

NIHR Regional Research Delivery Networks

Job Description & Personal Specification for RRDN Director

Version P1, 15 Aug 2023

JOB DETAILS

Job Title:	NIHR Regional Research Delivery Network (RRDN) Director
Grade:	NHS Agenda for Change Band 9 (subject to consistency checking)
Hours:	0.8 WTE minimum, 1.0 WTE maximum
Accountable to:	NIHR Research Delivery Network Coordinating Centre (RDNCC) Lead
Reports to:	RRDN Host Organisation Lead
Direct Reports:	RRDN Strategic Development Director RRDN Operations Director RRDN Health and Care Research Director (x2)
Location:	Royal Devon University Hospital, Wonford, Exeter, EX2 5DW

JOB PURPOSE

The RRDN Director is the senior officer responsible for the overall leadership, delivery and management of the RRDN. They will oversee and drive the work of the RRDN Strategic Development, Operations and Health & Care Research Directors.

The purpose of the RDN is to support the effective and efficient initiation and delivery of funded research across the health and care system in England for the benefit of patients, the health and care system and the economy. The RRDN Director will be accountable for enabling this regionally by providing efficient, effective and nationally consistent supporting services and activities in line with the requirements of the RRDN Host Organisation Contract with the Department of Health and Social Care, with particular emphasis on addressing the needs of the life sciences industry (across both commercial contract and commercial collaborative research).

Supported by the RRDN senior team, the RRDN Director will also be accountable for devising and delivering a 3-year RRDN Strategic Implementation Plan in line with the RDN national strategic aims. The RRDN Strategic Implementation Plan will be developed in conjunction with regional partners, including NHSE regional offices, ICSs, AHSNs, patients and the public, and should;

- include measures to tackle health inequalities, and;
- deliver the objectives of the NIHR Best Research for Best Health and Saving and Improving Lives: The Future of UK Clinical Research Delivery March 2021, Lord O'Shaughnessy's review and any subsequent national reviews and policy directives

The RRDN Director will be a member of the RDN Board which also includes representatives from the RDN Coordinating Centre and Department of Health and Social Care. As a RDN Board member the RRDN Director will be a senior leader and ambassador for RDN, contributing to the ongoing development of the vision, direction and strategic aims for the RDN at national level and translating this into deliverable priorities regionally. Alongside their regional responsibilities the RRDN Director will co-develop and lead national programmes of work on behalf of the RDN Board.

The RRDN Director will be accountable for the financial management of the allocated RRDN funding (£35 million per annum, per RRDN region on average), ensuring that the funding is used appropriately and effectively.

ROLE OF RDN

From October 2024, the current NIHR Clinical Research Network will be changing to become the NIHR Research Delivery Network (RDN). The RDN will continue to support the effective and efficient initiation and delivery of funded research across the health and care system in England for the benefit of patients, the health and care system and the economy, with a name that better reflects the scope and purpose of the network to support:

- Clinical trials and other well-designed health and social care research studies (including studies that are delivered outside of an NHS setting);
- Public health studies that require the recruitment of individuals within an NHS setting (that is, acute, ambulance, mental health, community or primary care) or an episode of care which involves contact with the NHS.

The whole of England will be supported through 12 NIHR Regional Research Delivery Networks (RRDNs). These will work with the national Coordinating Centre to provide a joint RDN leadership function so that the NIHR RDN as a whole functions as a single organisation with a shared vision and purpose across England. Royal Devon University Hospital will be the Host Organisation for the SWP RRDN region.

The NIHR RRDNs will have three key roles.

- First, to provide support to research sites to enable the effective and efficient initiation and delivery of funded research across the health and care system in England.
- Second, to enable the strategic development of new and more effective research delivery capability and capacity. This will include bringing research to under-served regions and communities with major health and care needs.
- Third, to work jointly with the Coordinating Centre in the strategic oversight of the NIHR RDN. This will ensure that the Portfolio is maintained as a cohort of high-quality, fully-funded, viable and deliverable studies. It will also ensure that the NIHR RDN as a whole serves the needs of researchers and R&D teams and is responsive to the changing domestic and global environment for health and care, life sciences and health research.

NIHR RRDNs will need to develop excellent relationships with the organisations commissioning and providing health and social care across their regions, which are mapped onto NHS regions and integrated care systems. They will help support research undertaken by those providers and at sites across the region, and promote research meeting the needs of local populations. NIHR RRDNs will work together with an RDN national Coordinating Centre to support health and care research for the benefit of patients, the health and care system and the economy as a whole.

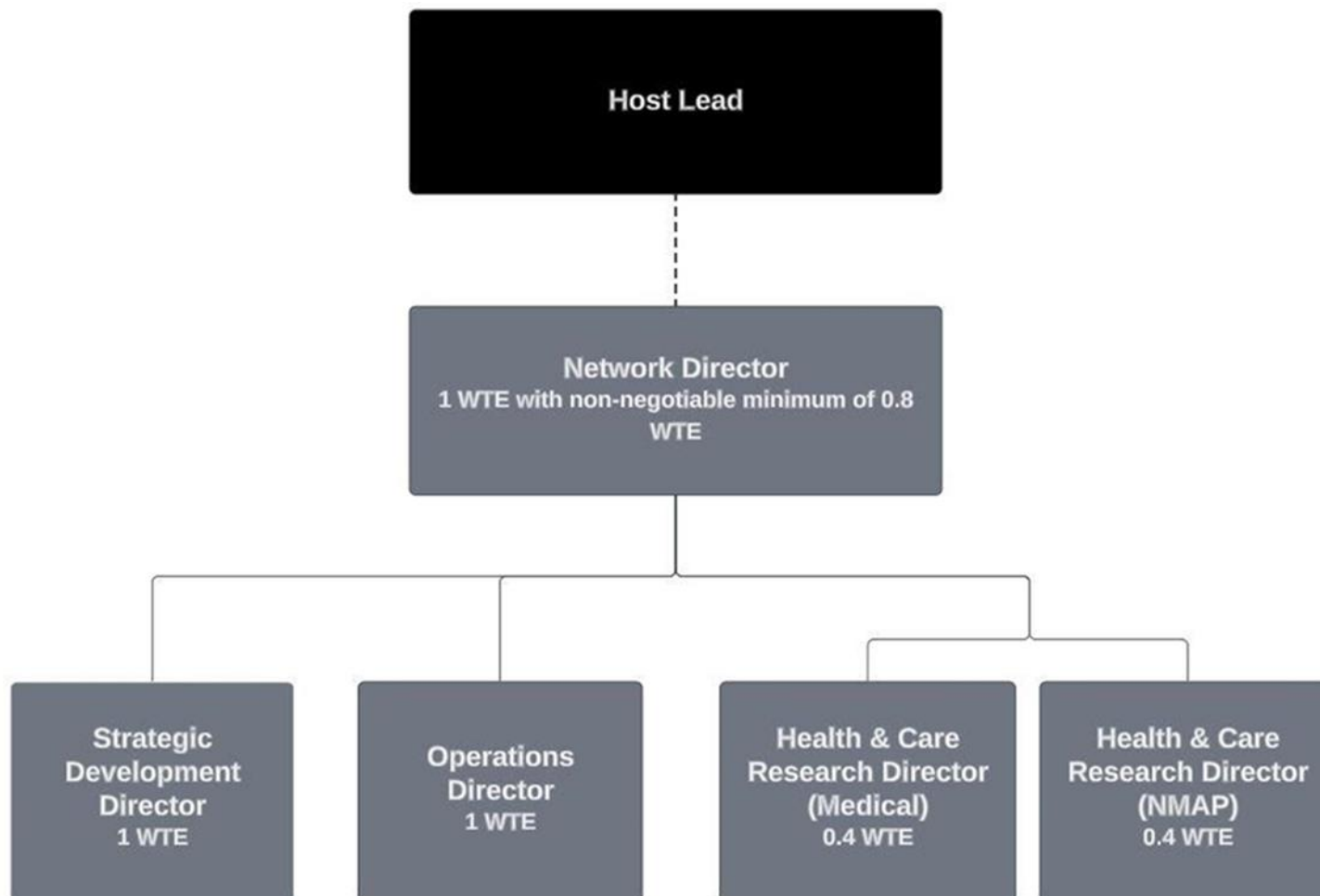
The RRDN Management Team, Agile Research Support Team and Regional Specialty and Settings Leads will comprise the “RRDN Staff”.

The RRDN Management Team means the staff employed, or otherwise procured, by the Host Organisation to lead and manage the RRDN services and functions. This team includes the RRDN directors.

The Agile Research Support Team means the flexible team that will work peripatetically to ensure delivery of Portfolio studies across a range of activities in a range of settings, in line with need.

RRDN Specialty and Settings Leads will provide clinical leadership at regional level with a particular focus on strategic development and portfolio oversight. A Specialty is defined as a Community of Experts and comprises individuals able to relate health and care expertise to research. Specialty areas will cover all aspects of health and care provided directly to an individual, group or whole population by or under the direction of any health or care specialist. A Setting is defined as the environment in which the potential research participants are provided with care or support for their health or care needs. The Community of Experts within Settings will have expertise particular to that environment relevant to research. Settings are agnostic of Specialty and may include multiple types of organisations and research locations. RRDNs will include specified Regional Specialties and Settings Leads, as defined by the RDN Board, supported by RDN funding, working as part of the national Community of Experts.

DEPARTMENTAL/DIRECTORATE ORGANISATIONAL CHART



KEY RELATIONSHIPS

- NIHR RDN Chief Executive
- NIHR RDN Chief Operating Officer
- Other members of the NIHR RDN Executive Team
- Peer NIHR RRDN Directors
- Department of Health and Social Care representatives
- RRDN Host Organisation Lead ('Host Lead')
- Senior leaders within the RRDN region for other NIHR infrastructure and entities, NHS England, Academic Health Science Networks (AHSNs), Integrated Care Boards/I integrated Care Systems, NHS Trusts, Primary Care providers, Universities, Local authorities, and other providers of health and social care services.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

- Overall leadership, delivery and management of the RRDN
- Be accountable to the Host Lead, NIHR RDN CEO and the RDN Board for;
 - the establishment and delivery of the RRDN
 - the operational performance of the RRDN
 - the management and assurance of RRDN funding
 - oversight of the development and delivery of the RRDN 3 year Strategic Implementation Plan
 - ensuring the Host Organisation fulfils the obligations of the RRDN Host Organisation Contract
 - ensuring the vision, values and behaviours of the RDN are embraced across the RRDN
- Be a member of the national RDN Board and acting as senior leader and ambassador for RDN, contributing to the ongoing development of the vision, direction and strategic aims for the RDN at national level and translating this into deliverable priorities regionally

- Develop, lead and deliver significant national programmes of work on behalf of the RDN Board
- Be accountable for devising and leading a 3-year RRDN Strategic Implementation Plan, which will require the interpretation of the national RDN strategy. The RRDN Strategic Implementation Plan should be developed in conjunction with regional partners, including other NIHR entities, NHSE regional offices, ICSs, AHSNs, patients and the public
- Be a visible leader and actively promote a culture of staff development and wellbeing
- Actively promote equality of opportunity, inclusivity and diversity in the RDN, for research participation and RDN staff
- Engage effectively with NHS organisations to maximise reach, impact and delivery of the RDN and its initiatives
- Enable collaborative relationships through effective network leadership, acting as a role model for others
- Work with partners across the RRDN region and nationally to progress improvements and transformation activities ensuring the RDN can realise the opportunities which come from working across the wider health and social care system
- Be accountable for the development and delivery of strategies for increasing research capacity and capability inside and outside of the NHS, working with NHSE regional offices, ICSs, AHSNs, patients and the public
- Actively contribute to national NIHR community engagement initiatives to increase access to health and care research for under-served groups and lead regional strategies to deliver this across the RRDN region
- Be responsible for supporting the development of national RDN policies and strategies as a RDN Board member and being accountable for interpreting those national RDN strategies and policies, and any prevailing national guidance in order to establish RRDN goals and standards
- Ensure structures, processes and systems are in place to enable relevant quality standards and RRDN contract requirements are met

BUSINESS PLANNING

- Strategic oversight, development and approval of RRDN business, financial, strategic development and impact plans, and associated reports
- Develop and optimise potential for high quality and sustainable health and care research within the region and nationally in alignment with RDN vision, direction and strategic aims
- Ensure all business planning, implementation and reporting requirements are met in line with the RRDN Host Organisation Contract
- Ensure effective mechanisms and services are in place for the continued support of the RDN Portfolio, with particular emphasis on addressing the needs of the life sciences industry

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- Overall accountability for the delivery and management of the RRDN with oversight of all aspects of the RRDN's daily business
- Line management of the RRDN Strategic Development Director, RRDN Operations Director and RRDN Health & Care Research Directors and have ultimate accountability for all departments and roles in the RRDN Staff structure
- Ensure that the RRDN is managed in line with the requirements of the RRDN Host Organisation Contract
- Ensure that the RRDN provides effective, high quality and nationally consistent services
- Ensure that relevant national strategies, policies and frameworks are fully implemented and associated targets met
- Ensure that the required IT systems for the RRDN are in place and are technologically linked where required, in the most appropriate manner to the national RDN systems

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Be a visible leader and actively promoting a culture of staff development, collaboration, positive staff experience, wellbeing and inclusion, and embedding patient, carer and public involvement within the RRDN at all appropriate levels of decision making
- Be an ambassador for RDN and actively modelling and championing RDN values
- As part of the RRDN Senior Leadership Team, advance the development of a highly professional and expert team to ensure effective delivery through appraisal, personal development planning, coaching and mentoring
- Develop effective working relationships with NHSE regional offices, ICSs, AHSNs, LETBs and other local stakeholders and partners
- Ensure professional supervisory arrangements are in place for the RRDN Staff (the RRDN Core Team, RRDN Agile Research Support Team, and RRDN Specialty and Settings Leads)
- Promote a learning organisation that uses the knowledge and skills of all members to improve performance and generate helpful and shared outputs
- Contribute to the ongoing development of the vision and direction for the RDN and translate into deliverable priorities for the RRDN

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- Provide strong leadership, engaging with the regional research community to support and enable the efficient set up and delivery of RDN Portfolio research, with particular emphasis on addressing the needs of the life sciences industry
- Ensure the establishment and oversight of effective systems and processes for robust performance management to ensure the RRDN Host Organisation Contract is adhered to
- Analysis of complex and often conflicting data to identify strategic priorities and business plan activities
- Identify service delivery issues or areas of underperformance, which can be highly contentious, emotive and hostile, communicate these to regional stakeholders and RDNCC (where appropriate) and take the necessary action to resolve, using appropriate risk management approaches and escalations
- Undertake analysis of research site delivery plans and performance, and the associated impact on regional RRDN and national RDN research support and strategic development and provide expert input, where other expert opinions may differ, to resolve performance issues
- Have responsibility for the performance monitoring information systems and associated processes used by the RRDN

LIFE SCIENCES INDUSTRY

- Establish mutually beneficial relationships with life sciences industry partners in collaboration with RDNCC to maximise the opportunities available for the benefit of our population
- Champion the RDNs capacity and capability to support Life Sciences Industry research and the contribution of the Life Sciences Industry to the NHS
- Drive forward the RDN strategies to support the needs of Life Sciences Industry research regionally and nationally
- Ensure that RRDN services provided to the Life Sciences Industry are provided consistently, within the required timeframes and to a high-quality standard and in line with identified national RDN requirements

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Be accountable for the effective financial management of all RRDN funding (£35m per annum per RRDN on average)
- Ensure that effective financial procedures and arrangements are in place and that these are in line with the RRDN Host Organisation's financial regulations, RDNCC guidance and the RRDN Host Organisation Contract
- Implement the RDN funding distribution model for all relevant RRDN stakeholders
- Ensure value for money and strive for continuous efficiencies in use of funding

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Utilise performance and other available data including benchmarking to identify and drive forward improvements in service delivery and performance
- Introduce service improvement approaches, such as 'Lean', or as directed by RDNCC, to streamline operational delivery systems and processes in order to optimise efficiency, delivery and value for money.
- Ensure robust mechanisms for continuous operational and business improvement processes are in place, supporting the delivery of transformational change across the RDN
- Take responsibility for the implementation of all relevant RDN and RRDN policies and procedures

NHS AND NON-NHS ENGAGEMENT

- Develop and foster effective relationships and collaborations with stakeholders such as, but not limited to, ICS/ICBs, HEIs, charities, other NIHR infrastructure, NHSE/I, AHSNs, to enhance and promote research and development across the health and care economy
- Ensure engagement and commitment from regional NHS organisations / providers of NHS services, other parts of NIHR and key external stakeholders as appropriate to enable implementation of RDN strategies
- Lead on supporting local authorities and stakeholders with relatively small research portfolios to further grow their research capacity and to use their knowledge and expertise to enable better outcomes for their citizens
- Work across the health and care specialties to identify and develop further opportunities to embed research into the NHS, non-NHS and wider health and care environment

ENSURING PATIENT, CARER AND PUBLIC IMPACT ON DELIVERY OF RDN STRATEGY

- Act as a champion for patients, carers and the public, ensuring that their interests are meaningfully incorporated into the development and delivery of the RDN and RRDN
- Ensure all patient, carer and public involvement and engagement activities of the RRDN are of the highest professional standard
- Embed patient, carer and public involvement within the RRDN at all appropriate levels of decision making

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

- Ensuring all required governance forums are established and maintained (including RRDN Partnership Board and RRDN Management Group) as required by the RRDN Host Organisation contract
- Ensuring that the RRDN and its associated services are provided in line with the RRDN Host Organisations corporate governance requirements

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Attribute	Essential	Desirable
	Education and Qualifications		
1.1	PhD, MD or Masters level qualification or equivalent	✓	
1.2	Executive level management qualification	✓	
	Knowledge and Experience		
2.1	Comprehensive understanding of the NHS, professional research leadership, and the wider health and care system including associated responsibilities to the public and patients	✓	
2.2	Experience of working in the health and care research sector, the health and social care service sector or academic environment at a senior level	✓	
2.3	Extensive experience of professional leadership, both strategic and operational at a senior level	✓	
2.4	Experience of working across complex organisational structures and effective matrix management	✓	
2.5	Proven senior level experience of leading and delivering complex change and strategy development programmes in a politically sensitive and complex environment	✓	
2.6	Significant experience of managing a large budget with solid knowledge of financial process requirements	✓	
2.7	Extensive experience of leading business planning cycles from concept to delivery	✓	
2.8	Direct extensive experience of business planning and robust financial management at appropriate scale	✓	
2.9	Knowledge of national systems, structures and processes for supporting clinical research in NHS and non-NHS settings	✓	

2.10	Experience of working collaboratively and in partnership with other organisations, with demonstrable experience of delivery across organisational boundaries	✓	
2.11	Evidence of managing effective collaborations and partnerships	✓	
2.12	Good understanding of performance management techniques	✓	
2.13	Knowledge of utilising Business Intelligence solutions to work within a performance management framework	✓	
2.14	Political astuteness and understanding of the health & social care context	✓	
2.15	Comprehensive knowledge of programme sponsorship and management	✓	
2.16	Experience of leading continuous improvement	✓	
2.17	Understanding of governance and legislative framework for clinical research in the NHS		✓
2.18	Extensive executive level experience		✓
	Skills and Abilities		
3.1	Highly developed leadership, strategic thinking and planning skills with ability to demonstrate these in highly political environments	✓	
3.2	Extensive experience of leadership skills in the management of change	✓	
3.3	Demonstrable ability to use autonomy to undertake actions as a result of own interpretation of policy and guidance, providing a source of expert advice to the organisation	✓	
3.4	Ability to make decisions autonomously, when required, on difficult issues	✓	
3.5	Proven interpersonal skills to work with clinical and management colleagues at all levels across a range of organisations and the ability to develop strong working relationships with senior stakeholders	✓	

3.6	Ability to deal with challenging situations in a formal setting	✓	
3.7	Strong external communications skills in a politically sensitive environment with knowledge of and experience in handling media relations	✓	
3.8	Advanced negotiation skills to reconcile stakeholder organisation expectations of financial allocations and within challenging fiscal environments	✓	
3.9	Ability to communicate highly complex, sensitive or contentious information orally and in writing, both internally and externally, to a range of audiences	✓	
3.10	Extensive experience of delivering presentations to large groups of stakeholders in often pressured and politically sensitive environments to a high standard (Board level quality)	✓	
3.11	Ability to analyse and interpret highly complex information to make judgements regarding a range of highly complex management issues	✓	
3.12	Strong problem solving skills	✓	
3.13	Ability to grasp critical issues and distil them into clear arguments/cases and be able to articulate these verbally or in written form	✓	
3.14	Ability to plan, manage, adjust and deliver complex projects involving multiple agencies and individuals and a broad range of activities to tight deadlines	✓	
3.15	Ability to work independently	✓	
3.16	Ability to understand the long term or widespread implications of decisions	✓	
3.17	Willingness to challenge existing practice	✓	
3.18	Good IT skills, particularly in use of Web applications and MS Office applications	✓	
3.19	Ability to travel to different locations across the region and nationally to attend meetings and conferences, representing the RDN	✓	

3.20	Ability to use Google Suite products	✓	
	Value and Personal Qualities		
4.1	Highly motivated with the ability to lead and inspire others	✓	
4.2	Appreciation of the impact of organisational culture on service delivery	✓	
4.3	Lives by values which include openness, collaboration, responsiveness, inclusion, personal integrity and creating positive cultures where these values thrive	✓	
4.4	Commitment to supporting the development of staff and understanding of workforce planning	✓	
4.5	Flexible approach to working	✓	
4.6	Attention to detail	✓	
4.7	Outcomes focussed	✓	
4.8	Acts as a champion for patients and their interests, ensuring the patients' voice has an impact on RDN activities	✓	
4.9	Commitment to and focused on quality, promotes high standards in all they do	✓	
4.10	Able to make a connection between their work and the benefit to patients and the public	✓	
4.11	Works well with others, is positive and helpful, listens, involves, respects and learns from the contribution of others	✓	
4.12	Consistently looks to improve what they do and seeks out innovation	✓	
4.13	Self-awareness with regard to emotional intelligence, biases and sensitivities	✓	
4.14	Demonstrates honesty and integrity and promotes organisational values	✓	