

NIHR ARC Kent Surrey and Sussex Knowledge Mobilisation Fellowship

Information Summary

The NIHR Applied Research Collaboration Kent, Surrey and Sussex (ARC KSS) has been awarded funding by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to build knowledge mobilisation capacity and capability within the health and social care sector across Kent and Medway, Surrey and Sussex.

The initiative aims to reduce the time it takes to roll out effective interventions, policies and models of care to address high-priority national and regional challenges and maximise the impact of research.

Key priorities for the initiative include:

- supporting proven strategies, interventions and models of care to be implemented into practice, responding to high-priority areas from national policymakers, the health and care systems and patients and the public
- proactively engaging key stakeholders
- building a knowledge mobilisation community to share learning, and
- evaluating knowledge mobilisation activities to evidence what works, for whom and why.

To support this initiative, the ARCs will appoint knowledge mobilisation “fellows” in local systems. These fellows will form a bridge between the ARCs and the health and care organisations they work with. They will be supported to enhance their skills so they can capture and communicate the needs of local decision makers. They will work with the ARCs to identify existing evidence-based treatments and models of care, and support them into practice, working with practitioners and service users.

What is Knowledge Mobilisation?

Knowledge mobilisation is an iterative, long-term, and two-way process to create the conditions for enabling the right people to use the right information at the right time. Through applying latest evidence and co-creating solutions with stakeholders, knowledge mobilisation ensures that innovations are effectively applied. It involves translating complex data into practical tools to improve health outcomes and bridge the gap between research and practice. It supports the integration of evidence into clinical decision-making and healthcare delivery.

For more information on knowledge mobilisation see: [Knowledge mobilisation | Knowledge and Library Services \(hee.nhs.uk\)](#) and [Plan knowledge mobilisation | NIHR](#).

What is the NIHR ARC KSS Knowledge Mobilisation Fellowship?

The ARC KSS will work in partnership with the Health Innovation Network Kent Surrey Sussex (HIKSS) to support Knowledge Mobilisation Fellowships. The Fellowships support the translation of evidence into practice. Fellows will receive funding and mentorship to implement quality improvement (QI) or service transformation projects in local organisations and/or healthcare systems. QI is about making health and care safe, effective, patient-centred, timely, efficient, and equitable. It is about giving the people closest to problems affecting care delivery

and care quality the time, permission, skills, and resources they need to solve them¹. This fellowship is designed to bridge the gap between research and practice and promote innovations that improve healthcare delivery, as well as patient experiences and outcomes.

What will the fellowship entail?

Fellows will lead quality improvement or service transformation knowledge mobilisation projects within organisations and/or an Integrated Care System (ICS) within Kent, Surrey and Sussex (KSS), applying the latest evidence to practice. They will collaborate with other fellows and stakeholders to drive change and promote innovation both within KSS and via the national knowledge mobilisation community of NIHR ARC Knowledge Mobilisation Fellows. HIKSS and the University of Kent will support fellows with project planning and development, relationship-building, and knowledge sharing across the region. They will further work with fellows to apply knowledge mobilisation frameworks and models as well as support them in the evaluation of their projects. There will be opportunities to link in with existing communities of practice which provide a valuable means for sharing knowledge and best practice amongst individuals and organisations with a shared interest, and facilitate knowledge mobilisation, capacity building and strengthen the translation of research into practice.

What is expected of Knowledge Mobilisation Fellows?

Fellows will be funded to be released for up to 2 days per week, for up to 18 months, to lead on a Quality Improvement (QI)/service transformation knowledge mobilisation project/s in response to a local health and/or care priority. Examples of local strategic priorities may include:

- Data informed quality improvement approaches
- Innovative workforce models
- Improved integration and pathways. For example, implementation of improved Discharge to Assess pathways
- New innovative models of care delivery
- Implementation of evidence-based models of complex care pathways for integrated neighbourhood teams
- Implementation of community mental health transformation programmes
- Implementation of evidence-based practices that address clinical variation
- Implementation of sustainable practices
- Approaches that address healthcare inequalities which may include alignment with the Core20PLUS5 adults and children and young people priorities

Where possible, projects should align to the Health Innovation KSS and [ARC KSS themes](#):

- Social Care
- Starting Well (Children and Young People's mental health)
- Living Well with Dementia
- Primary and Community Health Services
- Public Health

¹ Quality improvement made simple. The Health Foundation; 2021 (www.health.org.uk/publications/quality-improvement-made-simple).

- Digital Innovation
- Economics of Health and Social Care
- Co-Production
- Cross-cutting themes of population health and health inequalities

Knowledge Mobilisation Fellows will identify evidence from a range of sources, including policies, guidelines, research, and patient feedback to inform quality improvement and service transformation. Where possible, they will be embedded within QI/ transformation teams to implement evidence into practice. They will engage in networking across the KSS region and nationally, act as "knowledge brokers," and champion the spread of best practice within and across organisations. The fellowship offers mentorship, opportunities to work with QI/ transformation teams, and aims to build capacity for embedding research into health and care services.

Fellows will be expected to engage with the national NIHR ARC Knowledge Mobilisation Fellowship community across England, which will entail virtual and face to face sessions, conferences and other development opportunities.

Who can apply?

The fellowship is open to QI and service transformation teams, and anyone embedding research-based change within a service provider organisation within Kent, Surrey and/or Sussex and able to conduct a QI or transformation project. Applicants should be from within ICBs and providers of health (including public health) or social care. Applicants must be health/care organisations [from ARC KSS member organisations](#) or a health/care organisation that could be added to the ARC KSS' membership*

What will be funded?

The fellowship provides an estimated cost of up to £44,500 over 18 months per fellow, covering salary backfill (expected to be no more than 0.4 fte for 18 months) and project costs:

- Salary costs (including NI and superannuation) to a maximum of £40,650 for up to 18 months.
- Up to £3,850 towards project and training/development costs (e.g., travel, training fees, consumables, equipment, Public and Community Involvement costs).

Host organisations and/or any collaborators based at different [ARC KSS member organisations](#) will need to contribute at least £2,500 in co-funding.

Co-funding commitments for the ARC KSS can be financial or in kind to fund applied health and care research and/or implementation/impact activity within communities and/or beyond. Co-funding demonstrates that health and care organisations, universities, third sector and industry are committed to getting the most useful research applied in frontline settings. In addition, it is important that they see a return on their investment too.

Overheads, in-directs and estates cannot be counted as co-funding. Co-funding should be costed in the application. See Guidance on co-funding [here](#).

What are the timelines?

8 fellows will be recruited from across KSS on a phased basis as follows:

- **Round 1:**
 - 2 - 3 fellows from Kent & Medway
 - Deadline for applications is 31st January 2025, 5pm
 - Fellowship commences April 2025 and ends September 2026
 - Hosted at K&M ICB or KMPT
- **Round 2:**
 - 2 - 3 fellows from Sussex
 - Deadline for applications is 25 April 2025, 5pm
 - Fellowship commences August 2025 and ends January 2027
 - Host organisations to be confirmed.
- **Round 3:**
 - 2 -3 fellows from Surrey
 - Deadline for applications is 17 October 2025, 5pm
 - Fellowship commences January 2026 and ends June 2027
 - Host organisations to be confirmed.

Amongst the 8 fellows to be recruited in total, there are two themed fellowships available - 1 fellow exploring rural and/or coastal inequalities and 1 fellow exploring health inequalities. These fellows can be from any system, working across 1 or multiple systems and from any county in Kent and Medway, Surrey and Sussex.

Projects will be expected to provide regular reports to our Project Management Office (PMO), for project plan development and progress reports.

The total duration of the award will be no longer than 18 months.

How to Apply

Please submit an [application](#) and CV to arkkssacademy@kent.ac.uk. Link to guidance [here](#).

Please contact Beth Flowers at arkkssacademy@kent.ac.uk with queries.

There will be a webinar for the call on 7th January 2025 11:00 – 12:00, with a Q&A session. Please register to attend [here](#).

What happens after I have submitted an application?

Applications will be reviewed by a panel including patient and public representatives. Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Call remit and alignment to ARC KSS and Health Innovation KSS themes and local strategic priorities and needs
- Project activity: How appropriate is the proposed project activities and plan?
- Impact, Implementation and Dissemination:
- Public and Community Involvement and Engagement (PCIE): Are there clear plans for PCIE activity within the proposed work?
- Personal research/knowledge mobilisation strengths and opportunities for personal development

Examples of knowledge mobilisation projects:

- [BeeFree](#) – embedding the latest evidence to apply a multi-faceted approach to improve the care and mental health of patients with musculoskeletal disease.
- [STarTBack](#) – using a stratified care approach to identify appropriate interventions to patients based on their prognosis and risk of poor clinical outcomes.

** A full list of current member organisations can be found on our website [here](#). A member organisation is one that forms the NIHR ARC KSS as part of the collaboration with the host organisation and, as such, has made co-funding commitments. If your organisation is not currently a member of ARC KSS, your organisation can apply to be one at the point of contracting, if your application is successful. Organisations that are eligible for membership are (Universities/HEIs) or health or social care organisations including local voluntary sector organisations and care providers, whether private or not-for-profit delivering health and/or care services (including public health) in Kent, Surrey and Sussex*