FIRST STEPS- A SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH FOR STAFF IN SOCIAL CARE /PUBLIC HEALTH/WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY/CARE HOMES/ VOLUNTARY/CHARITABLE SECTOR

**WHAT IS THE NIHR?**

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) supports health and social care research in NHS, local authorities and within the voluntary and charitable sector.

The Clinical Research Network (CRN) is part of the NIHR and supports the running of research within the health and care system. There are 15 local CRNs across the country and the South West CRN covers from Somerset to Cornwall.

**WHO IS THIS PROGRAMME AIMED AT?**

This programme is open to anyone working in local authority or the voluntary and charitable sector in the South West Peninsula region, so we are looking for people working in these areas/ job roles;

* Social worker
* Public Health
* Occupational Therapist within the social care field
* School nurse
* Health visitor
* Public health/ Social Care Data analyst
* Community engagement officer
* Community development
* Leisure or culture services
* Care home staff
* Voluntary/charitable organisations

The above list are examples, but is not an exhaustive list of suggested job roles, so please do get in touch if your job role/area isn’t listed.

**WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE PROGRAMME?**

The aim of this programme is to ignite your passion and interest in research, develop skills and knowledge that allow you to support NIHR studies, embed research in the workforce and give you the motivation so that together we can integrate research into practice and develop a career pathway in health and social care research.

**WHAT WILL THIS PROGRAMME GIVE YOU?**

It will give you the skills, knowledge and confidence to engage in research or start to pursue a research career; either as a champion, a research practitioner, or a Principal Investigator or collaborator in research. As a very minimum, you will be more research aware, understand research delivery, understand how you might be able to support NIHR studies and be able to talk about research in your area.

You will join a cohort of 15 people to learn about research. Three of the sessions will be face to face so that you can meet others who have joined the programme. You will also produce a poster at the end of the programme to present to your colleagues.

On the first day of the programme you will join a face to face session which will give you an understanding of the programme. A second face to face session will be held when participants attend a learning event/ conference, and there will be a final face to face session with a celebration. The rest of the programme will be done online through webinars and reading relevant content.

**By the end of the programme you will:**

**Understand research through observing it in practice and gaining key skills.**

How? You will be given the opportunity to learn from successful research- and you will be allocated a mentor who will share their research knowledge, how they developed their own skills and how they furthered their research career. You will join webinars to support your research knowledge and skills.

**Have a greater understanding of research and the development of knowledge in how to pursue a future career in research and embed research.** How? This will be achieved through the completion of online webinars and reading.

**Have an awareness of international ethical, scientific and practical standards to which research is conducted.** How? Achievement of online Good Research/Clinical Practice training and other appropriate training that can be supported through the CRN.

**Gain an awareness of the NIHR CRN and other NIHR infrastructure across the country and in the South West Peninsula, what we do and other parts of the NIHR do, and how we support research.**  How? Webinars from NIHR partners in the region, introductions from our Senior Team.

**Further your personal development.** How? By demonstrating what you have gained from the programme and how you are going to apply this new knowledge by promoting research, supporting research opportunities offered through the CRN, becoming a research principal investigator or research collaborator, progressing to a predoctoral/ doctoral pathway or progressing to a research delivery career.

**Your Mentor**

During the programme you will have a mentor. Your mentor will also support you to produce a poster at the end of the programme to reflect on your learning.

Throughout the programme you will receive support from your mentor. Their organisation will receive £500 to cover the cost of the mentor’s time.

A memorandum of understanding will be produced to ensure that adequate supervision is received and that the responsibilities of the learner are recognised.

**Resources available to you:** A red and white flag

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• Bespoke training provided by us and colleagues across the region

• Mentor support

• Online resources

• Funded learning and personal learning time

**Backfill**

To ensure that you have protected learning time we can contribute towards **funding 10 days of your role to your organisation, as well as supporting your travel expenses to support attending some face to face sessions and the completion of some online courses.** We will also share a contract with your organisation to detail this agreement.

**Timeline**

The start date of the programme is September 2023, with the final celebration taking place in January 2024. (See full programme dates and session titles at the end of this document).

**Can I fail this course?**

There is no official pass/fail. We want to support you to grow and develop your research career. We will evaluate the programme and ask that you support the evaluation and reflect on the learning. We also ask that you produce a poster at the end of the programme to present and share with colleagues.

**Will I get a chance to learn from my peers?**

Yes - we will use virtual technologies to encourage buddying and relationship building, and to give access to resources. We will also plan a final day celebration where you will present your own poster and hear the ideas and career plans of your group.

**How do I apply for this opportunity?**

Please complete the application form, or for more information, please contact [helen.chenoweth@nhs.net](mailto:helen.chenoweth@nhs.net) / [elly.french@nhs.net](mailto:elly.french@nhs.net) or [Pauline.mcglone@nhs.net](mailto:Pauline.mcglone@nhs.net)

**Programme schedule.**

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| **Day** | **Date** | **Time** | **Programme Content** | **Venue** |
| 1 | 14thSeptember 2023 | 09:30 – 16:00 | Welcome & Introduction to Programme | AHSN, Vantage Point, Exeter |
| 2 | 21st September 2023 | 09:00 – 16:00 | How to get started | Virtual via MS Teams |
| 3 | 4th October 2023 | 09:00 – 15:45 | Making Sense of Evidence - Health Research Conference | Buckfast Conference Rooms |
| 4 | 10th October 2023 | 09:00 – 15:30 | How do we put a study together? | Virtual via MS Teams |
| 5 | 26th October 2023 | 09:00 – 16:00 | Delivering Research | Virtual via MS Teams |
| 6 | 2nd November 2023 | 09:00 – 15:30 | Importance of Data | Virtual via MS Teams |
| 7 | Self-Directed |  | Self-Directed – Poster Preparation & Shadowing opportunities |  |
| 8 | 23rd November 2023 | 09:00 – 16:00 | Co-production and Inclusion | Virtual via MS Teams |
| 9 | 14th December 2023 | 09:00 – 16:00 | Research Pathways | Virtual via MS Teams |
| 10 | 18th January 2023 | 10:00 – 15:00 | Poster Presentation Celebration | AHSN, Vantage Point, Exeter |