPI: involve service users to ensure appropriate language, lay summaries and user-friendly presentation of findings.

Confirm the costing of the project

- think through the logistics of your research
- contact your local finance office in good time ahead of submission
- consult the AcoRD document
- PPI: Think about the payment to service users involved in research.

RDS Support:
Established links within the research network allows RDS to expedite additional support that researchers need for research costings and approvals.

Submit your research application

Step 2 - Apply for Trust internal sign off – allowing 2 weeks for <u>approval before submission</u> to grant holder: <u>Grantapplications.enh-tr@nhs.net</u>

Obtain ethical and trust approval

- visit IRAS
- apply to a Research Ethics Committee
- apply to NHS Organisations for R&D Approval
- collate information sheets and consent forms
- think about Research Governance
- PPI: discuss ethical issues with service users.

Prepare for data management before collecting and collating the data

- design data collection forms and develop a database
- follow the protocol and guidelines
- think about the data protection and confidentiality
- PPI: work with users to adopt data collection methods that are sensitive to patient specific needs.

Analyse the data and interpret findings

- perform data analysis
- interpret findings
- compare your findings with the relevant published evidence
- clarify how your research findings can be put into clinical practice
- PPI: involve service users in the identification of themes and data patterns from the patient.

Reporting and dissemination

- write a research report
- follow relevant reporting guidelines
- present at conferences or seminars
- write a scientific paper for a peer-reviewed journal
- make your findings known to patients
- PPI: involve service users in preparing and presenting findings both to professional and lay audiences.

Appendix 3: Trust approval form for submission of Grant Applications (2 step process)	
Step 1 – Registration of intent to develop a grant application. Complete this form as much as possible and submit to **Grantapplications.enh-tr@nhs.net**	
Date of registration of intent	
Name of applicant	
Email address	
Position	
Anticipated Funding Body if known	
Funding Call if known	
Deadline for Submission if known	
Anticipated date of outcome if known	
Estimated Grant award (£) if known (please liaise with R&D Manager for support with this)	
Anticipated Grant duration	
Proposed Title	
Brief outline description of the proposed research project	
Organisation leading the bid	
Which organisation will receive the grant?	
ENHT Sponsorship to be requested	[ ] Yes [ ] No
Confirmation of awareness of "*Guidance Note on the process to be followed when requesting the Trust to act as Research Sponsor*".	[ ] Yes [ ] No
Anticipated Start date	
Anticipated End date	
Eligible for NIHR-Adoption	[ ] Yes [ ] No
If you would like the Trust to act as Research Sponsor then see "*Guidance Note on the process to be followed when requesting the Trust to act as Research Sponsor*". If required for the purposes of a grant application then the Associate Director of Research and Development can decide if the Trust can act, in principle, as Research Sponsor (note that if the grant is awarded then a review for the Trust to acts as research Sponsor will also be required but this will take into account previous considerations).	

Step 2 –Request for Trust approval of a proposed grant application	
Complete this form and send to grantapplications.enh-tr@nhs.net PRIOR to submission to grant funder	
Date of application	
Name of applicant	
Email address	
Position	
Funding Body	
Funding Call	
Deadline for Submission	
Anticipated date of outcome	
Agreement of service to host the research if grant successful?	[ ] Yes [ ] No
Estimated Grant award (£) as confirmed with Research Manager	
Finance schedule attached?	[ ] Yes [ ] No
Grant duration	
Is the application outline or full?	[ ] Outline [ ] Full
Organisation leading the bid	
Which organisation will receive the grant?	
ENHT Sponsorship to be requested	[ ] Yes [ ] No
Confirmation of awareness of "*Guidance Note on the process to be followed when requesting the Trust to act as Research Sponsor*".	[ ] Yes [ ] No
Proposed Title	
Anticipated Start date	
Anticipated End date	
Plain English summary of the proposal attached?	[ ] Yes [ ] No
Eligible for NIHR-Adoption	[ ] Yes [ ] No
Sign-off	**Approval and date**
Research and Development Manager	Signature Date
Lead Research Nurse	Signature Date
Associate Director Research and Development	Signature Date
If you would like the Trust to act as Research Sponsor then see "*Guidance Note on the process to be followed when requesting the Trust to act as Research Sponsor*". If required for the purposes of a grant application then the Associate Director of Research and Development can decide if the Trust can act, in principle, as Research Sponsor (note that if the grant is awarded then a review for the Trust to acts as research Sponsor will also be required but this will take into account previous considerations).	