

*King's Patient Safety
and Service Quality
Research Centre*



NHS

*National Institute for
Health Research*

King's Patient Safety and Service Quality Research Centre

Vision and Strategic Plan 2007-2012

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1 Introduction

King's Patient Safety and Service Quality Research Centre (King's PSSQRC) is one of only two national centres in the UK funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to conduct research with the aim of improving patient safety and service quality in the National Health Service (NHS).

This document sets out the overall vision for the Centre and its strategic aims and objectives.

Best Research for Best Health¹ set out a 5-year research and development strategy for the NHS in England. This strategy included plans to create several research centres of international standing within England's leading NHS/University partnerships. Following a rigorous competitive tendering process, including international review, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (KCH) and King's College London (KCL) were awarded funding over 5 years with effect from April 2007 to establish King's PSSQRC. King's PSSQRC is augmented by two other NIHR centres to emerge from the same tendering process involving KCL: a Comprehensive Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) partnering KCL with Guys and St Thomas's NHS Foundation Trust (GSTT) and KCH, and; a Specialist Mental Health Research Centre, partnering KCL/loP with the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM).

2 External & Internal Context

2.1 The NHS Environment

Both safety and quality are becoming increasingly high profile in today's NHS. Lord Darzi's review of the NHS sets out a vision for an NHS which; "... has quality of care at its heart – quality defined as clinically effective, personal and safe".²

Research is critical to the agenda of improving safety and quality of care in the NHS. The Government's commitment to health care research has recently been re-emphasised, being mentioned on the first page of the draft NHS Constitution which was published for consultation on 30 June 2008. The commitment features in one of seven key principles, namely, the principle that the NHS aspires to high standards of excellence and professionalism. As the NIHR has commented, "research is a core part of the NHS because it enables the NHS to improve the current and future health of the population"³.

¹ DH (2006): Best Research for Best Health

² Darzi, A (May 2008): High Quality Care For All – NHS Next Stage Review Final Report - Summary, p3

³ DH 07/07/08 <http://www.nihr.ac.uk/>

2.2 Local Context

KCH is a major teaching hospital in London with over 6,000 staff, providing comprehensive local services (60-70% of activity) and specialist services to South East London, Kent and beyond. KCH has a reputation for innovation, and hosts an active programme of clinical research led by clinicians and researchers eminent in their fields. Research is also emphasised within the Trust's 'First Choice' change management initiative, recently re-profiled and focused according to the dual key criteria of patient experience and safety⁴. There are also close research links between KCH and other hospitals, particularly GSTT and SLAM: a Joint Clinical Trials Office has been established to harmonise commercial R&D procedures across these organisations, aimed at reducing bureaucracy and improving research management. All three organisations, together with King's College London, have begun working together to create an Academic Health Sciences Centre (AHSC). This builds on a strong partnership which brings together an AHSC which is both medically focused and integrated with social sciences and humanities.

KCL is a prestigious multi-faculty university with 19,300 students. It is one of the two founding colleges of the University of London and has a worldwide reputation for research and teaching. It is in the top group of universities, and in 2008 was ranked 6th in the UK and 24th worldwide, with an annual income of approximately £400 million, including research earnings of approximately £110 million. KCL is a member of the Russell Group, a coalition of the UK's major research-based universities. A strategic review of its research profile placed particular emphasis on KCL's ability to work across traditional academic boundaries and exploit the practical applications of research. 24 of the College's subject-areas have been awarded the highest rating of 5* and 5 for research quality, demonstrating excellence at an international level. King's PSSQRC is supported by cross-School and Research Division collaboration covering social and health sciences.

There is a long-established partnership between KCH and KCL, which provides an excellent environment for a national research centre for NHS patient safety and service quality. We have assembled a team able to establish an innovative, multi-disciplinary centre, drawing on the broad range of expertise within the partnership, and from our strategic partners, both within and outside the health sector.

2.3 Research Focus

A considerable volume of research work has been conducted (both in the UK and internationally), on safety and quality in health care. The majority of this work, particularly with regard to safety, has focused on clinical aspects of patient safety rather than on the organisational context within which patient safety is enacted. A primary aim of the Centre is therefore to focus on the relatively neglected area of organisational aspects of safety and quality. Secondly, we aim to draw on a range of social science disciplines (e.g. organisational behaviour, social policy, sociology, anthropology) to examine these factors. Thirdly, we aim to draw on expertise from outside as well as from within the health sector (e.g. defence analysis, risk management, human resource management) to review evidence and knowledge on safety and quality and develop new approaches to improve patient safety and service quality. Within the context of these aims, we view patient safety as a sub-set of the wider topic of service quality.

⁴ KCH (April 2008) Refocusing First Choice: preparing to launch the programme

3 Mission Statement

The Centre's overarching mission is to:

Create an internationally recognised Centre that will draw on research from a range of disciplines and sectors to develop and test novel interventions to improve patient safety and quality that focus, distinctively, on the role of organisational context and the challenges of implementing effective change.

4 Research Strategy

4.1 An organisational focus on safety and quality

A key strategic aim of the Centre is to develop a body of research on patient safety and service quality that focuses distinctively on factors at the organisational level that are likely to have a significant impact on patient outcomes. In practice, this is likely to require research and interventions that can accommodate different levels of analysis to recognise the range of influences on patient outcomes.

4.2 A multidisciplinary approach

A second distinctive strategic aim is to apply expertise from a range of academic disciplines available within the partnership. This expertise will be used to address issues at the various levels of analysis. For example, organisational behaviour, which will be used to study workforce issues, can be applied both at the service and organisational levels. A key element of our research strategy is to include expertise (for example, in the field of risk) from outside the health sector, including from defence studies, food safety, and the nuclear industry, and to apply this to healthcare. Staff employed at the Centre come from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, including: anthropology, health services, human factors psychology, human resources, nursing and midwifery, organisational psychology, sociology, political science and public policy.

4.3 Knowledge integration for knowledge translation

A third strategic aim for the Centre is to use the inter-disciplinary analysis to develop, introduce and carefully evaluate novel interventions to improve patient safety and service quality and, where these are successful, disseminate findings to the wider health community. Through this process, we will highlight two cross-cutting themes. The first concerns the development of methodologies for the implementation and evaluation of changes designed to improve patient safety and service quality; the second concerns knowledge transfer and the translation of research into practice.

4.4 Distinctive programmes of research

A fourth strategic aim is to conduct successful research within four broad themes. There are four separate programmes of research within the Centre, each led by a senior KCL academic, staffed by dedicated research staff, and linked to KCH via the involvement of an executive director in each programme group.

- **The Innovations programme** looks at both the translation of novel technologies into health care and innovative ways of organising services in relation to safety and quality of care.
- **The Organisational Governance programme** examines the systems NHS Trusts use to ensure provision of safe, high quality care.
- **The Risk programme** looks at how different health care professions handle risk, and how is it calculated and managed by staff and patients.
- **The Workforce programme** explores the consequences of the ways in which the workforce is managed for patient safety and service quality.

4.5 Capacity building, stakeholder involvement and communication

A fifth strategic aim is to build capacity for, and involvement in research related to patient safety and service quality by developing scope for staff within the NHS to participate in research activity through a process of secondment; by ensuring effective practices to involve stakeholders such as patients, representatives of the local and hospital communities and early career researchers; and by effective communication to the stakeholder communities as well as to national and international academic, policy and practitioner audiences.

5 Strategic Goals to 2012

The funding of the Centre is at present fixed term, ending in March 2012. The success of the Centre may be measured in a number of ways. Here we set out our long-term strategic goals, against which we will evaluate our performance.

Goals:

1. Develop interventions that demonstrate improved patient safety and service quality
2. Develop an international profile in patient safety and service quality research through high quality research outputs
3. Develop, and demonstrate the utility of, appropriate measures and/or approaches for evaluation of organisational research on patient safety and

service quality, contributing to specialist knowledge in the fields of organisational methodology and patient safety and service quality

4. Contribute to research knowledge and capability in the areas of patient safety and service quality through education and training of Centre staff, KCH staff, staff within other local health care partners, and public and patients involved as co-researchers
5. Establish demonstrable public and patient involvement (PPI) in the work of the Centre, including both Centre governance and research programmes
6. Develop effective knowledge translation and dissemination of the Centre's patient safety and service quality research findings to raise awareness of quality and safety issues and inform practitioners, policy-makers and opinion formers, other researchers and academics, and the wider community
7. Secure additional external funding to a minimum total value of 10% of the main NIHR funding
8. Establish a successful, internationally recognised, centre of excellence for applied organisational research in patient safety and service quality, which NIHR supports for ongoing funding (i.e. renewal) beyond 2012
9. Ensure high quality governance of the Centre and effective use of resources

The following sections give more detail about how we intend to meet these goals, including measurable objectives.

6 Implementation of Strategic Goals

The Centre will implement the research approach outlined above by working towards the achievement of nine strategic goals:

6.1 Goal 1

Goal 1: Develop and apply interventions to improve patient safety and service quality.

- Each programme to be involved in the development and application of up to five interventions up to 2012.
- Each programme to be identified with two wider disseminations beyond the research setting up to 2012.

6.2 Goal 2

Goal 2: Develop an international profile in patient safety and service quality research through high quality research outputs.

- Publication of journal articles in appropriate high quality peer reviewed journals.

- Presentations across the Centre at international conferences in the field of patient safety and service quality.
- Presentations across the Centre international conferences in the field of organisation and management.

6.3 Goal 3

Goal 3: Develop, and demonstrate the utility of, appropriate measures and/or approaches for evaluation of organisational research on patient safety and service quality, contributing to specialist knowledge in the fields of organisational methodology and patient safety and service quality.

- Each programme will develop (or adapt), test and validate new measures and/or approaches relevant to patient safety and service quality.
- Each programme will develop at least one measure and/or approach that is widely adopted at national level or can be shown to influence policy and practice at the national level.

6.4 Goal 4

Goal 4: Contribute to research knowledge and capability in the areas of patient safety and service quality through education and training of Centre staff, KCH staff, staff within our other local health care partners, and public and patients involved as co-researchers.

- Produce higher degree registrations and higher degrees completed in the field of organisational and patient safety and service quality research.
- Increase research capacity among NHS staff (KCH and local health care partners) through Centre-funded research secondments.
- Develop a range of tailored training support for Centre staff and students, utilising both in-house (KCL and KCH) and local partner resources (e.g. GSTT BRC training).
- Organise a bi-monthly colloquium for Centre staff and others locally engaged in patient safety research to share and develop work in progress.

6.5 Goal 5

Goal 5: Establish demonstrable public and patient involvement (PPI) in the work of the Centre, including both Centre governance and research programmes.

- Where possible involve a PPI representative in the Centre Steering Group.
- PPI representatives to be involved in each of the four research programmes, meeting at least four times per annum,

6.6 Goal 6

Goal 6: Implement a communication strategy that ensures effective knowledge translation and dissemination of the Centre's research findings to raise awareness of quality and safety issues and inform practitioners, policy-makers and opinion formers, other researchers and academics, patients and the wider community.

- Establish a local Safety and Quality Forum, open to local academics, health care staff, patients and public, for debate and sharing of knowledge.
- Develop stakeholder links with local health care partners, including members of the AHSC and local PCTs, via joint and multi-centre research
- Organise national events including an annual lecture with a speaker of international renown and at least two seminars per annum with national speakers and an invited audience.
- Publicise research findings and resulting practical applications/interventions via press releases or briefing documents.
- Establish a Scientific Advisory Board, comprising international membership to oversee the academic quality of the Centre's work, and build a forum for international exchange, meeting a minimum of once per annum.
- Develop at least one project per programme jointly with other national and international partners.
- Produce an annual report setting out the achievements of the Centre.

6.7 Goals 7, 8, & 9

Goal 7: Secure additional external funding to a minimum total value of 10% of the main NIHR funding.

Goal 8: Establish a successful, internationally recognised, centre of excellence for applied organisational research in patient safety and service quality, which NIHR supports for ongoing funding i.e. renewal beyond 2012.

Goal 9: Implement the Centre's organisational structure (see appendix 1), management structures and groups, and relationships between these, to ensure rigorous oversight of Centre governance, including academic quality.

- Ensure that all scheduled meetings occur, that key stakeholders are involved in these meetings and that the processes associated with the meetings and associated activities are annually reviewed and approved by the Centre Steering Group and Scientific Advisory Board.

7 Appendix 1: Centre Governance and Structure

PSSQ RESEARCH CENTRE: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

