Ten Years on: Adapting and evolving to new challenges in developing tomorrow’s health research leaders
Background

- NIHR Strategic Review of Training:
  - Evidence based
  - Identifies new and evolving challenges through consultation
  - Sets out a vision and recommendations for the next 10-15 years
- Trainees are the next generation of health researchers
- 5,000 trainees across NIHR
Key Findings

Mapping of Trainees

- Wide variation in funding, selection and ongoing support
- Confusion about terminology such as the terms ‘fellowship’ and ‘trainee’

Feedback from consultation

- Good breadth and support for diversity
- Engagement and support for trainees
- Simplification and increased flexibility
- Need to address skill shortages and future challenges
- Support for under-represented groups
Application and success rates

- Success rates are equal for both sexes but as personal awards become more senior men become dominant

Portfolio

- Medical trainees are by far the largest group (40%), AHPs are well represented compared to nursing and midwifery but wide variation between the AHP groups
- Pharmacy is under represented
- NIHR Research Professors are predominantly male, medical and based in London.
Key Findings

Barriers and Facilitators to Career Progression

• Next destination data for majority of IAT award holders is carrying straight on with a clinical academic track; for ICA progression from the Masters level to the doctoral level is disappointing, which improves with CDRF

• Common barriers to a clinical academic career included: organisational support, balancing clinical and academic commitments, personal, and financial areas.
Vision

A modern NIHR academic faculty has/is:

- The key skills to meet future challenges

- Balanced in terms of discipline:
  - clinical profession
  - clinical discipline
  - non-clinical professions
  - research methods

- Balanced in terms of demographics
  - geography
  - gender
Vision

A modern NIHR academic faculty has/is:

• Attractive, intelligent and genuinely flexible career opportunities

• Attracting outstanding individuals

• High quality training and support

• Clear routes for progression

• Working in partnership to benefit the health and care system.
Recommendations

Structure and Organisation:

- NIHR training activity should be coordinated under a new entity called the **NIHR Academy** to replace the NIHR TCC and the term ‘NIHR Trainee’ should be replaced with **NIHR Academy Members**. Research staff supported by the NIHR to contribute to studies will become **Associates** of the NIHR Academy.

- TCC will become the **Executive** for the NIHR Academy and the Dean for NIHR Trainees will become the **Dean for the NIHR Academy**.

- Bring SIs into the NIHR Academy as senior figures.
Recommendations

People and Careers:

• **Personal awards** will have three tiers: pre doc, doctoral and post doc
  – Further details of this due very soon.
  – Opportunities for partnership with industry and charities.

• Response mode for the majority of awards, but will also support strategic themes
  – eg leadership, entrepreneurship, economics and bioinformatics

• Allow NIHR CL posts (including badged/match-funded) to span CCT.
People and Careers:

- For **IAT**, modify the balance between the allocation of IAT posts via “formula” and “competition” which will be aligned to NIHR Strategic Priorities
- Develop **IAT “research themes”** linked to complex challenges rather than speciality
- Provide opportunities for working with/in or meeting the needs of **the life science industry** through partnership within the new Personal Awards Programme and the research themes of IAT.
People and Careers:

- Develop a small number of networking structures – ‘NIHR Incubators’ to support capacity building and multidisciplinary career development in priority areas where critical mass is low.
- Provide targeted ‘seed-corn’ funding.
- Explore a bridging scheme for Members who fall between schemes.
Recommendations

Further recommendations

• A cross-funder review group led by HEE and NIHR be established to address career pathways for academic non-medical clinicians

• A working group be convened to draft a strategy for developing academic skills and realising research opportunity for clinicians

• Establish a cross-funder approach to address gender issues which build on evidence and understanding through a systematic review.
Next steps

- Implementation Groups have been established:
  - Stakeholder representation including HEE and other funders
  - New structure being established inc Governance
  - Improved data collection working across NIHR and outside
  - Implementation plans will be published on the NIHR website

- New programmes will be launched in sequence with managed transition from legacy training programmes
  - New Fellowships Programme – announcement coming soon
Further information

- Strategic Review of Training Report available online
- Implementation plans will be published here

https://www.nihr.ac.uk/srot