

## **NIHR CLAHRC North West Coast: A Strategic Approach to Capacity Building**

### NIHR CLAHRC NWC

The CLAHRC NWC aims to bring together all Partners (academics, service providers, commissioners, managers, public and service users) to collaborate on research, knowledge exchange, and implementation, to improve care and reduce health inequalities. Integral to this, is the harnessing of the region's applied health research expertise to deliver the CLAHRC's programmes of research (see XXX for details of individual themes), and further develop a research culture and expertise in a way that is sustainable into the future. The CLAHRC's legacy is to ensure that all future developments in healthcare are informed by applied health research, are based on the best available evidence, and leads to an evaluation of implementation. Further, that Partner organisations, and the workforce, are equipped and committed to implement and deliver those developments through working closely with the Academic Health Science Networks (AHSNs).

### Capacity Building Strategy

The importance of capacity building within the NIHR CLAHRC NWC is acknowledged through the appointment of a Director of Capacity Building and Implementation (Prof Caroline Watkins). Working closely with the Knowledge Transfer Theme (Prof Mike Pearson) and the Evidence Synthesis Collaboration (Prof Rumona Dickson), CLAHRC NWC will offer a range of capacity building opportunities across the NWC region. The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the approach that will be taken to integrate these activities with other CLAHRC NWC activities.

We will develop a culture of facilitating participation in research (at an organisational and individual level), and using research in practice, in keeping with the ethos of the CLAHRC NWC and the needs of our Partners and the individuals that participate in our capacity building programmes. We would wish to engender a real world understanding of what research entails, so participants (organisations and individuals) would not just be learning about research, and using research, but doing some research, alongside experienced researchers. We will offer a broad range of opportunities tailored to the needs of individuals, and the aspirations of organisations. All working would be alongside patients, carers and the public, and taking account of health inequalities. Opportunities will be facilitated around activities within Themes or, if outside the scope of our Themes, individuals will be supported to gain external funding.

### **Aim:**

- To develop a culture of capacity building for applied health research and implementation
- To engage with Partner organisations (AHSNs, NHS, Local Authorities, and other organisations)
- To ensure engagement of the public, and service users in our capacity building activities/programme
- To raise the profile of capacity building as a key component of research

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- To ensure capacity building across all Partner organisations
- To develop models of collaborative working with Partner organisations
- To develop people individually
- To ensure sufficient and appropriate opportunities for capacity building across all themes
- To evaluate the process, outcomes, and impacts of capacity building activities

This would require a scoping and mapping exercise for the objectives outlined below.

**Objectives:**

- To identify the workforce and stakeholders in relation to each theme
- To identify research workforce strategies within organisations
- To develop capacity building strategies collaboratively with organisations
- To ensure high level engagement in research workforce development/research culture
- To gain commitment to identify resources (people/time/funding) by organisations
- To develop training and development profiles for agreed participants
- To identify mentors, and those that need mentoring
- To identify secondment opportunities
- To develop a range of CPD courses at all levels
- To identify development opportunities (experiential through to studentships and fellowships)

Information from the scoping and mapping exercise would be integral to the *development, delivery and implementation, and evaluation* of the capacity building strategy.

**Development**

Practical mechanisms:

- Stakeholder engagement (priority setting, development of strategy)
- Education, training, and development opportunities and events
- Education framework (defining knowledge, skills, expertise)
- Information, advice and support (phone, website, meetings, newsletter)
- Networking (workshops, seminars, conferences, special interest groups, communities of practice)
- Facilitating collaborations (speed dating, introductions)
- Mentoring and mentorship (database of interests, interested, willing, peer review)
- Recognition (CLAHRC NWC fellows, associates, interns)
- Making core support available (statistics, health economics, systematic review, implementation research advice)
- Funding (research and training opportunities, bursaries and fellowships)

**Delivery and Implementation**

Implementation mechanisms:

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- Scoping exercise: who wants to engage, with what, how and when
  - Agreement about timing, timescales, anticipated outcomes
  - Discussion and agreement about ambitions and what success would look like
- Mapping: what is available, in what format, requiring what resources
- Develop: a collaborative plan informed by the scoping and mapping exercise
- Delivery and Implementation: introduction of collaborative plan
- Evaluation: using a research framework

### **Evaluation**

The CLAHRC NWC must not only be able to show what activities have been undertaken, but be able to demonstrate the outcomes and outputs from those activities, and gauge impact. In order to make improvements in a timely manner, our capacity building strategy requires ongoing evaluation and feedback mechanisms. Understanding what promotes and impedes our performance will allow us to respond proactively to make changes, and raise the quality of future delivery.

A mapping exercise will be performed to demonstrate:

- Who has engaged? (individuals and organisations)
- With what? (activities)
- How? (level, approach)
- When? (timeframe)

An integral process evaluation will explore:

- Has there been engagement?
- What have been the barriers and facilitators?
- What are the lessons learned?
- What changes have been made?
- What has worked well?
- What has been achieved (qualifications, funding, outputs, outcomes)?
- What has been the impact?

### **Resources needed**

A Capacity and Implementation Research Manager, (postdoctoral research fellow) will be required full time for the first 2-3 years, and potentially for the full 5 years (but this will be reviewed following interim reporting). They will oversee and deliver (with the support of Prof CW, and working closely with Prof MP and Prof RD) the scoping, mapping, development, implementation and delivery of the strategy in collaboration with theme leads and all partners. They will require administrative support (0.5 D-E grade) throughout the lifetime of the post. The Research Manager and the administrator will be supported and managed by Prof CW. They will both be based at UCLan, but will be required to work across the CLAHRC's NWC footprint. They will require travel, consumables etc.