

from the Research Design Service East Midlands

## Research design and methodology training opportunities in the East Midlands

*Think you have to travel to access training courses in research design and methodology? Think again! Universities in the East Midlands region offer many and varied courses and CPD workshops in applied health research to equip you with the skills and expertise you need to become a competent researcher and a competitive applicant for funding.*

### Applied health research training in the UK

Choosing an applied health research methods course that suits your needs can be challenging. Be you an experienced researcher wanting to gain advanced expertise in a particular methodology or an early career researcher looking for an introduction to a range of research methods, there are a plethora of training opportunities available in the UK. Institutions build a positive reputation based on both strong advertising campaigns and positive delegate feedback. Many of these institutions are based outside the Midlands, meaning long travel times, overnight stays, and increased costs.

### Applied health research training in the East Midlands

Did you know that institutions within the East Midlands provide comparable high-quality training opportunities? These courses and workshops are led by experienced and active researchers and methodologists and may be able to provide for your needs, keeping you closer to home and saving on costs. If you are considering applying for funding for an applied health research project or fellowship, and need to develop your research skills, the RDS can help you to identify skills gaps and point you towards appropriate training opportunities. Courses include full- or part-time Masters (1-2 years), Masters modules (or individual sessions within modules), and bespoke CPD workshops (2 hours to 2 days), tailored to suit different occupational groups and different training needs.

### Leicestershire and Northamptonshire

In the south of the region, the University of Northampton offers a MCLinRes for graduate nurses, midwives and allied health professionals to identify, develop and execute research within a clinical setting. They also run a Public Health MSc, including modules in Research Methods – Philosophy and Study Design, and Epidemiology, which can be studied as standalone modules. The University of Leicester runs a MRes in Applied Health Research, some modules within which can be taken individually, such as Qualitative Methods in Applied Health Research. De Montfort University runs a Masters in Research, with standalone opportunities available such as Health Policy and Strategy, Making sense of Quantitative and Qualitative Data, and Research Designs in Health. DMU also provides 2-hour introductory sessions to specialised methodologies.



### Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire

To the north, the School of Medicine at the University of Nottingham offers a number of Masters courses, which contain various modules on research methods. Most of these modules are run on a half a day session per week for a number of weeks in areas such as qualitative data, clinical trials, and health economics. The MA in Research Methods (linked with the ESRC doctoral training centre) may also be of interest. The University also provides CPD-style courses and bespoke short courses on research methods, designed to meet the needs of consumers. Further north, the University of Lincoln run a MSc in Social Research; researchers can access modules as standalone courses, many of which are relevant to applied health research.

### How the RDS can help

Are you considering applying for national, open, peer-reviewed funding in applied health research? The RDS can offer tailored support in all aspects of your application, including help in identifying your training needs and guidance in accessing appropriate training opportunities within (and beyond) the East Midlands. Get in touch by completing our short online form: <http://www.rds-eastmidlands.nihr.ac.uk/submit-request>

# RDS EM Information Service

At the start of 2016 the Information service changed its focus.

## Now aims to

- Provide current research checks to all projects supported by the RDS
- To ensure no similar research currently being carried out
- Identify any systematic reviews in the field
- Highlight research priorities

## Continues to:

- Conduct literature searches of published research to provide background information and justify the proposed project.
- Give methodological advice on systematic review search strategies
- Review proposals prior to submission to consider how literature and evidence has been used to support the case for research

## Facts and Figures

2 part-time Information Specialists (1 FTE)

### 2016 1st quarter

- 25 current research checks
- 22 literature searches
- 3 project reviews
- 2 systematic review methodology advice

**So far in 2016 56% of requests to RDS EM have benefitted from Information Service support!**



## How to access RDS EM



We support researchers at all stages of preparing grant applications for submission to peer-reviewed funding competitions for applied health or social care research. To access our services you need to have your project registered with us.

If you have a new project then please fill in the 'research support request form' on our website: [www.rds-eastmidlands.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.rds-eastmidlands.nihr.ac.uk)

If you have an existing project registered with us and would like to access the information service or apply for a PIF award then please contact your assigned adviser for details.

For general enquiries contact:

✉ [rds.em@nihr.ac.uk](mailto:rds.em@nihr.ac.uk)

☎ 0116 252 3276 Leicester  
(covering Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland)

☎ 0115 970 9310 Nottingham  
(covering Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire)

# RDS EM Public Involvement Fund

Public involvement in research design is crucial when applying for research funding. RDS EM offers small awards to support early work to help ensure your application has useful, informative public involvement that is woven throughout your whole application.

## Eligibility:

- Any team being supported by RDS EM to develop their application is eligible for financial support.
- Maximum amount offered £300 (£150 for fellowship applicants)
- You must be able to complete the public involvement work within 3 months of the award being approved.

## Application process:

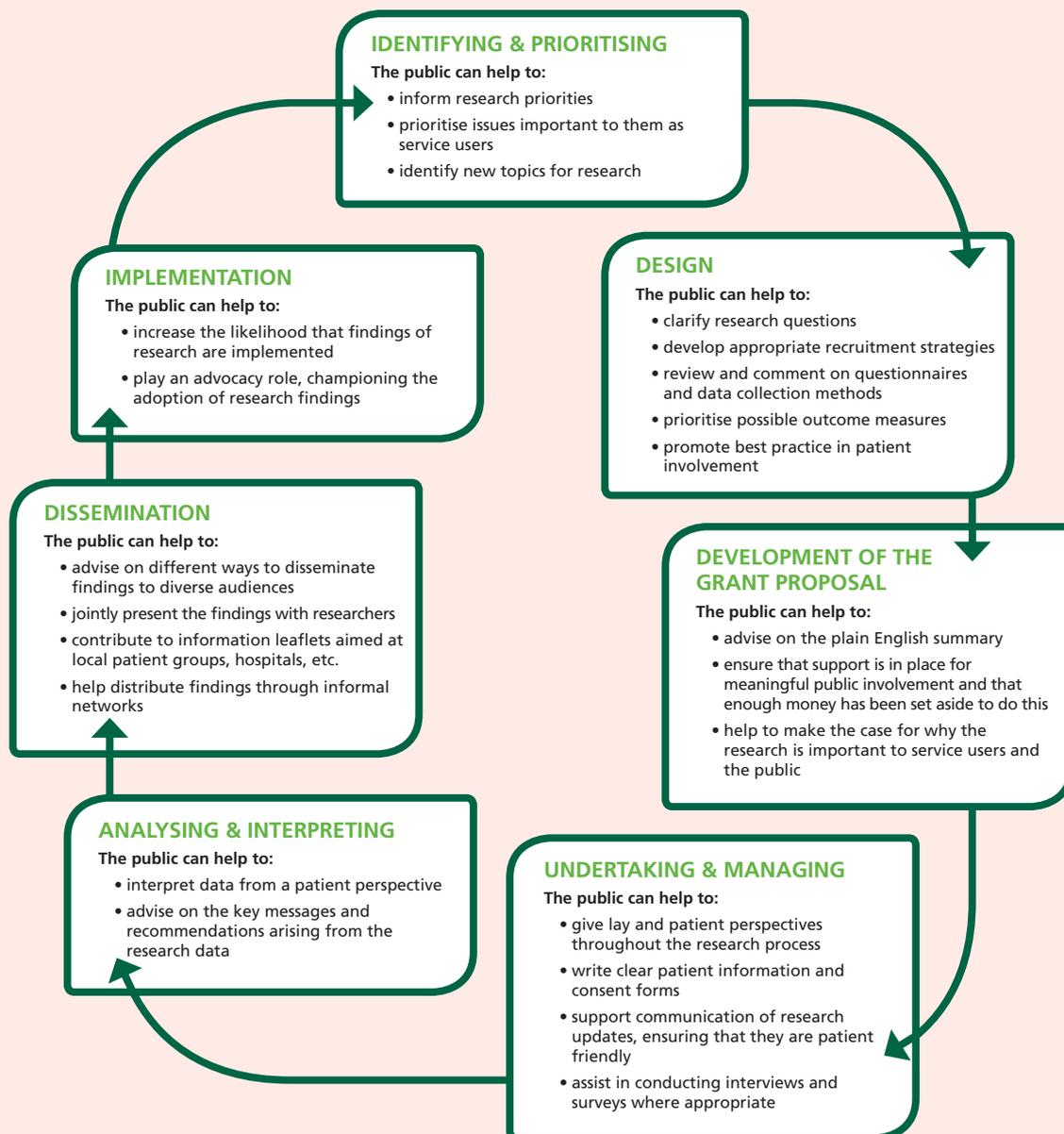
- All applications must be completed with support from the assigned RDS advice coordinator.
- Accurate breakdown of costs must be included
- The application will be assessed by 2 RDS EM staff and outcomes will be given within two weeks.
- RDS EM will reimburse costs on receiving an invoice (claim form and receipts)

## Facts and Figures

### 2015/6

- 20 Applications
- 17 Awards funded to the tune of £3,500

The Public Involvement Fund award can be used to help identify and prioritise areas for research, help inform the design and development of the grant proposal and also help formulate how public involvement will be used throughout the whole research project. Consult the diagram to below for ideas on where public involvement can be included in your research.



# NOTICEBOARD

## New service - for complex systematic reviews

Specialist expert advice for those producing complex systematic reviews is now available. The **Complex Review Support Unit** has been set up by the NIHR Systematic Reviews Programme and is a collaboration between London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of Leicester and University of Glasgow, which is the lead. It can provide advice on methodological fields such as Diagnostic Test Accuracy, Economic Evaluations or Network Meta-Analysis.

To access this support you need to fill in an **application form** and the proposed review must have already secured funding. Applications will be reviewed on an ad-hoc basis.

<http://www.nets.nihr.ac.uk/programmes/sr/support-for-complex-reviews>

## Better Endings - Right Care, Right Place, Right Time

Better Endings is the NIHR Dissemination Centre's first Themed Review. It brings together evidence from the NIHR, focusing largely on the quality and organisation of care.

The review aims to help those delivering, planning or using end of life services to ensure that the right care is delivered in the right place at the right time.

<http://www.rds-eastmidlands.nihr.ac.uk/better-endings-the-nihr-dissemination-centre-s-first-themed-review>

## Putting patients at heart of improving NHS services

New research funded by the NIHR **HS&DR programme**, will look at future ways to collect and analyse patient feedback to make it more useful for improving NHS services.

The work is a joint project between The University of Manchester, Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust and Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust. Patients have helped plan the research which aims to build on the way the health service already uses surveys and other feedback. It will explore how best to capture feedback at the time services are delivered. The research will make more use of written comments and will explore the value and use of patients' stories about their experiences.

Dr Caroline Sanders, who is leading the research, explained that the two-year project will focus on two patient groups and their carers – people with serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, and people with musculoskeletal conditions, such as arthritis. Both groups tend to use lots of different NHS services, face difficulties in seeing the same staff at appointments and can be at risk of harm when services don't work well.

The research team will work with 80 patients and carers to find out what sort of feedback they would like to give and will discuss with healthcare staff what information would be helpful when they're making decisions on improving services. They will also work with computer scientists to see how patient comments and stories can be analysed quickly and effectively through techniques such as text mining, and look at how patients' views can best be presented to staff alongside other information the NHS collects on quality, safety and symptoms of patients.

The researchers will use what they find to design – again alongside patients and staff - a set of materials to help staff improve the way they collect, analyse and use feedback. These materials will then be tested in different NHS settings: primary care, hospital outpatients, and community mental health services.

The two-year DEPEND (Developing and Enhancing the Usefulness of Patient Experience and Narrative Data) project will start in April 2016.

## Patients share their learning from MOOC in 'Highlights' video

The NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) released its first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) in November 2015. Attracting over 8,000 people from all over the world, patients, the public and healthcare professionals were amongst the thousands who learnt about 'Improving Healthcare Through Clinical Research.'

On the back of the November course success, this free online course is running again in June 2016.

To promote the June course and evaluate the value and impact MOOC has had on the people who undertook it, a short highlights video has been produced.

The video features members of the public and patients who registered to undertake the MOOC, which is a four week online course. They each talk about their experience, and how the course has helped them to be more knowledgeable about research.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0fWv68k63g>

Register for the June MOOC: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/clinical-research>

**The NIHR Research Design Service for the East Midlands provides free support to researchers undertaking health related research. A team of research advisors is able to help with developing and submitting research protocols to national peer-reviewed funding streams.**

To subscribe to our newsletter visit:

<http://www.rds-eastmidlands.nihr.ac.uk/#Signup>