# The Gordon Aikman Scholarship Scheme – a commemoration of the Scottish campaigner for Motor Neurone Disease

**Information and guidance for candidates**

## Background

The scholarship scheme to fund improvements in motor neurone disease (MND) care, set up by the Scottish Government in partnership with MND Scotland in honour of Scottish campaigner, Gordon Aikman, is now announcing its second call for applications.

The scholarship will support individuals and professionals to develop, implement and evaluate practical interventions to improve the quality of life of people affected by MND. This may be through travel to identify best practice and/or using improvement and research approaches to test the impact and suitability of interventions for people with MND. This would include non-medicine based interventions such as specialised physiotherapy techniques, non-medicalised assisted breathing techniques etc.

The Scottish Government and MND Scotland’s joint funding will be **£50,000** with the proviso that all funded learning is shared across Scotland, including presentation at an ‘end of award’ event. The Scottish Government and MND Scotland are especially committed to learning from those affected by MND and their carers, and it is anticipated that a significant amount of this resource will be invested in funding a project led by those with MND and their carers.

***The aim of the Scholarship Scheme is to make improvement(s) to MND care through research and practical projects into new and better care.***

## The Scholarship Scheme

The scholarship scheme will be administered by the Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions Research Unit (NMAPH RU) at the University of Stirling but scholarships are expected to be hosted by any NHS, Higher Education Institution (HEI), or other formal/registered care delivery organisation in Scotland, or by MND Scotland for those affected by MND and their carers. The scholarship scheme will accept applications from registered Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals (NMAHPs) working and domiciled in Scotland, and from those affected by MND and their carers who are living in Scotland. A total of £50,000 is available overall but will be split across 2 awards and a dissemination event, with the awards as follows:

1. **The NMAHP award scheme**

Up to a maximum of £25k for an NMAHP led clinical implementation/research project to enhance evidence based improvements in MND care. It is anticipated that this will fund the following options:

1. A part-time research fellowship to be undertaken within the NHS or other formal/registered care delivery organisation in Scotland, or a HEI in Scotland 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); or with the aim of implementing and evaluating/monitoring new or innovative care practices for those with MND; or implementing at-scale, and monitoring, existing evidence based care improvement interventions .
2. Travel and part-time research fellowship: Within the amount available, resources can be allocated to fund travel out-with Scotland where there are opportunities to learn from others developing or implementing evidence based interventions for improving the care of those living with MND. This must be accompanied with some form of research/evaluation/implementation study as at A) above.

***Candidate eligibility:***

* Must have previous research experience
* Are currently employed in the NHS or other formal/registered care delivery organisation in Scotland, or an HEI in Scotland, and living in Scotland.
* 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 7 will be available to enable appointment of a replacement. If applicants are employed by a formal/registered care delivery organisation the pro-rata salary not exceeding the equivalent of an NHS Agenda for Change Band 7 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 funding shall be up to the equivalent of the WTE and time specified for that scheme. Directly incurred research costs can be included but no organisational overheads/indirect costs can be claimed.

1. **The Person with MND/Carer award scheme**

Up to a maximum of £25k to support a practical project to improve the lives of people affected by MND and conducted by those affected by MND and/or their carers. This can include developing practical ways in which health and social care staff can improve the lives of those with MND and their carers OR can include developing or implementing practical improvements for those affected by MND. The ideas for these practical projects will be developed by those with MND and/or their carers and they will be supported and hosted by MND Scotland to take forward these ideas: through implementation of existing practical supports; or development of new ideas for practical support. The development of new ideas can include conducting research with those affected by MND and their carers to identify problems and practical solutions. Any research or evaluation conducted to develop or support practical projects will be conducted by those affected by MND or their carers with the support of the host organisation MND Scotland. Projects will be hosted and supported by MND Scotland but can also include other partners offering additional support to projects (such as the NHS, an HEI, another formal/registered care delivery organisation in Scotland or another Third Sector/charitable organisation).

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 on completion of both awards. A final report (up to 5,000 words) including a financial statement will be expected from the recipient of the NMAHP Award Scheme. A project summary and financial statement will be expected from the Person with MND/Carer award scheme.

## An additional amount of up to £1k is also available from MND Scotland (on application) to fund dissemination activities (e.g. conference attendance and travel, costs for organising additional workshops).

## 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: For healthcare professionals** 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 direct patient care. Candidates may work either in an HEI or in the NHS or other formal/registered care delivery organisation in Scotland 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 employer/senior manager/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 those with MND with a preference for practical interventions to improve the quality of life of people affected by MND (e.g. non-medicine based interventions such as specialised physiotherapy techniques, non-medicalised assisted breathing techniques etc.)

**The closing date for applications is the 31st August 2018.**

**Applications forms are available from NMAHP Research Unit website:**

[**www.nmahp-ru.ac.uk**](http://www.nmahp-ru.ac.uk/)

**Please see below for guidance for completing the application form and CV. Separate guidance is supplied for NMAHP professionals and for people with MND and their carers.**

**GUIDANCE FOR NMAHPs COMPLETING THE APPLICATION AND CV**

1. **Personal Characteristics**
   1. **Personal Details:** self-explanatory, please provide contact details and current employer**.**
   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.
   3. **Personal statement:** write about the skills/attributes you could bring to the award (500 words)
2. **Environment**
   1. **NHS or HEI** **or other formal/registered care delivery organisation in Scotland:** where your potential research sits or where the scholarship activity will be undertaken. Travel + research scholarships must provide exact details of the organisation(s) they will visit and why.
   2. **Potential mentors:** Suggest mentor(s) if appropriate.
   3. **Managerial support:** A signature from an HEI or NHS or other care organisation manager (or one from each sector where a collaboration is proposed) confirming they have read the completed application and support the applicant.
3. **Clinical Issue**
   1. **Broad title:** give a broad potential title if appropriate or a few lines.
   2. **Summary of research interest** (700 words)- in layman’s terms outline your potential activity explaining the:
      1. context of the research and how it fits with improving care for those with MND
      2. aims and objectives
      3. project plan/methods if appropriate (Travel + research scholarships may outline what knowledge they hope to gather from visits elsewhere)
      4. potential significance and benefits to people living with MND and their carers (and the NHS if appropriate).
4. **Budget requested**
   1. A **detailed** breakdown of costs requested.

**GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH MND AND THEIR CARERS COMPLETING THE APPLICATION AND CV**

1. **Personal Characteristics**
   1. **Personal Details:** self-explanatory, please provide full contact details for the main applicant
   2. **Personal statement:** write briefly about the skills/attributes you could bring to the award
2. **Environment**
   1. **MND Scotland:** Please confirm you have spoken with MND Scotland and how you will work with them to support this project
   2. **Potential mentors:** Suggest mentor(s) if appropriate.
   3. **Managerial support:** A signature from MND Scotland confirming they have read the completed application and support the applicant. Where additional partners are involved, applications must also be signed by an appropriate manager or organisation lead.
3. **Care Issue**
   1. **Broad title:** give a broad potential title if appropriate or a few lines.
   2. **Summary of research interest** (700 words)- in layman’s terms outline your potential project/activity explaining :
      1. how it fits with improving care for those with MND
      2. aims and objectives
      3. project plan: what steps will need to be taken to achieve your project, do you have a planned timescale, who will be involved at each stage, what outcomes do you hope to achieve and how will you know if these have been achieved.
4. **Budget requested**
   1. A **detailed** breakdown of costs requested.
5. **Referees**
   1. Please provide contact details for 2 people who can provide a character reference for you or a reference in relation to your competency to complete your proposed project.

**For NMAHP Professionals only: Curriculum vitae of applicant**

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

**The closing date for applications is the 31st August 2018.**

**Further details and an application form are available here:** [**www.nmahp-ru.ac.uk**](http://www.nmahp-ru.ac.uk)

If you want to discuss in more detail please contact:

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