

Community Farms, Gardens, and Allotments

Research Question(s)

- What is the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of community farms, gardens, and allotments in improving health and wellbeing?

The programme is not interested, in this call, in the use of these facilities as a targeted therapeutic agent for patients with a diagnosed illness.

- **Population:** General population, especially vulnerable groups.
- **Intervention (non-NHS):** Provision of community farm, garden, allotment or similar facility.
- **Comparator:** No provision of community farm, garden, allotment or similar facility.
- **Outcomes:** May include the following: improved physical activity levels; healthier eating; other healthier lifestyles; improved mental wellbeing; reduction in prescription drugs; adverse events such as zoonoses. Secondary outcomes may include: sustainability of participation in intervention; outcomes relating to social capital, connectedness to nature, environmentally friendly behaviours.
- **Duration of follow up:** At least 1 year.
- **Impact on inequalities:** Research design should consider the impact of the intervention on health inequalities Researchers to specify and justify.
- **Design:** Primary research, researchers to specify and justify.
- **Setting:** The community.
- **Public engagement:** Proposals should incorporate a mechanism for public involvement.

Background to commissioning brief:

The origins of community farms and gardens relate to therapeutic gardens associated with hospitals and other community-led initiatives. It has been suggested that a recent resurgence in community food growing may have benefited physical activity and healthy eating patterns.

Community farms, gardens, and allotments can involve people, plants, and animals. They range in scope from small wildlife gardens and fruit and vegetable plots to large city farms. Their impact on individual mental and physical wellbeing has been little researched. Research is needed to address the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of community farms, gardens, and allotments on improving the health and wellbeing of participants.

Notes to Applicants

The NIHR Public Health Research programme is funded by the NIHR, with contributions from the CSO in Scotland, NISCHR in Wales, and HSC R&D, Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland. Researchers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are eligible to apply for funding under this programme