

COMMEMORATIVE VALE OF LEVEN HOSPITAL INQUIRY SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME – a commemoration for those who died as a result of the *C. difficile* outbreak at the Vale of Leven Hospital.

Information and guidance for candidates

Background:

The NMAHP Research Unit will administer a Scholarship scheme on behalf of the Scottish Government's Chief Nursing Office, which aims to make improvements to patient care in line with the findings of the Vale of Leven Hospital (VOLH) Inquiry (The Vale of Leven Hospital Inquiry Report 2014, www.valeoflevenhospitalinquiry.org).

This report called for “a significantly improved focus on patient care, and in particular on the care of patients who contract a hospital infection such as CDI”. Therefore, some of the recommendations are directed to aspects of basic nursing care, for example fluid monitoring, care planning, and the prevention and management of pressure damage. The report states that these are aspects of care which still feature as sources of criticism, yet are critical to good quality care and that such basic care is integral to compassionate care.

The report consists of 75 recommendations covering areas of: national structures and systems; national policies and guidance; changes in services/service re-organisation; leadership and management; communication and record keeping; clinical governance; experiences of patients and relatives; nursing care; antibiotic prescribing; medical care; infection prevention and control; death certification; and experiences of *C. difficile* infection within and beyond Scotland.

Purpose of scheme:

To make improvement(s) to patient care in line with recommendations of the Vale of Leven Hospital Inquiry.

Scholarship Scheme details:

Applications are to be made in partnership with NHS or Higher Education Institute (HEI) support, and expected to be completed within 12 months.

The sum of £25,000 has been made available for this Scholarship scheme which is open to Nurses. This will fund up to 5 Scholarship projects which will re-engage nurses with existing research skills to undertake small-scale research projects or research related tasks, many of which may lead to the development of other research funding applications.

The Scholarship Scheme consist of three types of award:

- **Part-time Research Fellowship:** this will fund part-time research fellowships with the aim of undertaking a small scale research study (such as a systematic review, research priority setting consensus exercise, intervention development, or small feasibility or pilot study). Funding is available up to the equivalent of NHS Band 6 0.5 WTE for 4 months.
- **Education and Travel Scholarship:** this will fund travel out-with Scotland where there are opportunities to learn from others in areas that were raised within the VOLH Inquiry Report; it could seek to answer a specific question based on a finding from the Report. Funding of up to £2000 is available to cover travel, accommodation and subsistence.
- **Implementation Science Scholarship:** this will fund studies where evidence based improvements in areas of patient care (that were identified in the VOLH Inquiry Report) are implemented at-scale and monitored using implementation/improvement science methodologies. Funding is available up to the equivalent of NHS Band 6 0.5 WTE for 4 months.

Successful applicants will be expected to share their findings, learning and best practice with their peers and across Scotland and this will be seen as an integral part of the award process. A national dissemination event will be held in early 2018 which the successful applicant will be expected to attend.

Candidate eligibility:

- Must have previous research experience (Masters in Research, PhD, Clinical Doctorate, **OR** similar substantial research experience).
- Are currently employed in the NHS or a HEI in Scotland, and living in Scotland. A supporting NHS or HEI must be prepared to administer and account for the funding received. Interested registered nurses living in Scotland but not currently employed by the NHS or an HEI may be considered **if** the necessary HEI and NHS supporting framework is in place prior to application.
- Can demonstrate current availability of time for research: undertaking the required Fellowship/Scholarship within 12 months of the award.

If applicants are employed by the NHS, the pro-rata NHS salary up to Agenda for Change Band 6 will be available to enable appointment of a replacement. If applicants are employed by an HEI then the funds will support additional research time (buy-out) over and above 1 day for research that the current host institution is assumed to already provide. If an applicant is currently on a non-permanent contract then the contract must extend up to or beyond the period of the award. Research and associated costs are not included in this award.

Assessment criteria:

All applications will be assessed in terms of their likelihood of achieving the fellowship/scholarship aims. The approach and activities within the fellowship/scholarship applications can be novel. However, all applications must show these criteria have been addressed:

- 1) Person:** There must be clear evidence of the individual's previous track record in applied research. Preference will be given to individuals who have demonstrated delivery of high quality smaller studies rather than larger scale studies of reduced quality. Preference will also be given to those with previous experience of research in topic areas of relevance to the recommendations of the Vale of Leven Inquiry and which aim to make a difference to direct patient care. Candidates may work either in an HEI or in the NHS but preference will be given to those with a clinical component to their contract.

- 2) Environment:** A challenging and yet supportive environment is crucial to enabling delivery of a successful project or proposal. The candidate must demonstrate high level strategic commitment to the scholarship from their NHS employer/senior manager/HEI line manager.

- 3) Clinical or care issue/question being researched:** The clinical or care problem(s) being researched must be of significant importance and value to the NHS that it maximises the likelihood of on-going NHS support and/or future financial support (from external funding bodies). The clinical or care problem(s) must also be of relevance to the recommendations of the Vale of Leven Inquiry and which aim to make a difference to direct patient care. Patients and families who were affected by Clostridium difficile Infection (CDI) may be involved in reviewing and selecting proposals.

The closing date for applications is the 3rd July 2017.

Applications forms are available from NMAHP Research Unit website: www.nmahp-ru.ac.uk

Please see below for guidance for completing the application form and CV.

GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION AND CV

1. Personal Characteristics

- 1.1. **Personal Details:** self-explanatory, please provide contact details and current employer.
- 1.2. **Relevant research:** outline your research experience. For those with a PhD this will be straightforward to complete. For those without a PhD briefly describe a study/piece of research that you have been the principal investigator or you feel you have been closely involved with such as a clinical trial.
- 1.3. **Personal statement:** write about the skills/attributes you could bring to the award (500 words)

2. Environment

- 2.1. **NHS or HEI:** where your potential research sits or where the scholarship activity will be undertaken. Travel scholarships must provide exact details of the organisation(s) they will visit and why.
- 2.2. **Potential mentors:** Suggest mentor(s) if appropriate.
- 2.3. **Managerial support:** A signature from an HEI or NHS manager (or both where a collaboration is proposed) confirming they have read the completed application and support the applicant.

3. Clinical Issue

- 3.1. **Broad title:** give a broad potential title if appropriate or a few lines.
- 3.2. **Summary of research interest** (700 words) - in layman's terms outline your potential activity explaining the:
 - 3.2.1. context of the research relating it to the Vale of Leven Hospital (VOLH) Inquiry and its recommendations
 - 3.2.2. aims and objectives
 - 3.2.3. project plan/methods if appropriate (Travel scholarships may outline what knowledge they hope to gather)
 - 3.2.4. potential significance and benefits to NHS

4. Budget requested

- 4.1. A detailed breakdown of costs requested.

**IN ADDITION PLEASE INCLUDE AN UP TO DATE CURRICULUM VITAE
(TEMPLATE AVAILABLE BELOW).**

CURRICULUM VITAE OF APPLICANT

Name:	
Present appointment: <i>(Job title, department, and organisation.)</i>	
Address:	
Telephone number:	Email address:
Qualifications:	
Professional registration:	
Previous and other appointments:	
Research experience:	
Research training:	
Relevant publications:	
Signature:	Date:

Please submit completed application forms and CV template to suzannah.hunter@stir.ac.uk

For additional help please contact:

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