

This guidance document is designed to assist with candidates applying to the 2025 **Wellcome PhD Programme for Primary Care Clinicians** hosted by the School for Primary Care Research (SPCR) and Cambridge University.

Please read the information on our website for any eligibility queries:

<https://www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/career-development/doctoral-training-programme-for-primary-care-clinicians/view>

Before filling out the application form, candidates should familiarise themselves with the following scoring criteria. Each application will be scored by 3 academic and 2 public reviewers.

Applications for the Wellcome PhD Programme for Primary Care Clinicians are assessed on the following criteria:
Person
Interest in pursuing academic primary care research in the UK
Excellent academic track record with evidence of interest in teaching or research as well as clinical medicine*
Ambition to collaborate and be part of the Wellcome programme consortium/ SPCR Trainees community
Proposal
Relevance of proposed project to primary care
Clarity of aims
Appropriate methodology
Appropriate training and development plan
Public reviewers will consider the following
Quality and accessibility of the plain English summary
Public involvement in developing the proposal
Public involvement plans throughout the project
How the project and person will benefit the public

*Please note that this will be scored in line with the opportunities and expectations from that primary care clinical discipline

We advise that candidates contact their proposed primary supervisor at least 8 weeks prior to the submission deadline so that the supervisor offer meaningful support and have time to comment on a draft version.

The application form is filled out online, the link to the form will be shared on the [programme website](#) when the competition opens. The SPCR uses an online application platform hosted by Good Grants. Candidates will need to create an account in order to complete the form.

Application form questions:

Title

First Name

Surname

Professional qualifications, degrees, diplomas

Current post title

Current post address

Professional registration

Name of professional body you are registered with and your registration number, (e.g General Pharmaceutical Council, GPhC)

Contact telephone number

Contact address

Proposed duration of study

This award can be taken full time or part time. Please ensure that you have read the guidance on clinical work alongside your award <https://www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/career-development/pcc-frequently-asked-questions> The award duration for full-time fellows will be three years. This is extended for part-time fellows

Research experience (500 words)

Please use this question to summarise your research experience and career to date thinking about how this has prepared you for this fellowship and the research proposed. Please include the following:

Research you have led or made a significant contribution to (making clear what your role was), the research methods you have experience of, and the impact and outputs of the research you have been involved

Any other relevant experience such as supervisory, management, teaching, public engagement and involvement, or leadership experience that demonstrates your potential as a future primary care research leader.

Relevant scoring criteria:

Interest in pursuing academic primary care research in the UK

Excellent academic track record with evidence of interest in teaching or research as well as clinical medicine

How the project and/or person will benefit the public

Please list up to 5 of your best publications. This can include submissions where you are not the first author. (optional)

List up to 5 publications that you have contributed to that are in press, pre-registered or fully published. Please do not include submitted manuscripts, manuscripts under review or posters (posters can be listed under the conference presentation section) If you have less than 5 publications, or none, don't worry – your research experience will be scored in line with the opportunities and expectations from your discipline or career stage.

Relevant scoring criteria:

Interest in pursuing academic primary care research in the UK

Excellent academic track record with evidence of interest in teaching or research as well as clinical medicine

Please list up to 5 conference presentations (optional)

This can include lightening talks and poster presentations that you have contributed to

Relevant scoring criteria:

Interest in pursuing academic primary care research in the UK

Excellent academic track record with evidence of interest in teaching or research as well as clinical medicine

Grants / funding received *Please specify role (optional)

Please list any previous grant funding you have received either as the Principal Investigator (PI) or as a co-applicant and your role on the project.

Relevant scoring criteria:

Interest in pursuing academic primary care research in the UK

Excellent academic track record with evidence of interest in teaching or research as well as clinical medicine

If you have previously been awarded either an Academic Clinical Fellowship or In-Practice Fellowship or

other such award, please provide details on work completed:

Do you currently have any applications related to the work proposed here or another doctorate submitted elsewhere?

Let us know in this space if you have applied for any other awards that are linked to your proposal

Please indicate your medium and long-term career goals in relation to an academic career in Primary Care 250 words

Summarise your career goals and how the award will help you achieve them.

Relevant scoring criteria:

Interest in pursuing academic primary care research in the UK

How the project and/or person will benefit the public

Do you wish to let us know any further information in support of your application? (e.g details of career breaks/caring responsibilities etc)

If applicable, use this section to let us know anything you wish to tell us about what has affected your career to date. This can include extenuating circumstances that may have delayed or impeded your research career so far, including but not limited to: parental leave, chronic illness, caring responsibilities, disability, economic hardship etc.

Host institution

Awards take place at one of the 10 consortium members. Your primary supervisor should be based at the host institution.

Name of proposed primary supervisor

Please ensure you have discussed your application in depth with your proposed primary supervisor.

Primary supervisor email

What aspects of the PhD have you discussed with proposed primary supervisor:

If you have proposed your own project, you may wish to briefly describe the discussions you have had around how the supervisory team will be able to support you. If you are applying for an existing project you may wish to describe discussions around how you will lead this work, how your skills and experience are suited to the project and how you will take it forward.

Details of any other supervisors; Name, email and institution (optional)

You do not need to confirm details of the wider supervisory team at application stage if you have not yet identified them. Secondary supervisors should ideally come from another consortium member or an external institution. Support can be provided to successful applicants with identifying a wider supervisory team.

Abstract of research plan 350 words

The abstract should be a clear and concise summary of the detailed research plan.

The following is a list of potential headings to include depending on the design of the proposed research and the setting. It will be for applicant to decide the appropriate elements to be covered in the scientific abstract and could contain topics outside this list.

- Research question
- Background
- Aims and objectives
- Methods
- Timelines for delivery
- Anticipated impact and dissemination

Relevant scoring criteria:

Relevance of proposed project to primary care

Clarity of aims

Appropriate methodology

How the project and/or person will benefit the public

Details of doctoral research planned

You should prepare this section of the application offline. It will then be uploaded to the online application system. The maximum length of the upload is 2 A4 pages

Please use this section to clearly explain your proposed research. You should ensure that the information is accurate, succinct and clearly laid out. You should include the following:

- What is the problem being addressed?

- Why is this research important in terms of improving the health and/or wellbeing of the public and/or to patients, carers and the primary care landscape in general?
- Review of existing evidence: how does the existing literature support this proposal?
- What is the research question/what are the aims and objectives?
- Project Plan
- Project management strategy
- Dissemination, outputs and anticipated impact
- Ethics
- Success criteria

You should also briefly mention your plans for public involvement and engagement when outlining your research plan in addition to the question specifically on public involvement.

Relevant scoring criteria:

Relevance of proposed project to primary care

Clarity of aims

Appropriate methodology

How the project and/or person will benefit the public

Plain English summary of research plan 450 words

A plain English summary should be a clear explanation of your research.

Many reviewers use this summary to inform their review of your funding application. This includes researchers who do not have specialist knowledge of your field as well as members of the public

You should ensure you have read guidance on what is expected to be included in your summary. Useful information can be found here:

<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/plain-english-summaries/27363>

If possible, you should try to have your Plain English summary reviewed by members of the public to ensure it is accessible.

Relevant scoring criteria:

Quality and accessibility of the plain English summary

How the project and/or person will benefit the public

How have patients and the public helped develop this application and how will they be involved with your research? 500 words

Please describe how patients, carers and the public have been involved in developing this proposal and how they will be actively involved the proposed research, including any training and support provided

Patients, carers, and the public can be involved in every stage of a research project, from developing a proposal through to dissemination and evaluation.

You should aim to be as specific as possible in this section and seek to include details of:

- a) Pre-application involvement:
 - Who you have involved
 - How they been involved and how their involvement has shaped your proposal

- b) Involvement and engagement throughout your project:
 - Who you plan to involve and how you will identify them to be involved
 - When and how you will involve members of the public throughout your project
 - Any training and/or support that will be provided to those involved
 - How you intend to capture, evaluate and report on your public involvement and engagement activities

You can find further resources to support the design of your PPI via the following links:

<https://www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/PPI/resources-for-researchers>

<https://www.learningforinvolvement.org.uk/topic/getting-started-involving-people/>

<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/briefing-notes-for-researchers-public-involvement-in-nhs-health-and-social-care-research/27371>.

Relevant scoring criteria:

Public involvement in developing the proposal

Public involvement plans throughout the project

What collaborations do you hope to develop during your studentship? Please indicate how you will maximise access to the programme consortium network/SPCR Trainee community 300 words

You should use this space to reflect on how undertaking a PhD within the programme consortium will support both your career ambitions and your research project. You can find out details of the opportunities for trainees as well as what research is currently going on within the SPCR at our website: <https://www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/>

Relevant Scoring criteria:

Ambition to collaborate and be part of the Wellcome programme consortium/ SPCR Trainees community

Details of your training and development programme (optional) 500 words

Please use this section to detail the training and development you will undertake as part of the Fellowship. This should cover both the training you may need to undertake the research being proposed but also training designed to support your development as a future primary care research leader.

Relevant scoring criteria:

Appropriate training and development plan

Please give details of your current gross annual salary or your Agenda for Change pay scale (including years of experience band and any high-cost area supplements). You may be asked to provide evidence of your current salary or pay scale.

Full financial details are not required at the application stage. Read more information on what the award will cover on our website <https://www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/career-development/pcc-frequently-asked-questions>