Supporting research – a funders perspective

Dr Mark Pitman
Methodology Theme Leader

Frieburg 12th October 2012
The Medical Research Council

Supports research from molecular level science to public health medicine and understanding of the human body in health and disease.

MRC mission

- Encourage and support high-quality research with the aim of improving human health.
- Produce skilled researchers.
- Advance and disseminate knowledge and technology to improve the quality of life and economic competitiveness in the UK and worldwide.
- Promote dialogue with the public about medical research.
In 2011/12

- The MRC’s gross research expenditure was **£759.4m**

- **£309.9m** on 1,100 grants to researchers in universities, medical schools and research institutes.

- **£354.6m** on 440 programmes within the MRC’s own research, units and institutes.

- **£86.0m** on studentships and fellowships, including those in MRC’s own units and institutes. There were 1,900 postgraduate students and 400 fellows in March 2012.
Methodology work stream activities

MRC Lead
Discovery and Exploratory Development

NIHR Lead Organisation
Clinical Trials and Evaluations

MRC/NIHR Methodology Research Programme (MRP)

Patient reported outcomes initiative

Needs – led initiative initiative

MRC-led Hubs in Trials Methodology Research

CONSORT
COMET

EQUATOR

MRC capacity building Fellowships
The programme includes:

- methods development, with methodological outputs that are applicable beyond a specific case study, to underpin the biomedical sciences, and;

- ‘methods in research’ for developing methods and their implementation in research standards with the aim of improving quality and consistency in practice, for example, consensus statements.
More specifically, it includes:

- **Research methods** in disciplines underpinning health research including: biomedical, behavioural and social science, experimental medicine, randomised trials, cohorts and other research designs investigating health, healthcare, health services and health policy
  - for evaluative research
  - for non-evaluative research.

- **Developing and evaluating** relevant theory and models

- Methods for effective **regulation** (including indices for decision making), approval, adaptation and reporting of new interventions (including behaviour).

- Research methods for valid **measures of health**, e.g. health outcomes, exposure and risk (including behaviour, cognition and emotion) and well being.
Responsibilities of funding organisations
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High Quality Research

IMPACT
Responsibilities of funding organisations

High Quality Research → IMPACT → Human Health
Responsibilities of funding organisations

High Quality Research → IMPACT → Human Health → Clinical Practice
Responsibilities of funding organisations

- High Quality Research
- IMPACT
- Human Health
- Policy
- Clinical Practice
Responsibilities of funding organisations

High Quality Research ➔ IMPACT ➔ Human Health ➔ Policy ➔ Regulation

Clinical Practice

MRC | Medical Research Council
Responsibilities of funding organisations

High Quality Research → IMPACT → Human Health

Clinical Practice
Policy
Regulation
Inform other research
Responsibilities of funding organisations

High Quality Research ➔ IMPACT ➔ Human Health ➔ Policy ➔ Regulation ➔ Inform other research

Clinical Practice
Funding Lifecycle

- ‘State of the Art’
- Validate Idea
- Prepare proposal
- Submit to Funder
- Peer Review
- Undertake study
- Assemble and analyse data
- Prepare and submit Publication
- Peer Review
- Publish results and data
- Idea
- Panel
- Award
Summary

- Funders are more proactive in following up awards
- Should funders wave a stick?
- Can funders help with guidelines?
- Shared responsibility
- Quite a number of scientists do an excellent job