

## **All Wales Research Design and Conduct Service (RDCS) Charter**

### **Purpose of this Charter**

This Charter describes the role of the All Wales Research Design and Conduct Service (RDCS); the support it can provide to health and social care professionals working in Wales; what health and social care professionals can expect from the RDCS; and what the RDCS anticipates from them in return.

### **What is the RDCS?**

The RDCS is an independent advisory service available to health and social care professionals working in Wales seeking to develop, design and deliver high quality applied health or social care research. It is one of a number of complementary services that sit within the Welsh Government-funded Health and Care Research Wales family aimed at supporting and increasing Wales' capacity in research and development (R&D).

### **Scope**

The RDCS has a primary focus on advising health and social care professionals and researchers whose substantive employer is the Welsh NHS and equivalent social care organisations in Wales, with a view to increasing the amount of applied research being undertaken in those environments. The RDCS also has a role in:

- Advising on the development of a research culture within the NHS/social care and other partner organisations, across specialties and disciplines;
- Advising on the development of a research methods training strategy for NHS/social care researchers and partner organisations; and
- Providing links to other experienced researchers.

### **Nature of support available**

The RDCS is an advisory service. Its role is to offer independent advice to health and social care professionals on what is required, and what may be possible, from a research and design perspective to enable them to develop high quality, robust and potentially fundable research proposals. The RDCS is not funded to undertake and/or deliver project activities associated with research grants once won. Its focus is on providing high quality research advice to enable people to attract external research funding which will cover the costs of conducting the research.

Advice is available from the RDCS on all aspects of designing research studies and developing grant applications, including statistics, economics, other quantitative and qualitative research methods, clinical trials, evidence synthesis, outcome measures, outcomes, epidemiology, public and patient involvement, ethics and governance and enhancing Welsh language awareness in research design and conduct.

Advice available includes:

- Focusing ideas and refining the research question(s);
- Building an appropriate research team;
- Involving patients, carers and service users in all stages of the research process;

- Overall research design;
- Choice and application of research methodologies for both qualitative and quantitative approaches;
- Choice and application of economic approaches and methods;
- Facilitating research participation through the medium of Welsh that meets regulatory and governance requirements;
- Outcome measures
- How to conduct literature searches and undertake systematic reviews;
- Identifying the resources required for a successful project;
- Identifying suitable funding opportunities; and
- Signposting researchers to other sources of research expertise including identifying possible research partners.

Advice can be given at a very early stage, including advice on developing ideas for smaller grants and feasibility work which then has the potential to lead onto larger applications. This continues right through to advice to enable submission of significant research projects with every necessary element characterised and quantified.

The RDCS is not funded by the Welsh Government to undertake specific education or training delivery functions beyond explaining and promoting its own advice services. However, the advice available from the RDCS does include advising partner organisations on the development of a research culture and on the development of a research methods training strategy.

### **Eligibility**

The RDCS may be accessed by any health or social care professional working in Wales looking to develop grant applications to national, peer reviewed funding streams in order to undertake research.

The All Wales RDCS is not able to provide advice in all situations. Some examples of situations where the RDCS are not able to provide advice include:

- in the development of research projects for which there is no intention to submit a grant application to a recognised funder as described above;
- in situations where ongoing research is required – such work would need to be explicitly funded from another source, for example from a project grant;
- informal supervision or support for student projects including PhDs and Professional Doctorates; and
- advising academics and/or research staff working in Higher Education Institutions or equivalent research-based organisations.

In addition, late (too close to a funding deadline) requests for advice may be refused on the grounds of insufficient time being available between the request for support being made and the deadline for applying for research.

### **Mutual Understandings**

Users of the RDCS can expect to gain access to a professional service in a timely and efficient manner and may approach the RDCS providers at any stage of development of a research proposal: from simply wanting to discuss an initial idea through to requesting advice on a specific issue relating to a well-developed proposal.

In return for their advice, the RDCS providers expect that users will:

- use the RDCS only for eligible purposes;
- consider carefully all advice that is given;
- acknowledge the advice given by the RDCS;
- agree to appropriate sharing of draft proposals with other RDCS and clinical trial units/WHESS (Welsh Health Economics Support Service) and LLAIS (Language Awareness Infrastructure Support) staff; and
- complete the appropriate sections on application forms regarding the nature of the RDCS involvement and advice given.

### **Data Protection and Privacy Statement**

The RDCS regularly reports to Health and Care Research Wales and to the local R&D offices about the number and nature support requests received from the NHS and others. No personal information will ever be passed on or otherwise distributed to any other person or organisation, unless consent has been given. The All Wales RDCS complies fully with the Data Protection Act 1998. Personal data will be stored confidentially and will not be disclosed to any third party (any organisation outside the RDCS) except where individual consent has been sought and granted. Contact information relating to users will be held in accordance with data protection regulations.

### **How can the All Wales RDCS be accessed?**

The first stage to accessing RDCS support is to get in touch and complete the Request for Support form. Further advice is available directly from the RDCS provider in your region, as set out below.

The RDCS provider considering your Request for Support form may contact you to further understand the nature of the advice sought and support likely to be available. For eligible approaches the RDCS provider will contact you directly to arrange an initial meeting to discuss, agree and document the scope and extent of the advice service to be provided by the RDCS.

In order to ensure that the RDCS resource is distributed fairly and equitably across the whole of Wales, services users need to know that there are service limits in terms of staff availability. The scope and extent of the service you can expect from the RDCS will be explained and agreed at initial meetings.

### **Who is delivering the RDCS in Wales?**

The RDCS is planned and delivered regionally across Wales. Where appropriate referrals are made to the WHESS and LLAIS.

Health and social care professionals wishing to access the RDCS may approach whichever provider is most convenient to them.



Research Design  
& Conduct Service  
South East Wales

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Gwasanaeth Cynllunio  
a Chynnal Ymchwil  
De-ddwyrain Cymru

South East Wales: Centre for Trials Research

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Research Design  
& Conduct Service  
South West Wales

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Research Design  
& Conduct Service  
North Wales

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Gwasanaeth Cynllunio  
a Chynnal Ymchwil  
Gogledd Cymru

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