

Welcome-Overview

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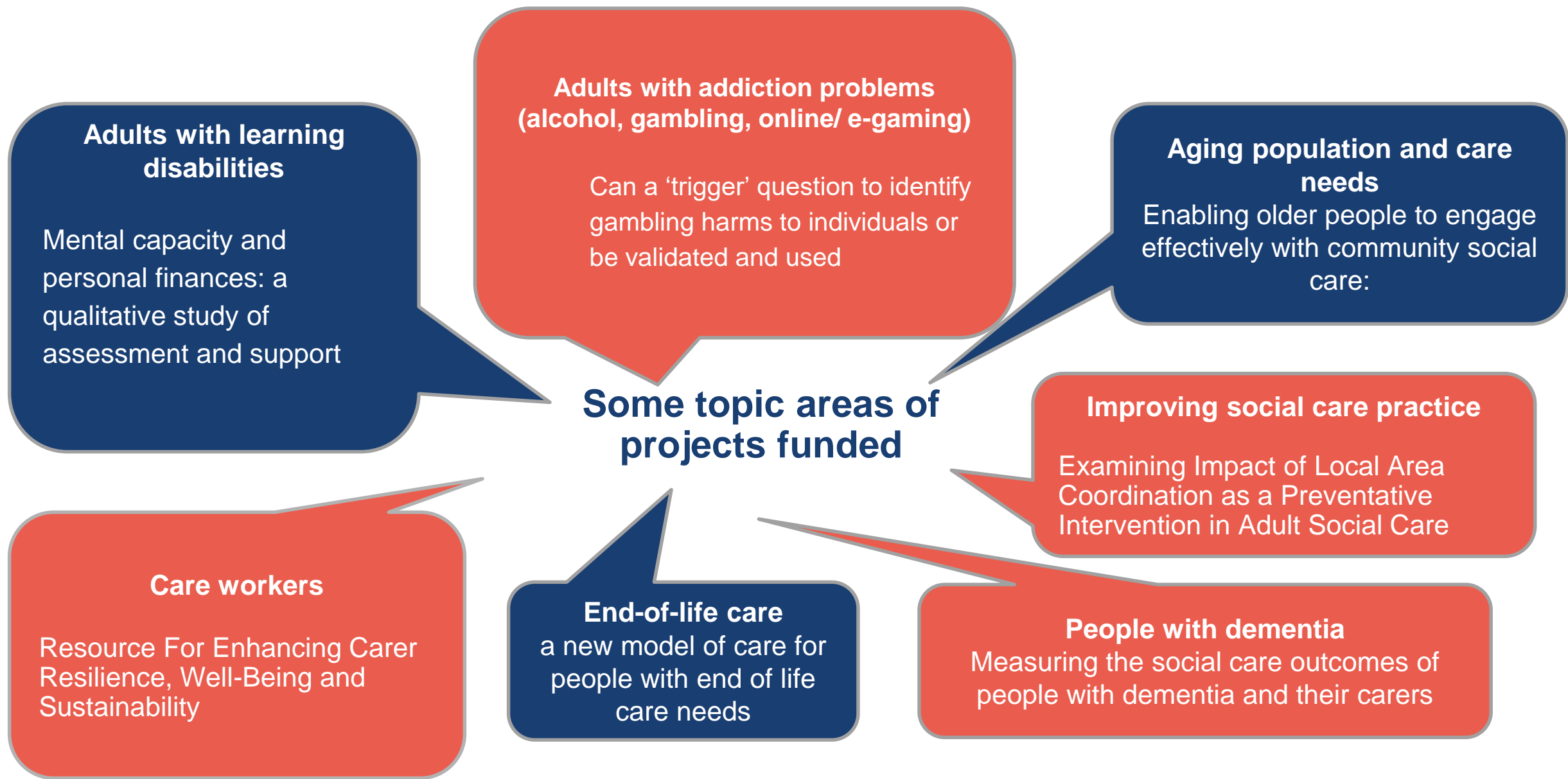
Overview of the Research Programme for Social Care (RPSC)



Where we've been: 'Research for Social Care' (RfSC) Call

From 2018 to 2023, RfSC funded research to **generate evidence to improve, expand and strengthen the way adult social care is delivered for users of care services, carers, and the public.**

- RfSC has funded over £15m on social care research in 55+ projects
- £3m allocated per call with the aim of funding 10-15 high quality proposals.
- Applications allocated up to £350k and could reach up to 3 years in length.
- Applications assessed by a national committee of **social care research experts.**



Research Programme for Social Care (RPSC)

NIHR launches £10m funding programme for social care research



Published: 28 July 2023

The NIHR has launched a new £10m funding programme focused on social care research. The new programme will fund research which generates evidence to improve, expand and strengthen the way social care is delivered for users of care services, carers, the social care workforce, and the public.

Latest news

[Extra £30m a year to boost research careers for healthcare professionals](#)

[Risk of premature birth 50 per cent higher in mothers with poor mental health: NIHR-funded report](#)

[£25m funding boost for research into Long Term Health Conditions](#)

[E-cigarettes may be better than nicotine patches in helping pregnant women stop smoking](#)

[NIHR awards over £100 million to new Policy Research Units](#)

Research Programme for Social Care (RPSC): Overview

- RPSC funds research aimed at improving social care for **adults & children**
- There is no project funding limit
- RPSC encourages applications from researchers **at any career stage**
 - There is a specific early career funding sub-stream
- Funding is available for wide range of social care **research topics & designs**
 - Additional funding is available for capacity building
- **UK-wide eligibility** for universities, local authorities, NHS bodies, providers of social care services, and third sector organisations

Applications through the Research Programme for Social Care should have:

- **Strong involvement** from users of social care, carers and social care workforce
- Clear short, medium, and/or long-term trajectories to social care benefit
- Strong involvement from and collaboration with organisations that provide social care services, and/or other relevant groups
- An appropriate team reflecting the nature of the application
 - i.e a combination of social care researchers, workforce, carers, methodologists and people who use social care

Types of projects RPSC will fund

RPSC is a researcher-led Call, so we welcome any social care projects proposed by a team, including (but not limited to):

- studies about social care needs, circumstances and relevant outcomes
- evaluations of existing or new social care services
- evaluations of the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of interventions
- feasibility, pilot, and definitive trials
- policy-implementation research
- systematic (or other) reviews of evidence
- research on approaches to support and strengthen the social care workforce

How to Apply

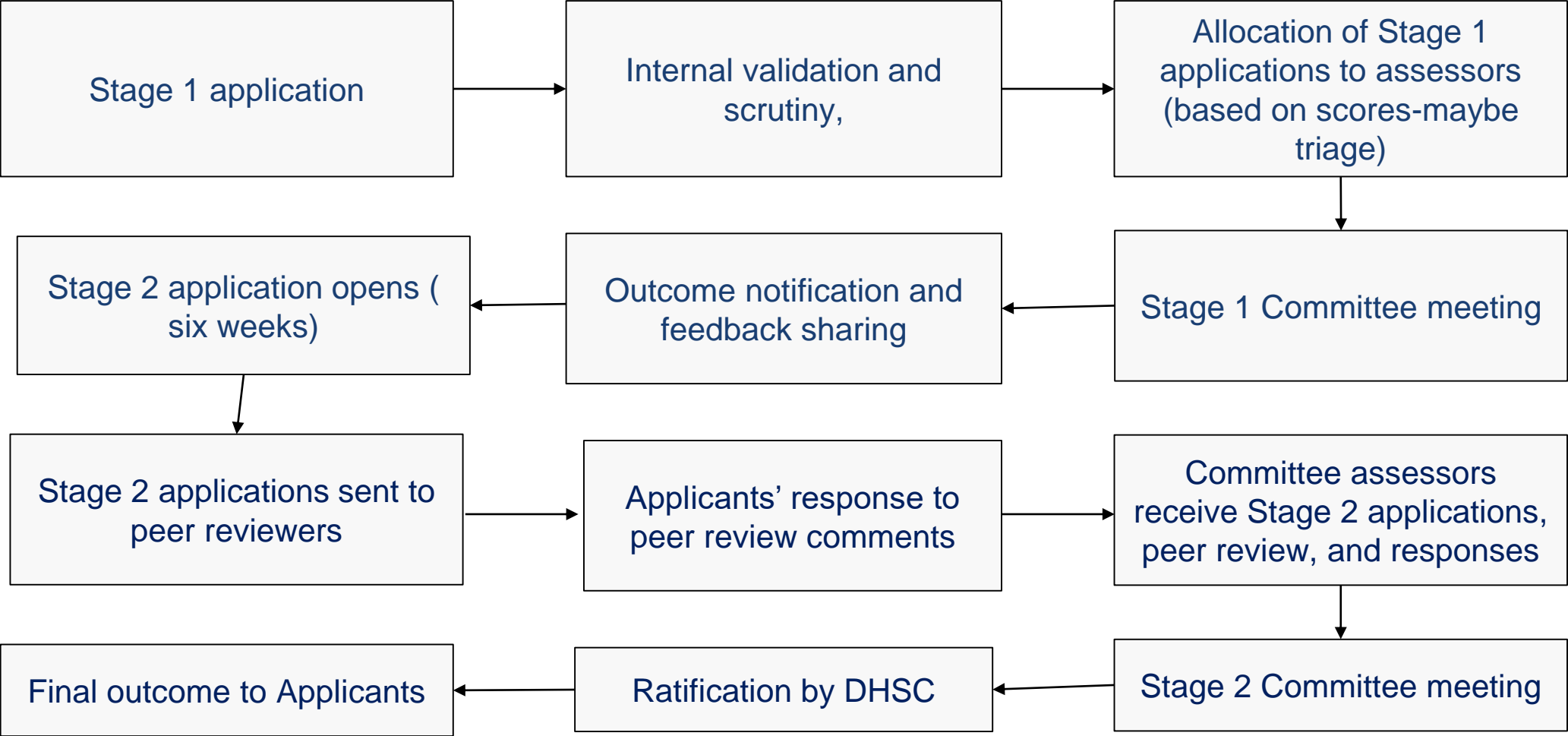
RPSC Programme Team



RPSC Application Assessment Process & Timeline

RPSC Call 2 will open in March, closing at the end of June
RPSC will be taking part in the DHSC/NIHR themed call compo

RPSC Application Assessment Process



Who Can Apply?

Contracting Organisations:

- Applications will be made through universities, local authorities/governments, NHS bodies or other providers of social care services across the UK.
 - *Act as the contracting organisation, receive funds, and are responsible for the delivery of the research.*

Co-Applicants:

- Are considered part of the project team and are expected to share responsibility for its successful delivery.
 - *Can be from other universities, charity organisations, public members and other organisations relevant to the project.*

Collaborators:

- Normally provide specific expertise on particular aspects of the project but who do not share in the responsibility for the delivery of the project.

Stage 1 and Stage 2 applications: What do you need?

Stage 1 applications	Stage 2 applications
Lead Applicant and Team	Response to the Stage 1 feedback points Lead Applicant and Team (address any feedback)
Research Plan	Research Plan with explanation and elaboration
Public Involvement and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy	Public Involvement and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (address any query from the Stage 1 feedback)
Dissemination Plan and Impact	Dissemination Plan and Impact (pay particular attention to feedback)
Total Estimated Research cost and Estimated Support and Treatment cost	Detailed budget breakdown of all research costs, online SOECAT if you have participants under an NHS or Health and Social Care duty of care (consult with Local Clinical Research Network)
2 additional upload (reference and Gantt chart)	6 additional upload including letters of support

Early Career Researcher (ECR) stream

Early career researchers are defined as a researcher who meets either or both of the following criteria:

has not held a grant as chief investigator (excluding fellowships) exceeding £100,000

or

has completed a PhD within the last 5 years.

- ECRs can apply for awards up to £250,000
 - ECRs must be supported by an appropriate team
 - The team must be suitably resourced
 - Applications should be within the overall scope of the programme
- These applications will be reviewed by the assessing committee, but will not be in direct competition with larger awards or those from non-ECRs

Early Career Researcher (ECR) stream

How to apply:

The Section 1 Application Summary contains the question: “*are you applying as an early career researcher?*”

- Select “yes” if you are an ECR wanting to take the ECR opportunity.
- Select “no” if you are using the competition open to all.

If you are an ECR, please provide further information in the research plan section (using the criteria) as to why you class as such.

Capacity Building funding

- Applicants can include funding for research capacity development as part of their application
- Can be used at any point on the academic career pathway
- A range of diverse career paths are encouraged (including different methodologies, disciplines and professions)
- Individuals should be embedded within a supportive host environment, and strong public involvement and engagement should be embedded within the research
- Anticipated 10% to 20% of the overall project budget

Successful RPSC awards will be expected to appoint a “Named Point of Contact for Training and Development”, who will be the first point of contact for all NIHR Academy-related communication and queries

How to apply:

- In the application form-Section 5 of the research plan has a “Research Capacity” section. Please use this to explain the your proposed capacity building. (500 words)



Learning about Successful Applications from RfSC



Six areas to consider for your application

1. **Clear research question/rationale**
2. **Clearly-defined social care benefit (or path to impact)**
3. **Appropriate methods** – clearly linked to the overall aims and objectives
4. **A convincing team** – justified with the methods, work packages, and disseminations
5. **Suitable involvement plan** for social care practitioners, researchers, care workers and users of social care
6. **Clear links to social care**

1. The Research Question

Making an interesting and/or important research question:

- Can you demonstrate the importance of the research question?
- Can you explain why this new knowledge matters for social care?
- Can you ensure the research question is well-defined?
- Can you demonstrate a clear trajectory from the research question to care user, carer and/or wider social care benefit?
- Can you ensure the methods provide a clear answer to the research question?
- Is the cost of the research commensurate to the 'risk' it won't deliver?

2. Clearly-defined Social Care Benefit (Path to Impact)

Consider the following:

- **Impact** is the demonstrable contribution that research makes to society and the economy, of benefit to individuals, organisations and nations.
- **Knowledge mobilization** is the process that paves the way to impact being realised, by actively bringing stakeholders together throughout the research lifecycle to share, respond to, and act upon research plans and findings.
- **Dissemination** is an active approach to spreading research findings to a target audience via determined channels, using planned strategies.

2. Clearly-defined Social Care Benefit (Path to Impact)

- Can you clearly articulate what the need/relevance of the proposed research is?
- Can you define the intended impact of your project?
- How will your research enable this impact?

3. Appropriate Methods

- Be mindful of the range of equality & diversity issues
- Attempt to maximise inclusion where possible and avoid random exclusions
- Consider appropriate methodologies (for both the situation and those you will be engaging with)
- Ensure recruitment methods are suitable
- Acknowledge potential problems (e.g., in recruitment)

4. A Convincing Team

- The team needs to reflect the nature of the proposed work, with relevant people included – under/over costing will be picked up by the committee
- Each co-applicant needs a clearly described role – if the committee cannot determine what each member is doing it undermines the application
- Including a list of senior colleagues at 1% is not well received by committees – we want to see who will actually be doing the work
- Ensure the team has appropriate methodological and social care experience

5. A Suitable Involvement Plan

- Cost appropriately
- Consider how involvement will be meaningful (consider methods)
- Think about co-applicants and letters of support
- Consider barriers and how these will be addressed
- Provide clarity on how any involvement/collaboration runs through the research proposal and process.

6. Clear Links to Social Care

- Ensure applications are recognisable as social care
- Demonstrate an understanding of some of the challenges within the field of social care research
- Offer a view of how your work will be beneficial to a range of audiences
- Demonstrate that your project has been conceived with input from users and people with lived experience



RPSC Support



RPSC Support

RPSC supports prospective social care researchers, applicants, and award holders at each step of their journey. Support includes:

- A voluntary pre-submission form to provide feedback on whether a prospective application falls within RPSC's remit.
- An annual award-holders' event for successful applicants from each Call.
- An Early-Career Researcher Reviewers' scheme to build capacity within the social care research community.
- Working with third sector organisations to engage in research.

Useful Resources

- NIHR Research Programme for Social Care ([RPSC](#)) page
- NIHR School for Social care research [SSCR](#)
- NIHR Research Support Services [\(RSS\)](#)
- NIHR Equality, Diversity and Inclusion [Toolkit](#)
- NIHR Patient and Public Involvement [Resources](#)
- NIHR knowledge mobilisation [guidance](#)

Any Questions?

Please contact us **RPSC@nhr.ac.uk**