

The Support and Delivery infrastructure consists of three parts: the **NHS Research and Development (R&D) offices** and the **Health and Care Research Wales Workforce and Support Centre** - who work in partnership to provide up-to-date advice and a wide range of support services and funding for the promotion and delivery of high-quality commercial and non-commercial research.



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The Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery infrastructure is undertaking an important project to develop the optimum model for recruiting and deploying research delivery staff in Wales.

Over the last few years, several different arrangements have been established when employing and deploying research delivery staff across health and social care research teams - with main sources of funding being the NHS R&D allocations and the national Research Workforce. At a time when resources will increasingly become more limited, it is vital to ensure that the most appropriate skilled delivery staff are deployed to the right studies and that every possibility to grow resources and secure sustainability of a Welsh research delivery infrastructure is fully explored. This project provides an opportunity to take a fresh view of the current landscape and drive improvements that will put Wales in good stead for the future. Research delivery staff are not the only driver in improving the study delivery landscape, but an efficient and effective research delivery workforce is required if investigators are to feel confident in leading research and seeking sites in Wales.

During August, a mapping exercise of research delivery staff funded via the NHS R&D allocations and those employed by the national Research Workforce has been undertaken. The final report brings together in a systematic manner, information on a range of delivery staff (e.g. research nurses, research officers, trial administrators and data managers) and provides an overview of the current models of management, grades and specialisms, and the spread of support across disease /topic areas and geographical areas.

The information will feed into the development of an Operational Strategy which will clearly define the research delivery staff resources on offer to health and social care researchers in Wales (and across the UK). This will include a holistic service model – a framework of resources available and their management structures, with descriptions of underpinning systems and processes, relating to how decisions are made on roles and functions, the deployment of resources, and how delivery staff are supported to deliver their roles and develop.

Consultation on the Operational Strategy with the research community will take place during late January to March, with implementation starting in April 2016. Between now and then, Welsh Government has asked the national Research Workforce to not replace posts that become vacant based on the previous staffing structure (NISCHR CRC) - until there is greater clarity around the future operational arrangements and requirements. This may (or may not) cause a short-term pressure for researchers seeking delivery resources, but is a necessary measure to take in order to support long-term planning and rapid transition. There remains significant investment in the current research delivery infrastructure and any resource needs should continue to be discussed with the national Research Workforce and NHS R&D offices.