



**School for
Primary Care
Research**



**National Institute for
Health Research**

Training and Development Programme



“You only have to look at the successes of our trainees to see that we are making a big difference in the School for Primary Care Research. Our trainees have got fantastic grants and wonderful publications that are already influencing national guidelines and being put into practice.”

Christian Mallen, SPCR Training Director

“Being the holder of a SPCR award has enabled me to establish a programme of research and be mentored by world-renowned primary care researchers. The close links with other insitutions within the School has facilitated networking with leading researchers outside my department. All of which has been hugely enriching.”

Adam Geraghty,
Post-Doctoral Fellow



The School for Primary Care Research brings together expertise from nine leading academic centres for primary care research in England. The aims of the School are to increase the evidence base for primary care practice and to provide a strong foundation of support for future leaders in primary care research.

Every year the School recruits trainees from clinical and non-clinical backgrounds, funding over 100 trainees to date. Our unique collaboration between academic centres provides a setting where trainees benefit from the leadership of researchers at the top of their fields. The highly competitive training awards offered by the School are designed to complement existing fellowship schemes offered by the NIHR Training Co-ordinating Centre (TCC) and other funding bodies such as the MRC and Wellcome Trust.

www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk



“A really fantastic event - a great opportunity to see the variety of research being conducted and gave me plenty of food for thought for my own research. The biggest impact for me was the opportunity to network and meet the trainees in such a supportive environment.”

SPCR Trainees’ Event

Benefits of attending

- Meeting new and existing members
- Networking with colleagues across the School
- Presenting work in supportive, constructive environment
- Increased understanding of cross disciplinary collaboration
- Introduced to further funding and training opportunities offered by the School and NIHR and beyond
- Learning about innovative research from peers.

The SPCR Annual Trainees’ Event encourages networking, research development and enhances a sense of belonging to the School and to the wider NIHR infrastructure.

Trainees are given opportunities to learn about the scope of multidisciplinary research skills, methods and perspectives from lectures and discussions.

Small interactive poster sessions help to develop presentation skills in a facilitated and supportive environment. Trainees are also exposed to, and inspired by, research from different disciplines and departments within the NIHR and the wider academic primary care environment.

The School encompasses research expertise from diverse areas such as sociologists, health economists, anthropologists, statisticians, behavioural scientists, clinicians and public health practitioners, all converging at the event to discuss their work and potential future collaboration.

Trainees are introduced to a variety of different patient and public engagement methodologies, influencing the integration of these elements in their own studies.



“The annual SPCR Trainees’ Event is an excellent forum to meet bright and enthusiastic researchers from departments within the School.”

“The event was very interactive, informing and inspiring.”

TUTOR-PHC

**Transdisciplinary
Understanding and Training on Research
Primary Health Care**

TUTOR-PHC is a one-year, pan-Canadian, interdisciplinary research capacity building program that has been training primary and integrated health care researchers and decision-makers from family medicine, nursing, psychology, epidemiology, social work, education, policy and many other disciplines since 2003.

The programme includes:

- an onsite 3-day symposium in Toronto
- two 3-week online research skill development workshops - June and November
- two 7-8 week online interdisciplinary discussion groups September to November and January to March
- autumn - present your own research project to peers and receive interdisciplinary feedback
- winter - work with an interdisciplinary team to create a primary health care research project
- trainees accepted to the program will have their research supervisor participate in aspects of the program.
- at the end of the program trainees will be able to complete an interdisciplinary primary health care research proposal.

“ Mentors are, like the trainees, from a wide range of Primary Care backgrounds, and being able to chat to all of them informally was a great way to understand exactly how primary care can really benefit from collaborative, interdisciplinary research teams.”

Ben Ainsworth, post-doctoral fellow (pictured far right)

Read the blog: www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/blog/the-2018tutor-phc2019-experience-transdisciplinary-understanding-and-training-on-research-2013-primary-health-care-2016

“I greatly benefitted from being a part of the TUTOR-PHC training. Primarily, this training course has offered insights into the contribution and role of multiple disciplines in enriching primary care research.”

Jasmin Knopp, Doctool Student

“On the first day each mentor presented some of their work in a poster session. There was a lot of inspiring and novel research on view, and for me it was really interesting to see what primary care research looks like outside the UK.”

Ben Fletcher, Doctoral Student

Read the blog: www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/blog/tutor-phc-2013-four-day-symposium-in-toronto



TUTOR-PHC



“I cannot thank the SPCR enough for giving me the opportunity to attend this event, and strongly recommend this camp to future trainees who are interested in going. It’s intense, it’s hard work, but it’s so rewarding and an experience I will never forget.” Rachel Ryves, top left.

Read the blog: www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/blog/the-art-of-communication

NIHR Doctoral Research Training Camp

The NIHR Experimental Research Training Camp is a three-day intense annual event for NIHR Trainees from the Biomedical Research Centres (BRCs), Biomedical Research Units (BRUs), Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRCs), Patient Safety Translational Research Centres (PSTRCs) and the School of Primary Care Research.

This is a challenging event that offers workshops, guest speakers who have established research careers as well as poster presentations and opportunities for networking and mentoring. This is an important opportunity for early career researchers and attendance is by invitation only.

“The camp also presents an opportunity for trainees to develop networks which are an important ingredient for collaborative research work.”

Edmore Chamapiwa.

Read the blog: www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/blog/developing-your-post-doctoral-career-the-art-of-communicating-your-science

“Overall, the training camp was a fantastic, if intense, experience. We got an insight into the trials and tribulations of grant application writing and meeting other NIHR trainees and working closely together in such a beautiful setting was a fun and rewarding experience. There were plenty of networking opportunities over scrumptious dinners too! If you get the chance to go to something like this in the future, we’d highly recommend it!”

Kieran Ayling and Priyanka Chandratre.

“It was a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills and network with other researchers from all over the country, from different disciplines and a wide range of research interests. A really valuable and enjoyable experience which has given me the confidence and skills to contribute to future funding applications.”

Jane Vennik



Oxford International Primary Care Research Leadership programme

The International Primary Care Research Leadership programme is designed to foster and develop future leaders in primary care research. The programme consists of three residential meetings in Oxford designed to help participants explore different aspects of leadership in primary care research. Participants are encouraged to identify their own development needs, form peer learning sets and establish a two year follow up programme. They are provided with access to current leaders in primary care research, experts in strategic leadership and one-to-one coaching.

The SPCR funds up to two places per year on the programme.

Find out more: www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/trainees

As cohort#12 we hope to use this inspiration to work together and support each other in identifying and following our own visions so we can enjoy all the benefits of working in academic primary care.”

Alyson Huntley and Sarah Tonkin-Crine. Cohort 12.

“It was a great way to consider different types of people in an organisation and the range of strategies needed for good leadership. Meeting and working with my fellow cohort members will prove to be the most enduring benefit of the programme”

Fiona Stevenson. Cohort 11.

The International Leadership Programme has given us a unique opportunity to extend our professional networks and broaden our horizons ... Our cohort is a safe place to reflect on our work, career progression and balance between personal life and work. We learned leadership skills to increase our personal effectiveness and to distinguish between signal and noise. The cohort offers a tremendous peer support in all of these aspects.”

Prof Christian Mallen, Cohort 1.



Read the latest blog: www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/blog/insights-from-the-oxford-leadership-programme

“The research on ageing at UCL overlaps with my fellowship at UEA. Opportunities to learn from what researchers in the department had done by sitting in on training and informally discussing research with different members of the team was helpful in the development of my current fellowship. Additionally, discussing my research with a range of different academics and being able to learn from their experiences was invaluable.”

John Ford, NIHR doctoral fellow

NIHR Doctoral Training Exchange Scheme

The Infrastructure Doctoral Training Exchange (IDTE) Scheme allows doctoral trainees supported by NIHR to spend time in other parts of the infrastructure to network, train in a specific technique or collaborate with other researchers/specialists in their topic area.

The scheme is open to all NIHR trainees, that is, trainees undertaking a PhD or a MD, and whose research training is funded by an NIHR infrastructure award or whose supervisor is supported by an NIHR infrastructure award.

John Ford is a Public Health registrar currently out of programme on a NIHR doctoral fellowship at the University of East Anglia. After attending a qualitative methods course at UCL’s Department of Primary Care and Population Health early in 2015, he was encouraged to apply for the NIHR exchange programme. Kate Walters is Senior Clinical Lecturer and SPCR training lead at UCL.



Why would you encourage others to apply?

JOHN:

“I think it’s really important and healthy for early career researchers to spend time working with lots of different people. It’s not just about learning new skills, but also seeing how other people approach research and think critically through research problems.”

KATE (left):

“Based on our experience, I would encourage the SPCR members to use this opportunity to promote cross-departmental collaboration and as a good experience for our NIHR funded students. The application process was very straightforward and simple, so the whole thing was surprisingly easy to set up.”

www.nihr.ac.uk/our-faculty/trainees/support-and-resources-for-trainees/support-for-trainees-in-nihr-infrastructure/

NIHR Annual Trainees Meeting

NIHR trainees, including those appointed by the School, have the unique opportunity to attend the annual NIHR Trainee Meeting in Leeds, hosted by the NIHR Trainees Coordinating Centre (TCC).

Trainees present posters of their work, network with and meet other trainees, share experiences, take part in workshops and learn more about the NIHR.

Jamie Hartmann-Boyce and David Jameson have captured highlights of the 2015 event in a blog 'Making a difference: from evidence to impact.'

How to Make a Successful Fellowship Application

JAMIE

Talk to funders early on in the process – they all have people whose job it is to talk to potential applicants, and want to hear from you!

The earlier you approach the NIHR Research Design Service, the more they can do for you.

If you make it to interview, remember it's ok to be nervous and to not know everything. Admit what you don't know, be happy to take advice, relax, and be yourself.

In NIHR interviews (and presumably for other funding bodies, too), the last slide of your presentation stays up for the remainder of the interview. So make it strong and visual – you don't need to be formulaic.

DAVID

Apply to a wide range of funders early on in the application process, including the MRC, BBSRC, NIHR and charities. They may all have money available to support your application.

The focal points of the application differ for fellowships and grant proposals. For **fellowship** applications the focus is on the person (you!), the project you will undertake and finally the place where you will undertake the project. **Grant** applications focus more on the project you will undertake, the people you'll work with (why they are the best people to collaborate with) and the place where you'll undertake the project (why is this the best place for this research project to be carried out).

Discuss how the application fits in with your own career trajectory. What career outputs would you like to see from the results of your project?

Include your training needs as part of the application process. This shows you have thought about your project, and identified the skills you have and need for it to be successful.

“The event runs over two days and is jam packed with seminars, workshops, poster presentations, and ample networking opportunities. It was a buzzing atmosphere with an abundance of material covered, and if you are an NIHR trainee and haven't gone yet, we recommend you look into it for next year!”

Jamie Hartmann-Boyce and David Jameson

Read the blog: www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/blog/highlights-from-the-2015-nihr-trainees-meeting



Photograph courtesy of the NIHR TCC

www.nihr.ac.uk/our-faculty/trainees/events-for-trainees/annual-trainees-meeting/

SPCR student-led training days

Doctoral students from around the School conceptualise, organise and lead training days around the country.

The focus of the training days is to give students the opportunity for specific skills training from experts within the School. The events also provide an opportunity for doctoral students, either embarking on new research or completing their studies, to meet others interested in similar research topics and to present their work. The training complements the annual SPCR trainee meeting held in September each year.

SPCR trainees Charlotte Albury and Ben Fletcher developed the proposal for the series and organised the first event in Cambridge which provided training for research relating to randomised controlled trials. All students from SPCR member institutes were invited to attend the training day, regardless of whether they were funded by SPCR.

A second workshop to develop skills in Patient and Public Involvement was held in Newcastle and organised by Bethany Bareham, "Our vision for the training day was to create a formative opportunity to develop understanding and confidence for PPI in our cohort of early career researchers. Particular emphasis was placed on encouraging creative thinking, and involvement of patients and the public throughout the research cycle."

"It was fantastic to meet more students interested in primary care and other areas that link to our own research interests. All of the talks were fantastic and well pitched, the students presented really well put together 3MT's and the networking event was really effective and well thought out. Thanks to the SPCR for supporting these events!"

Charlotte Albury

Read more about it: www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/news/skills-training-for-phd-students

Read Beth's blog: <https://www.spcr.nihr.ac.uk/blog/spcr-2018developing-skills-in-ppi2019-training-day-at-newcastle-university>

NIHR webinars

NIHR Webinar series run by the Trainees Co-ordinating Centre (TCC) for current and aspiring NIHR trainees and cover a range of topics to help researchers develop their research careers. Each month a new webinar is hosted live and recordings made available following the live event.

Previous webinars include:

- Writing for publication
- Further your research career in clinical trials
- CRN study support service
- Getting your finances right - from application to the end of your project.

To access these recordings, visit the webinar channel:
bit.ly/NIHRwebinarchannel



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