NIHR Regional Research Delivery Networks

Job Description & Person Specification for

Study Support Service Officer R29

v1.1

**JOB DETAILS**

**Job Title:** Study Support Service Officer

**Grade:** NHS Agenda for Change Band 5

**Hours:** 1.0 WTE

**Reporting to:** Study Support Service Facilitator

**Direct Reports:** N/A

**Location:** Contractual base in either Somerset, Devon or Cornwall

**JOB PURPOSE**

The Study Support Service serves as the cornerstone of the Research Delivery Network (RDN), facilitating the effective delivery of studies throughout the system while enhancing strategic capacity and capability.

The Study Support Service Officer is responsible for supporting the delivery of these services following relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). This will involve engaging with multiple partners across the region by supporting the coordination of communities and events. Additionally, they maintain systems for costing and attribution of studies ensuring adept support for regional organisations with their data requirements.

The Officer's efforts are instrumental in underpinning the success of the Study Support Service, providing essential support and enabling the smooth operation of services. Through their coordination and expertise, they contribute significantly to the overarching goals of the Research Delivery Network.

**ROLE OF THE NIHR RESEARCH DELIVERY NETWORK**

From October 2024, the current NIHR Clinical Research Network will be changing to become the NIHR Research Delivery Network (RDN). The RDN will build on the successes of the CRN in supporting 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 RDN will 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 RDN is a new organisation with new structures, governance and ways of working. Study delivery in England will be supported through 12 NIHR Regional Research Delivery Networks (RRDNs). These will work with the national Coordinating Centre (RDNCC) and the Department of Health and Care to provide a joint RDN leadership function via the RDN Board, so that the NIHR RDN as a whole functions as a single, transparent organisation with a shared vision and purpose. The Royal Devon and Exeter University Hospitals will be the Host Organisation for the South West Peninsula RRDN region.

The NIHR RRDNs will have three key roles which it will fulfil via new models of service delivery and functions, 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;

● 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;

● 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 research delivery needs of investigators and R&D teams and is responsive to the changing domestic and global environment for health and care, life sciences and health research.

The 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 Coordinating Centre to support health and care research delivery for the benefit of patients, the health and care system and the economy as a whole.

**DEPARTMENTAL/DIRECTORATE ORGANISATIONAL CHART**

**KEY RELATIONSHIPS**

* RDN Study Support Service teams
* National/RRDN Specialty and Settings Leads
* Commercial and non-commercial sponsors and their delegates (e.g. Chief Investigators, Study Teams, Contract Research Organisations and Clinical Trials Units)
* R&D staff based at research Delivery Organisations
* Regional research delivery teams
* Research funders

**MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP**

* Act as a liaison between various stakeholders to ensure effective communication and alignment of objectives

**INFORMATION & ADMINISTRATION**

* Manage data and information systems central to operation of the Study Support Service
* Manage, understand and interpret complex information and data to make recommendations on decisions and plans relating to the Study Support Service. This may include communicating and presenting to a variety of audiences
* Facilitate implementation of Information Governance best practice within systems supporting operation of the Study Support Service
* Ensure data integrity within relevant RDN systems, identifying potential concerns and patterns, and advising RDN customers and partners in resolving issues
* Undertake the processes required to continually ensure high quality and integrity of data within the portfolio management systems
* Support the use of digital innovations including data visualisation tools/dashboards and digital recruitment services such as Be Part of Research and Join Dementia Research to inform study and process decision making
* Actively contribute to activities and service processes that support study sponsors, funders and investigators to access data to enable them to effectively manage the delivery of their studies (and enable them to request support from the RDN as required)
* Utilise operational activity data for cost attribution and allocation of studies, ensuring accurate data support for regional organisations
* Ensure compliance with the DHSC RDN Portfolio Policy that the process, procedure and monitoring of studies enables sponsors / delegates, research delivery sites and funders to understand and adhere to their roles and responsibilities. For example, this may include satisfying the Eligibility Criteria for NIHR support before they are included on the portfolio and subsequently adhering to the expected actions and requirements set out in the NIHR RDN Portfolio Terms and Conditions
* Contribute to the oversight of the RDN portfolio to proactively identify potential issues and opportunities, working as an active partner to resolve and action follow-up activity
* Support Study Sponsors and delegates in the utilisation of the Sponsor Engagement Tool to secure visibility of real-time research activity data and help identify capacity in the health and care research system to deliver research quickly and efficiently
* Actively contribute to the coordination of the National Specialty and Setting Groups (e.g. arranging meetings, taking notes)
* Provide administrative support (e.g. note-taking and action tracking) to facilitate operational and project delivery and to capture learnings and knowledge for national network benefit

**OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

* Provide support for the delivery of Study Support Services in line with national standards
* Facilitate efficient study set-up, act as 'Main NIHR Network Contact' for the purpose of performance monitoring, tracking and assisting activities
* Where requested track, monitor and assess study progress and provide appropriate support/ action plans for key stakeholders so they can effectively deliver their study in line with the Terms and Conditions for NIHR Research Delivery Network Support
* Support and encourage sponsors to undertake accurate and timely uploading of recruitment data to relevant national portfolio systems
* Assist stakeholders who may need help to undertake feasibility, capability and capacity evaluations so organisations can deliver studies in a timely manner
* Assist in the development and delivery of training relating to RDN Study Support Service service and relevant research activities
* Undertake activities that contribute to the alignment and coordination of the NS&SL support for funders and sponsors in study design, deliverability and participant access to bring compatibility with the advice and guidance provided by the Study Support Service to further ensure optimal planning, placement and 'on request' performance monitoring of studies
* Support in the project management of specialty and setting initiatives at regional and national levels
* Support the organisation of communities of practice and events to promote knowledge sharing and best practices

**SERVICE IMPROVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT**

* Ensure a customer-centric approach to service delivery, ensuring that the needs and expectations of stakeholders are met or exceeded
* Collaborate with internal teams to address challenges and optimise service delivery

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

* Contribute to the overarching goals of the Research Delivery Network by ensuring smooth operation of services, adhering to relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to ensure consistent and effective service delivery
* Foster effective communication and collaboration among internal teams to enhance overall efficiency

**LIFE SCIENCES INDUSTRY**

* Champion the RDN’s capacity and capability to support Life Sciences Industry research and the contribution of the Life Sciences Industry to the NHS
* Provide the Study Support Services consistently, within the required timeframes and to standard RDN requirements
* Support business development activities, including: sourcing / signposting to relevant regional clinical research expertise and knowledge to support optimal research delivery

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

* Maintain systems for cost attribution and allocation of studies ensuring adept support for regional organisations with their data requirements

**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

* Foster a culture of continuous improvement, seeking out opportunities for innovation
* Support quality improvement projects as required
* Suggest new improvements for national adoption, escalating local challenges and sharing all innovations
* Undertake cross-specialty, cross-setting and Study Support Service collaborative activities for improved research delivery

**COMMUNICATION & STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT (NHS AND NON-NHS)**

* Engage with multiple regional partners to support the coordination of communities and events
* Communication of complex information both orally and in writing, both internally to colleagues and externally to a range of audiences. This may include providing advice, delivering training, presentations and writing reports
* Respond to queries from partners and customers to help them navigate and best utilise the network’s offer, internally flagging potential issues that may arise

**ENSURING PATIENT, CARER AND PUBLIC INFORM AND INFLUENCE DELIVERY OF RDN STRATEGY**

* Act as a champion for patients, carers and the public, ensuring that their interests are meaningfully incorporated into the delivery of the RDN and RRDN
* Champion research inclusion within RDN activities

**CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

* Work in accordance with RRDN contractual requirements (e.g. the Performance and Operating Framework) and with Host-related policies and procedures
* Act in accordance with current legislation, including Good Clinical Practice, research governance legislation, and the Data Protection Act
* Escalate risks that may need to be considered for the corporate risk register
* Follow and make suggestions to Standard Operating Procedures

**KEY RESULT AREAS**

* Provide support for the delivery of Study Support Services in line with national standards

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mental Effort** | There is a frequent requirement for concentration where the work pattern is unpredictable |
| **Physical Effort** | A combination of sitting, standing and walking with little requirement for physical effort. There may be a requirement to exert light physical effort for short periods |
| **Working Conditions** | Exposure to unpleasant working conditions or hazards is rare. Requirement to use Visual Display Unit equipment more or less continuously on most days |
| **Emotional Effort** | Occasional indirect exposure to distressing or emotional circumstances |

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Attribute** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
|  | **Education and Qualifications** |  |  |
|  | Degree level qualification or equivalent experience | **✔** |  |
|  | Degree in health or science discipline |  | **✔** |
|  | **Knowledge and Experience** |  |  |
|  | Awareness of research, the NHS and the wider health and care system including associated responsibilities to the public and patients | **✔** |  |
|  | Awareness of key RDN customers and their needs |  | **✔** |
|  | Awareness of governance and legislative framework for clinical research in the NHS |  | **✔** |
|  | Knowledge of scientific, research and medical terms commonly used in health and care research | **✔** |  |
|  | Knowledge of the research study lifecycle | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of administration within an organisational environment | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of using data systems, including accurate data entry and interpretation of data | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of working in a customer-focused role | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of working with other people to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes | **✔** |  |
|  | **Skills and Abilities** |  |  |
|  | Ability to communicate clearly with colleagues at all levels and across organisations | **✔** |  |
|  | Ability to work independently in accordance with SOPs, while supporting the broader activities of a team | **✔** |  |
|  | Logical approach to problem solving and ability to be objective | **✔** |  |
|  | Excellent oral, written and presentation skills | **✔** |  |
|  | Ability to interpret and present complex information | **✔** |  |
|  | Ability to coordinate and meet targets for project management | **✔** |  |
|  | Excellent IT skills, particularly in the use of web applications, Google Workspace and Microsoft Office | **✔** |  |
|  | Ability to be tactful and diplomatic | **✔** |  |
|  | **Values and Personal Qualities** |  |  |
|  | Guided by policies and protocols but applies flexibility when necessary | **✔** |  |
|  | Meticulous attention to detail, exhibiting thoroughness and efficiency | **✔** |  |
|  | Acts as a champion for patients, carers, the public and their interests | **✔** |  |
|  | Constantly strives for improvement | **✔** |  |
|  | Delivers on commitments and promises | **✔** |  |
|  | Committed to ongoing learning and development | **✔** |  |
|  | Professional and friendly approach to interpersonal interactions | **✔** |  |
|  | Prepared and able to travel to different locations across the region to attend meetings | **✔** |  |
|  | Enthusiastic and proactive approach to work, bringing a ‘can do’ attitude | **✔** |  |
|  | Listens to, involves, respects and learns from the contribution of others | **✔** |  |
|  | Works in accordance with the values of the RDN and the employing NHS Trust | **✔** |  |