

Regional Research Specialty and Setting Lead Appointments: Scope

Purpose of this document

We appreciate that our Specialty and Setting Leads (SSLs) wear many 'hats' during the course of their working week, and that it is sometimes difficult to separate between the many roles undertaken when representing a Specialty or Setting that you care passionately about.

Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) have been very clear in their specification for the NIHR Research Delivery Network (RDN). It is therefore very important that representatives of the NIHR RDN are aware of what is in and out of scope for the NIHR RDN.

This slideset is a guide to aid SSLs with the scope of the NIHR RDN when representing the NIHR or using NIHR branding.

Role description key elements: Primary Role

1. Strategic oversight of the regional RDN Portfolio
2. Support the RDN Study Support Service in the planning, placement and performance monitoring of studies
3. Support funders and sponsors in study design to optimise deliverability, including providing early feedback on protocols
4. Building regional capacity and capability for study delivery in your Specialty or Setting
5. Embedding research, and engagement and delivery into the NHS and wider care environment
6. Initiating, facilitating and promoting regional cross-specialty and cross-setting collaborations for improved research delivery
7. Keeping up to date with innovative study design and delivery methods
8. Acting as regional NIHR RDN Ambassadors

Role description key elements: Supporting Role

Activities that will be undertaken on request by other areas of the NIHR and DHSC, via the National Specialty Lead

1. Support the NIHR Coordinating Centre to develop topics for commissioned research by providing expert advice on the current RDN

- study portfolio, innovative research delivery methods and the needs of patient and public groups, including under-served communities.
2. Support for new Chief Investigators, primarily with respect to good practice to support research feasibility and delivery, as part of a cross-NIHR programme.
 3. Provide peer reviews on studies for NIHR and regulatory authorities to contribute an expert opinion when needed.

In scope

1. Analysing current RRDN Portfolio data to inform the strategic development of the regional research delivery system for the future RDN Portfolio, for example:
 - a. Identifying areas for cross-specialty/setting growth
 - b. Identifying geographical/demographic exclusion
 - c. Identify and address impact on regional health inequalities
 - d. Reviewing the balance of the regional portfolio
2. The Study Planning and Placement Team (SPPT) work with Sponsors to provide a range of services designed to ensure studies are feasible and deliverable in the health and care system. Work as part of the SPPT to provide advice on eligibility, deliverability and undertake feasibility assessments.
3. The Study Support Service (SSS) will only review individual studies when requested by Sponsors. On request from the SSS, and via the SSS/SPPT, work with sponsors to provide advice and support to enable effective protocol design and study set-up and delivery
4. The RDN Board will be responsible for ensuring that all activities undertaken within RDN are within the scope of the RDN strategies and implementation plans. As part of this process you will be requested to:
 - a. Provide health and care intelligence as to the research delivery opportunities or challenges that exist within your Specialty or Setting at a regional level, and ensure the RRDN Directors are appropriately informed and advised to aid effective decision making
 - b. Undertake regional projects to build capacity and capability of research delivery
5. Stakeholder engagement with regional Specialty or Setting specific stakeholders for the purpose of building research delivery capacity and capability
 - a. The NIHR RDN will be developing stakeholder engagement strategies for both national and regional stakeholders. These strategies will be in place to support colleagues to engage with all relevant stakeholders

6. In conjunction with the NIHR RDN Life Sciences Directorate, represent the Specialty, Setting or wider NIHR in engagement with the life science industry. This may also include representing the NIHR on a national and international basis.
7. Mentoring and supporting the development of future Principal Investigators and research leaders

Out of scope

As part of your NIHR RDN leadership role, you should not:

1. Initiate the analysis, review or discussion of individual studies
2. Engage with Sponsors, Chief Investigators or study teams who approach with individual study queries without informing the relevant teams within RDN as to the context and outcome of those discussions. As we establish a new way of working it is important that we are joined up as one Network, we therefore encourage you to **please forward these queries to the relevant RRDN or RDNCC Research Delivery team**
3. Undertake projects that have not been approved through the NIHR RDN operating model for strategic development
4. Offer NIHR RDN administrative support to external organisations or their activities when NIHR RDN has little or no involvement in the activity.
5. Engage with stakeholders or the Life Sciences Industry as an NIHR RDN representative without the relevant NIHR RDN teams' knowledge, or in a manner that contravenes the relevant stakeholder engagement strategy for that stakeholder group or key account
6. Look to directly influence funding streams with respect to the development of funding calls, unless specifically requested by the funder as part of the NSSL supporting role
7. Use an "ambassadorial platform" to promote your own institution or personal interests (avoiding conflicts of interest)