



‘Developing the best research professionals’

**Draft Report of the UKCRC Sub Committee
for Nurses in Clinical Research (Workforce)**

Consultation response form

Dates and further information:

The consultation period for this report is 12 weeks
from **Monday 8th January 2007** to **Friday 30th March 2007**

A report summarising responses to this consultation will be written and then made available to download from the UK Clinical Research Collaboration web site (<http://www.ukcrc.org>)

If you have any queries please contact Philippa Yeeles at the UKCRC
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T: 020 7670 5452

If this document is not accessible to you and you would prefer it in another format please contact Philippa Yeeles on 020 7670 5452.

Completing the form:

Please read through the document and enter your comments as prompted.

To fill in this form:

1. Please save the document onto your hard drive.
2. Use the tab key to move between questions.
3. Text boxes will automatically expand to take your response.
4. Tick boxes can be checked/unchecked using the space bar or mouse.

Please complete and return this form as a Word attachment to an email.
Send it to consultation@ukcrc.org

THE DEADLINE FOR RESPONDING TO THIS CONSULTATION IS FRIDAY 30TH MARCH 2007

RESPONDER DETAILS:

Name of responder (person): Ann McMahon

Name of organisation (if appropriate): Royal College of Nursing

Your health profession: Nursing

Nature of your response:

Organisational response

(representing the views of the named group or organisation):

Yes No

Personal response

(representing the views of one or more individuals):

Contact details in case of queries:

Telephone: 07778 776161

E-mail: ann.mcmahon@rcn.org.uk

- The Summary Consultation Report will be a public document made available on the UKCRC's web site. If you would prefer your comments only to be reported anonymously then please tick this box.
- Please tick this box if you would like to be notified by email when the Summary Consultation Report becomes available on the UKCRC web site.

Structure of the Consultation Response Form:

Questions 1 & 2 invite you to comment on the report as a whole.

Questions 3 - 13 focus on the recommendations in the report.

They are grouped into the following areas:

- A. Education and training [Q.3 – Q.8]
- B. Facilitating careers [Q.9 & Q.10]
- C. Better information on nursing researchers [Q.11 & Q.12]
- D. Implementation [Q.13]

You are asked to indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each recommendation and invited to expand on your response.

Question 14 invites members of the Allied Health Professions to consider the recommendations and comment on their potential applicability to the academic research careers of the Allied Health Professions.

Question 15 invites you to comment on any other aspects of the report that are not included elsewhere in your response.

Q.1 To what extent do you think that the report accurately reflects present and future challenges in this area?

The box will expand to fit your text:

The Royal College of Nursing welcomes this report and believes that it reflects an accurate account of the present and future challenges in this area. We particularly welcome the emphasis on increasing both nursing capacity and capability in research.

We believe however that the success of these aspirations is contingent upon considerable sustained investment coupled with the establishment of a robust research culture within nursing and midwifery. We believe this may be enabled through:

- a) the incentivisation of the NHS to support these proposals
- b) the incentivisation of the HEI sector to support these proposals
- b) implementation of the 'Modernisation of Nursing Careers' to build a solid foundation for clinical academic career development
- c) considered application of the 'Knowledge and Skills Framework' within 'Agenda for Change' to ensure research and innovation feature strongly within performance review

Q.2 To what extent do the recommendations create an appropriate and integrated pathway to develop a high quality and sustainable workforce of nurses in clinical research?

The box will expand to fit your text:

The RCN supports the overall framework which we regard as a sound and realistic approach to research capacity building in nursing. Staged career progression from initial registration through to senior clinical academic roles will develop much needed research leadership capability within nursing.

We welcome the fact that the proposals are embedded within 'Modernising Nursing Careers' and believe they will provide an attractive career opportunity for nurses with an interest and ability in research. We agree that investment should be made in developing research capacity and capability to enhance the evidence-base to underpin nursing practice. We also support the proposed opportunities for research nurses to develop their potential to progress to become independent researchers.

We seek clarity with regard to the number of awards proposed and whether those indicated are for the UK or England only. If the latter we would seek greater clarity as

to how these will be allocated throughout the UK. If the former we would request more detail from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

In addition we would welcome a stronger emphasis on the opportunities these proposals will create for experienced nursing and midwifery researchers who currently play a crucial role in supervising, mentoring and nurturing new researchers.

A. Education & training

Recommendation 1

We recommend the establishment of a coordinated range of research training opportunities endorsed by all four countries of the UK. These training opportunities should be organised at four sequential levels (Award Schemes 1 – 4), as set out in the following recommendations.

Q.3 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

We are fully supportive of the overall framework of sequential training opportunities.

However, in order to ensure appropriate senior research leadership within the nursing professions, we would like to see a more balanced distribution of the indicative numbers across the full spectrum of awards. We would also seek clarity regarding how these proposals will interface with existing research development opportunities across the UK.

A. Education & training

Recommendation 2

We welcome the opportunities for nurses presented by the UK Clinical Research Networks and clinical research facilities. We recommend that the rapidly developing training programmes emerging within this infrastructure should be seen as one of the preparatory steps towards the new training path, for those who have experience of working as research nurses and who wish to develop their skills further. It will be important that this rapidly increasing cadre of research professionals has access to clear advice and mentoring to ensure that those that wish to move on to an MRes and beyond, can do so.

Q.4 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

We fully support the recommendation that the rapidly developing training programmes within the UK Clinical Research Networks and clinical research facilities should be seen as one of the preparatory steps towards these new training paths. However these appear to be at very early stages of development and would recommend:

- they complement current provision (more co-ordination is required to reduce duplication and increase sustainability)
- the opportunities are purposefully marketed to clinical and academic nurses as well as clinical research nurses
- they create a culture and opportunities where nurses can develop and flourish as independent researchers and principle investigators as well as members of research teams.

We recognise that mentoring is crucial and the resources required to underpin mentorship schemes must be fully acknowledged.

A. Education & training

Recommendation 3

MRes or MClinRes (Award Scheme 1)

We recommend that up to 100 career clinical academic training positions be funded annually for graduate nurses. These positions will be of two-year duration (or part time equivalence), and 50% clinical and 50% academic in composition. Such posts will have a clear academic postgraduate component resting within a well defined vocational training programme. A set of Core Modules should be developed nationally which would form part of the curriculum for all Award Scheme 1 holders.

Q.5 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

Whilst we fully support this recommendation we acknowledge the considerable challenges it presents. We therefore recommend:

- 1.) In making these awards, steps should be taken to ensure there is good geographical spread across the UK and a wide range of areas of practice are included (geographical location should not be a barrier).
 - 2) Recipients should be afforded networking opportunities as well as mentorship.
 - 3) These posts must be strategically embedded within their host organisations within a clearly delineated clinical academic career structure and research time must be guaranteed.
- 2) The respective host organisations should be performance managed by the award makers and the recipients. Lessons learned should be shared across the UK and future success should be contingent upon outcomes.

A. Education & training

Recommendation 4

PhD/Professional Doctorate (Award Scheme 2)

We recommend that up to 50 early career clinical academic appointments are funded annually for a period of five years. These positions will be of three-year duration (or part time equivalence) and allow students to undertake a PhD or Professional Doctorate programme of study.

Q.6 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

We welcome the recommendation that Award scheme 2 will incorporate both both PhD and professional doctorates. However we recognise a lack of consistency in research training within professional doctorate programmes. These must be addressed as a priority to ensure those with professional doctorates are afforded the same clinical academic training and career progression opportunities as their colleagues with a traditional PhD training.

Equally, we would recommend greater flexibility in the timescales proposed to enable nurses pursuing this route to remain clinically credible and continue to develop their clinical expertise. The proposed 3 year full-time study may mitigate against this and act as a deterrent for potential applicants and sponsors.

We recommend that it should be explicit that 'early career' means early in a research career and not necessarily in nursing, so as not to deter experienced clinical nurses or educationalists.

A. Education & training

Recommendation 5

Post-doctoral Career Fellowships (Award Scheme 3)

We recommend that up to 20 Post-doctoral Career Fellowships are funded annually. These positions will be of three-year duration (or part time equivalence) to allow appointees to undertake advanced research, clinical and education roles and develop their programme leadership potential.

Q.7 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

This recommendation is particularly welcomed due to the shortage of post-doctoral opportunities in nursing and the subsequent deficit in research leadership capability. Consequently we would recommend an increase in the numbers of post-doctoral awards in the early years in order to increase research leadership capability in nursing.

We acknowledge the importance of mentorship here too and recommend that this should be coupled with political leadership development. We recommend that the resources required to underpin these activities should be acknowledged.

A. Education & training

Recommendation 6

Senior Clinical Academic Fellowships (Award Scheme 4)

We recommend that up to 10 Senior Clinical Academic Fellowships for nurses are funded annually. These positions will be of three to five year duration (or part time equivalence) and allow appointees to develop more advanced research, clinical work and education skills and develop their role as leaders.

Q.8 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

Within the nursing professions this recommendation will create new opportunities and is warmly welcomed. The organisational infrastructures required to support and sustain these new leaders, who will inspire the next generation of clinical and clinical-academic, nurses will require careful consideration

B. Facilitating careers

Recommendation 7

We recommend that career flexibility, specifically the ease of combining research and clinical practice throughout a career, must be enabled through the introduction of sessionally based contracts of employment that allow nurses to work as clinicians while also undertaking other roles as researchers and/or educators.

Q.9 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

We strongly endorse this recommendation to enable nurses to pursue a career that combines clinical, research and education roles. With the necessary organisational incentives in place, the introduction of sessionally-based contracts will facilitate this.

We would also recommend clinical mentorship schemes should be established to facilitate this recommendation in practice.

B. Facilitating careers

Recommendation 8

We recommend that in discussion with key partners, a well articulated system of mentoring is developed for nurse researchers and educators, including emerging researchers.

Q.10 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

We would recommend a well articulated and fully resourced clinical and academic mentorship scheme at all levels throughout this training pathway.

We would also recommend mentorship development opportunities are afforded to nurses in clinical academic roles as well as those who might define themselves as "research supporters" such as Executive Nurse Directors of NHS Trusts.

C. Better information on nursing researchers

Recommendation 9

We recommend that NHS Careers Advisors must be made aware of and promote the full range of career opportunities that are possible for qualified nurses. Careers advice must include opportunities for developing excellence in clinical research, education and leadership.

Q.11 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

Agree, but we would also recommend that the NHS and the HE sector is incentivised to promote and support clinical academic careers in nursing.

C. Better information on nursing research

Recommendation 10

We recommend that a single data source be developed to provide information on labour market intelligence that relates to nurses engaged in training to be researchers and educators.

Q.12 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

We agree. Current information relating to capacity, capability and expertise in nursing research and education is fragmented and inaccurate. There is a need to develop more robust systems for collating data to assist with workforce planning. Without a reliable data it will be impossible to evaluate the impact of these recommendations!

D. Implementation

Recommendation 11

We recommend that the implementation and delivery of these recommendations and their associated actions should commence without delay, with a view to achieving the recommendations outlined in this report within 5 years.

Q.13 Do you agree or disagree with the above recommendation?

Please indicate your views using the grid below:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recommendation 11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use this box to help us better understand your response

(the box will expand to fit your text):

We strongly agree that there should be no delay in implementing these recommendations.

We would recommend membership of the implementation group to include nurses at various levels, from a range of perspectives including NHS, CRF, HEI, from all 4 UK countries as well as the Professional Associations.

We would also recommend that urgent attention is given to the importance of incentivising the NHS and the HE sector to respond favourably to these proposals.

Q.14 'Developing the best research professionals' focuses on the training needs of the nursing workforce in clinical research. However, the UKCRC also wishes to consider to what extent the recommendations in the report could be considered a blueprint that could also be applied to the research workforce of the Allied Health Professions?

If you are a member of the Allied Health Professions, it would be helpful if you could indicate:

- a) Which of the recommendations could be suitable for your profession?**
- b) Are there any issues specific to your profession that would not be addressed through these recommendations?**

The box will expand to fit your text:

N/A

Q.15 Any further comments?

Please use this box to provide any other comments you wish to make: