

Allocation of Research Supporting Programmed Activity (SPA) time for NHS consultants at North Bristol NHS Trust

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This paper proposes the principles by which consultants may be awarded part, one or more SPAs or other sessions for research.

2. Background

- 2.1. As part of all consultant job planning, research active NBT consultants will need to identify their research activity when they agree their job plans with their Clinical Director and identify Research SPAs explicitly in their job plan.

3. Principles

- 3.1. Research activity should be explicitly recognised in consultant job plans.
- 3.2. Activity levels must be evidenced based.
- 3.3. The award of a research SPA will be discussed individually during directorate job planning with the relevant clinical director.
- 3.4. The Director of Research (or deputy) will support the directorate/consultant to interpret appropriately the evidence for research activity, where necessary.

4. Evidence required to justify the award of part, one or more research SPAs

- 4.1. Recruitment activity into National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) portfolio research as Chief or Principal Investigator:
 - a) The evidence for this will be provided annually by R&I to the directorates. The metric used will include the numbers of patients recruited into NIHR portfolio trials weighted by the complexity of the study. Information on any clinical staff (e.g. research nurses) already attributed to this activity will be provided. A threshold will be set each year above which the award of a research 0.5 SPA is recommended. Patient recruitment into fully costed commercial studies is excluded from these calculations (see paragraph 4.4 below).
 - b) Usually, consultants will only be able to attribute a maximum of one SPA for their NIHR portfolio recruitment activities and the standard allocation will be 0.5 SPA.
 - c) The award of a research SPA is recommended for one financial year only and does not imply a permanent change to a job plan. If recruitment in subsequent years ceases or drops below the threshold for recommendation of an award, then the research SPA may be removed by the directorate.
- 4.2. Research SPA(s) to develop an NIHR grant application:
 - a) Consultant time may be agreed as part of Research Capability Funding. An application for Research Capability Funding must be made to R&I using the appropriate application form.
 - b) This must be explicitly agreed by the directorate before the funding is released and must appear in the job plan for the period agreed. It is expected this will convert into one or more research SPAs if the grant application is successful (see paragraph 4.3 below).

- 4.3. Research SPA(s) funded by a successful grant application:
- a) Directorates will be made aware of any grant applications that may have back-fill implications at the time of submission.
 - b) The evidence for the award of one or more research SPAs will be from the successful grant award.
 - c) After discussion with the directorate, the funding from the grant for the research SPA(s) may be used to buy out clinical time and/or may be paid as an APA.
 - d) The SPA funded by a successful grant application does not imply a permanent change to a job plan. When the grant and funding ends, the research SPA may be removed by the directorate.
 - e) Consultants with research SPAs funded by a grant will NOT normally also be eligible for a recruitment SPA for patients recruited into the study for which the grant was awarded.

4.4. Commercial research activity:

- a) All commercial trials at NBT are costed using the NIHR full-cost recovery template.
- b) Consultants delivering sufficient activity under paragraph 7.6.4 of the Commercial Research Policy to fund a full/part SPA of their time can be recommended to the directorate for a full/part research SPA. The evidence for this will be provided by R&I to the directorates and will be discussed during the job planning process.
- c) The SPA will be for one year only and must be funded from the commercial income received under paragraph 7.6.4 of the Commercial Research Policy.

4.5. Other research activity:

Consultants who do not meet any of the criteria (paragraphs 4.1 - 4.4 above) for the award of a research SPA may still be considered or recommended for a research SPA if they meet a sufficient number of the following criteria (see attached scoring template). Evidence of the activities and time commitment should be provided to a sub-group of NBT Research and Innovation Group for review, who will recommend a research SPA where appropriate:

- a) Chief or principal applicant on NIHR or partner funded research grants where money for one or more research SPAs is NOT explicitly funded by the grant. The consultant should be able to evidence the source of the grant, that it was independently peer-reviewed, the total amount and length of the award and that they are the chief or principal applicant as opposed to a co-applicant or collaborator. Of note, internally awarded NBT funds (e.g. NBT Research Fund and RCF Schemes) will NOT usually be considered.
- b) Supervision of PhD or MD students. The consultant should be able to evidence whether they are the sole, principal or co-supervisor, and the source of funding for the PhD or MD programme of study.
- c) A significant number of research publications over the last five years where the consultant is first, last or communicating author.
- d) Evidence of measures of national or international research esteem that include: keynote speaker invitations to major conferences; editorship of journals; membership of significant national or international policy committees or major fund awarding panels.

Appendix 1: Evidence required to be considered for Research SPA time

If an individual scores 6 or more on the template below then the evidence provided will be considered by a sub-committee of NBT Research Committee. The award of a research SPA/session may then be recommended to the Directorate.

NOTE: This evidence is not required if a research SPA/session can be justified by other criteria (4.1-4.4above)

1.	Publications																
Attach a list of your publications over the last 3 years, including title, all authors, journal, page numbers and year Only include publications where you are the first, last or communicating author		<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Score</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>0-3</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4-6</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>6</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> </table>	Score		0-3	1	4-6	2	>6	3							
Score																	
0-3	1																
4-6	2																
>6	3																
2.	Current/active grants																
Only include current/active grants where costs for one or more research SPAs/sessions are not explicitly funded by the grant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether you are PI/CI or co-applicant • title • date awarded and duration • awarding body • amount [and amount that comes to NBT if multi-centre] • NOTE: The following are not eligible:- • commercial/pharma “unrestricted” grants that are not awarded in open competition and/or are not peer-reviewed • Pump-priming grants e.g. from NBT Small Grant Scheme/FSF/UoB • Grants on which you are only a collaborator 		<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Score</td> <td>Income to NBT (not total grant value)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>15-50K</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>50-100K</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>100-200k</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>>200k</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4</td> </tr> </table>	Score	Income to NBT (not total grant value)			15-50K	1		50-100K	2		100-200k	3		>200k	4
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	15-50K	1															
	50-100K	2															
	100-200k	3															
	>200k	4															
3.	Supervision of higher degree students																
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List how many PhD/MD students you are currently supervising • List for each whether you are the sole-principal-or co-supervisor • Source of funds for each studentships 		<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Score</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-2</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 or more</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> </table>	Score		1-2	1	3 or more	2									
Score																	
1-2	1																
3 or more	2																
4.	Measures of Esteem																
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List all keynote speaker invitations at national or international conferences over the last 3 years • Editorship of learned journals over the last 3 years • Membership of significant national or international policy committees over the last 3 years • Membership of major fund awarding panels over the last 3 years 		<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Score</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>None</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sufficient evidence of esteem</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> </table>	Score		None	0	Sufficient evidence of esteem	1									
Score																	
None	0																
Sufficient evidence of esteem	1																

NB: The evidence above will be considered alongside the planned research aims for the financial year the award will cover. All evidence is considered on a case by case basis and part or whole SPA may be recommended.