

Obesity Themed Call

Introduction

The NIHR Health Technology Assessment (HTA) and Public Health Research (PHR) programmes are launching a joint themed call for obesity evaluation research. The Office for the Strategic Co-ordination of Health Research has prioritised obesity for further research and *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A cross-government research and surveillance plan for England* was published in 2008.

Research proposals to this call must be within the remit of the HTA or PHR programme (see below). Both programmes focus on evaluation, with an interest in cost-effectiveness. The research should be designed to inform NHS and/or public health decision-makers.

The HTA programme evaluates interventions in the NHS and the PHR programme evaluates public health interventions delivered in other settings. NETSCC can help researchers to identify which programme to apply to, or may allocate proposals between the programmes when they are submitted.

Submission Deadline

Applications should be submitted electronically and the deadline for receiving all applications is **1pm on Wednesday 20 January 2010**.

Eligibility for the Call

Studies should meet these criteria:

- **Participants:** Adults and/or children in whom the intervention might be of value.
- **Interventions or Tests:** Those which prevent obesity or identify, diagnose, or treat people who are obese or overweight. Both programmes are interested in research which may lead to a reduction in health inequalities.
- **Setting:** Any: either the wider community or the NHS (eg hospitals or primary care, community NHS settings such as pharmacies or health promotion services, etc).
- **Study Design:** Well-designed evaluation studies, including randomised controlled trials, pilot and feasibility studies, and evidence syntheses. Pilot and feasibility study proposals should come with an overview of the definitive study, and a clear plan of how the preliminary study will inform it. The definitive study should also be within the remit of one of the two programmes.
- **Outcomes:**
 - For the HTA programme: Eligible studies should have a primary outcome of a measure of obesity or overweight for a minimum of one year. Among their outcomes investigators should report weight (kg) in adults or BMI centile in children, at baseline and one year, or another widely reported outcome to allow later meta-analysis and indirect comparisons. Cost effectiveness should normally be assessed.
 - For the PHR programme: Eligible studies should normally have a primary outcome of a measure of obesity or overweight for a minimum of one year or a well validated surrogate. Among their outcomes investigators should report weight (kg) in adults or BMI centile in children, at baseline and one year, or another widely reported outcome to allow later meta-analysis and indirect comparisons. Cost effectiveness should normally be assessed.

Applying

If you wish to apply please consider the HTA programme and PHR programme remit information below to decide which programme is most appropriate.

The HTA programme produces independent research information about the effectiveness, costs and broader impact of healthcare treatments and tests for those who plan, provide or receive care in the NHS. The NIHR Health Technology Assessment programme is funded by the NIHR, with contributions from the CSO in Scotland and WORD in Wales. Researchers in England, Scotland and Wales are eligible to apply for funding under this call. Researchers from Northern Ireland should contact NETSCC to discuss their eligibility to apply.

The PHR programme evaluates public health interventions, providing new knowledge on the benefits, costs, acceptability and wider impacts of non-NHS interventions intended to improve the health of the public and reduce inequalities in health. The scope of the programme is multi-disciplinary and broad, covering a range of interventions that improve public health. The NIHR Public Health Research programme is funded by the NIHR, with contributions from the CSO in Scotland, WORD in Wales, and HSC R&D, Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland. Researchers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are eligible to apply for funding under this programme.

Researchers wishing to evaluate interventions that sit both inside and outside the NHS, or that sit in a boundary zone, should consider the following:

- *What are the NHS and non-NHS components, funding and organisational support?*
- *Where will the intervention be delivered if it was fully developed and implemented?*

If the primary source of funding for the intervention is from the NHS or, when the intervention is implemented, it would be delivered within the NHS/healthcare setting, your proposal is likely to fall within the remit of the HTA programme. If the primary source of funding for the intervention is from outside the NHS or, when the intervention is implemented, it would be delivered outside the NHS/healthcare setting, your proposal is likely to fall within the remit of the PHR programme. Whichever programme you choose to submit to, your proposal should clearly describe how it relates to the information above to help us assess your application.

Examples of interventions which would fall within the remit of the HTA programme, and not the PHR programme, include:

- Screening programmes or components of screening programmes
- Interventions delivered by midwives or health visitors
- Interventions delivered by community pharmacists
- Research involving prison health services

Please consider which programme's remit your application is likely to fall into, then go to the website of the relevant programme for application forms and additional guidance for developing your proposal.

HTA programme website (<http://www.hta.ac.uk/funding/themedcalls/obesity.shtml>)

PHR programme website (<http://www.phr.ac.uk/fundingopportunities/obesity.asp>)

If you are unsure about which programme would be more appropriate having read the information above, staff at NETSCC are happy to advise, contact details are below:

HTA programme contact details: Themed Call Commissioning Team, NETSCC, Alpha House, Enterprise Road, University of Southampton Science Park, Chilworth, Southampton SO16 7NS. Tel: 023 8059 5621 (24 hour answer phone), Fax: 023 8059 5639, or email: htatcall@southampton.ac.uk.

PHR programme contact details: Public Health Research programme, NETSCC, Alpha House, Enterprise Road, University of Southampton Science Park, Chilworth, Southampton SO16 7NS. Tel: 023 8059 9697 (24 hour answer phone), Fax: 023 8059 5639, or email: info@phr.ac.uk.