

SPCR Funding Round 15

Launch: 05/01/2026

Successful applications to be submitted to SPCR via Good Grants by noon 30/04/2026.

Projects may start from: 01/09/2026 (can start earlier if feasible)

Projects **must end** by 30/09/2028 (no extensions beyond this date)

Research Brief: Primary Care Research Projects (Department-led Funding Rounds)

The NIHR School for Primary Care Research (SPCR) invites SPCR member departments to commission **ambitious, well-designed research projects** that strengthen the evidence base for primary care practice across England. Departments will manage their own funding rounds, with a total budget of **£300,000** to support **1–2 projects**.

Collaboration between SPCR departments is not mandated but you may wish to consider this if feasible.

Scope and Focus

Projects should:

- Address **pressing challenges** in primary care;
- Be **ambitious in vision**, while proportionate in scale and cost;
- Be led by **early or mid-career researchers**;
- Align with the **DHSC's three strategic shifts**:
 1. Moving more care from hospitals to communities
 2. Making better use of technology in health and care
 3. Focusing on preventing sickness, not just treating it

Key Requirements

- **Leadership:** Projects must be led by early or mid-career researchers, with appropriate mentorship and support structures in place.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Proposals must clearly demonstrate how they contribute to one or more of the DHSC strategic shifts and the SPCR's mission to strengthen the primary care evidence base.
- **Involvement and Inclusion:** Proposals must include meaningful **patient and public involvement (PPI)** and address **equity, diversity, and inclusion**, particularly in relation to underserved or marginalised groups.

- **Impact:** Applicants should outline the potential benefit to patients, communities, and the health and care system, including plans for dissemination and stakeholder engagement.
- **Feasibility:** Projects must be deliverable within the funding period, with a **hard end date of 30 September 2028**. Proposals should include a clear timeline, appropriate resourcing, and risk mitigation strategies.
- **Funding:** Projects should be **realistically and fully costed** to ensure smooth delivery. Budgets must be proportionate to the scope and ambition of the project and must not exceed the department's total allocation of £300,000.

Project Proposal

Guidance for Applicants

Please address the following areas, keeping in mind the SPCR's mission to increase the evidence base for primary care and the NIHR's goal to improve the health and wealth of the nation:

1. What is the problem being addressed and why is it important?

- Define the health or care challenge your research addresses.
- Explain its significance to primary care, service delivery, or health inequalities.

2. Potential impact and benefit to the public

- Identify who will benefit (e.g. patients, carers, clinicians, underserved communities).
- Describe how your research will improve outcomes, access, experience, or system efficiency.

3. Proposed research methods

- Outline your research design, methodology, data sources, and analysis.
- Describe how you will ensure rigour, inclusivity, and relevance.
- Detail your approach to PPI and how it will enhance the research.

4. Expected outcomes

- Summarise key outputs and how they will contribute to knowledge, practice, or policy.
- Describe your dissemination and stakeholder engagement plans.

5. Feasibility of delivery

- Demonstrate that your project is achievable within the timeframe and budget.
- Highlight the team's skills, experience, and partnerships.
- Identify risks and mitigation strategies.

Guidance for Applicants: Mapping Your Research to the NHS 10-Year Plan

Please describe how your research aligns with one or more of the following strategic shifts:

1. Strategic Relevance

- Identify which shift(s) your research supports.
- Explain how your project contributes to delivering care closer to home, improving technology use, or enhancing prevention.
- Address current challenges or gaps in service delivery, access, or outcomes.

2. Stakeholder Engagement

- Identify key stakeholders (e.g. ICSs, policy makers, community providers, patients).
- Describe how you will involve them throughout the research lifecycle.

3. Driving Change

- Explain how your findings could inform practice, policy, or service redesign.
- Consider implications for workforce, digital transformation, or integrated care.