

To:
Medical Directors
HR Directors
Heads of Research Governance and Governance Officers
Lead Healthcare Scientists

**National School of
Healthcare
Science**
St Chads Court
213 Hagley Road
Birmingham
B16 9RG



July 2020

Dear Colleague,

RE: Research Sponsorship of Healthcare Science Trainees on STP and HSST Programmes during COVID Pandemic

The National School of Healthcare Science in Health Education England (HEE) was established to support the implementation and delivery of the healthcare science education and training programmes across the UK. These pioneering new educational programmes are training scientific staff in the NHS to work at the highest level in healthcare, understanding and advising on the most recent advances in technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Genomics and Bioinformatics as well as radiotherapy, proton beam and many physiological sciences. These scientists are key to most innovations in patient care, and to have the flexibility and adaptability to work across patient pathways enabling efficient and high-quality care.

During the COVID-19 pandemic the role of this scientific workforce has been highlighted more so than ever before. Healthcare scientists have been responsible for the commissioning and maintenance of new equipment at a rapid pace, they have been central within scaling up essential clinics and wards, including critical care, cardiac and respiratory. In addition, within pathology they have rapidly evaluated and introduced COVID testing platforms and are providing high throughput testing at this time.

The Scientific Training Programme (STP) and Higher Scientific Specialist Training (HSST) programmes supply trainees to Trusts around the country. It is vital that R & D departments in Trusts are aware that research and innovation projects that will be carried out in Trust Departments **are integral** to these programmes. These trainees in Trusts are financially supported by HEE in Trusts and their research is important for future proofing many innovations and developments in the NHS and in Trusts.

The HSST programme will deliver very senior scientists to the system who are at Consultant level and whose training and seniority are recognised by the “Academy of Medical Royal Colleges” and NIHR. In addition, their research is supported and encouraged by Professional

Bodies, Royal Colleges, and Universities, national and regional education and commissioning leads, as well as NHS Trusts they are working in.

These scientists are in your Trusts now and they will require the experience and skills of the research and development teams in supporting their research and innovation plans which are an integral part of their training. Their projects will require Trust sponsorship.

HEE and the School would be grateful if you could ensure that the learners receive the support, advice and provide sponsorship to these scientists should it be required.

Please note that HSST and STP research projects are not always eligible for NIHR CRN Portfolio adoption, so R&D support should not be predicated on this.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at the school if you have any queries.

Thank you in advance

Yours Sincerely



Professor Berne Ferry

Head of the National School of Healthcare Science