NIHR Regional Research Delivery Networks

Job Description & Person Specification for

Study Support Service Manager R27

v1.1

**JOB DETAILS**

**Job Title:** Study Support Service Manager

**Grade:** NHS Agenda for Change Band 7

**Hours:** 1.0 WTE

**Reporting to:** Study Support Service Senior Manager

**Direct Reports:** [x] x Study Support Service Facilitator

**Location:** *To be completed by RRDN Host Organisation*

**JOB PURPOSE**

The Study Support Service Manager will assume a key leadership position in the Regional RDN (RRDN) Study Support Service, which will be seamlessly integrated within the collective national Study Support Service, which serves as the cornerstone of the NIHR Research Delivery Network (RDN), facilitating the effective delivery of studies throughout the system while enhancing strategic capacity and capability.

The role will be entrusted with the delivery of critical services across a defined portfolio of specialties and settings. These encompass pre-approval services such as Planning and Placement Service/national cost and attribution tools, as well as post-approval services including portfolio oversight and on-request services. Central to the role is the cultivation of a robust knowledge base within the assigned portfolio area, achieved through the establishment of communities of practice with relevant study and site delivery teams. By facilitating the exchange of best practices, the post-holder will ensure optimal study performance as required. The role will also work in collaboration with Regional Specialty and Setting Leads, actively engaging in regional and national improvement projects, aligning efforts with strategic objectives, and fostering continuous improvement (CI) across the network.

The role will line manage a team of [x] Study Support Service Facilitators. Line management of staff members will include undertaking staff reviews to identify training and development needs, and establishing how those needs will be met, and managing performance against agreed objectives. The postholder will ensure the same review processes take place for all staff with the defined function via appropriate line management arrangements and that skills and capabilities exist to meet current and future business needs.

**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. *[XXX]* will be the Host Organisation for the *[XXX]* 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**

*[RRDN Organogram to be inserted]*

**KEY RELATIONSHIPS**

* Directors in the RRDN
* RDN Heads of Service
* RDNCC Heads of Service
* National/RRDN Specialty and Settings Leads
* Other NIHR regional infrastructure (e.g. Clinical Research Facilities, Experimental Cancer Medicine Centres)
* Commercial and non-commercial sponsors and their delegates (e.g. Chief Investigators, Study Teams, Contract Research Organisations and Clinical Trials Units)
* Senior leadership at research site organisations participating in RDN portfolio studies
* Regional research delivery leaders and staff (e.g. Principal Investigators, R&D Offices, RRDN Management Team and Site Research Delivery staff)
* Research funders

**MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP**

* Act as a liaison between various stakeholders to ensure effective collaboration, communication and alignment of objectives
* Work as part of a community of specialty and settings leaders across the national network, promoting the consistency of experience across a nationally-harmonised Study Support Service
* Collaborate with designated Local Specialty and Settings Leadership to align operational activities with strategic objectives
* Provide strategic support to designated research delivery sites, drawing on and contributing to national network intelligence
* Support the implementation and cascade of national strategic direction within the region and the local RRDN

**BUSINESS PLANNING**

* Develop and undertake activities which contribute to the annual business planning cycle
* Support with reviewing, evaluating and approving research site delivery plans, and have delegated responsibility for periodically performance monitoring against those plans to ensure that RDN funding is being used appropriately and effectively within specific specialties and settings

**INFORMATION & ADMINISTRATION**

* Understand and interpret highly complex information, data and situations to inform plans and make decisions within designated specialities and settings. This may include communicating and presenting to a variety of audiences and the facilitation of collaborative discussions
* Facilitate the implementation of Information Governance best practice within the Study Support Service
* Support the implementation and management of the Study Support Service processes that ensure data integrity within relevant RDN systems, enabling the identification of potential concerns and patterns and supporting RDN customers and partners in resolving issues
* Promote the use of digital innovations including data visualisation tools/dashboards to inform study and process decision making
* Manage the activities 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)
* Maintain and support general understanding of costing and attribution tools, process and policy that ensure studies in the region meet national requirements
* Implement compliance with the DHSC RDN Portfolio Policy to ensure 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
* Maintain oversight of the RDN portfolio within designated specialties and settings to proactively identify potential issues and opportunities, working as an active partner to resolve and action follow-up activity
* Lead the coordination of the National Specialty and Setting Groups (e.g. organise national meetings and support the general activities of the National Specialty and Setting Leads)

**OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

* Deliver the Study Support Services across designated specialties and settings, in accordance with nationally defined standards and processes. This will include pre-approval services (planning and placement; national cost attribution services) and post-approval services (portfolio oversight; on-request services)
* Act as regional champions and specialists as required, such as for AcoRD, Digital Recruitment, Be Part of Research, Join Dementia and for NHS and Primary Care based National Contract Value Review
* Supervise 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
* Project manage specialty and setting initiatives at regional, and occasionally national, levels
* Facilitate communities of practice and events, encouraging system-level collaboration and learning to solve operational challenges and pursue opportunities for strategic development
* Workload allocation and supervision (with Potential for line management) of B6 Study Support Service Facilitators

**SERVICE IMPROVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT**

* Ensure a customer-centric approach to service delivery, ensuring that the needs and expectations of stakeholders are met or exceeded
* Collaborate closely with Specialty and Setting leadership to contribute to regional and national improvement projects
* Cultivate a robust knowledge base within the assigned portfolio by establishing communities of practice with relevant study and site delivery teams, and by making effective use of data
* Actively seek and share feedback from customers and partners, so as to provide a responsive service and identify opportunities for improvement
* Identify and implement strategies to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of Study Support Service operations regionally and nationally, including piloting and evaluating ideas as part of national working
* Problem-solving, on request, to support RDN customers with identified challenges in study delivery

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

* Monitor and evaluate performance metrics relating to portfolio to identify areas for improvement
* Facilitate the exchange of best practices among stakeholders to optimise study performance and outcomes
* Ensure seamless coordination with other services and functions within the RRDN and across the national network, working with other teams to provide a consistent experience and work as one organisation

**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
* Ensure that RRDN Study Support Services provided to the Life Sciences Industry, within designated specialities and settings, are provided consistently, within the required timeframes and to a high quality standard and in line with identified national RDN requirements
* Engage in, and support, business development activities, including: Providing clinical research expertise and knowledge to support optimal research delivery in discussions with commercial organisations; and attending meetings and presenting at events, webinars etc

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

* Provide comments to inform decisions of funding allocations, including strategic development funding relevant to designated specialities and settings
* Have an overview of the resource allocated to their areas of work, and proactively support the management of this allocation and report on its use as required

**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

* Foster a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging team members to seek out opportunities for innovation
* Jointly consider new improvements for national adoption, escalating local challenges and sharing all innovations
* Implement cross-specialty, cross-setting and Study Support Service collaborative innovations for improved research delivery

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

* Maintain effective communication and coordination with stakeholders across the Research Delivery Network
* Communication of complex and difficult information both orally and in writing, both internally to colleagues and externally to a range of audiences. This may include delivering presentations and writing reports, and can involve communication where there may be barriers to acceptance
* Act as a main point of contact for sponsors and research delivery sites, providing a consistent and coordinated experience, and proactively supporting in identifying opportunities for capacity and capability development
* Work within designated health and care specialties and settings 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 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
* Actively promote equality of opportunity, inclusivity and diversity in the RDN, for research participation and RDN staff, supporting sponsors and sites with research inclusion and providing constructive challenge where appropriate

**CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

* Support the management of compliance with RRDN contractual requirements (e.g. the Performance and Operating Framework) and with Host-related policies and procedures
* Maintain working knowledge of, and 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
* Implement and make suggestions to Standard Operating Procedures, ensuring national consistency

**KEY RESULT AREAS**

* Deliver the Study Support Services across designated specialties and settings, in accordance with nationally defined standards and processes. This will include pre-approval services (planning and placement; national cost attribution services) and post-approval services (portfolio oversight; on-request services)

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mental Effort** | There is an occasional requirement for prolonged concentration |
| **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 exposure to distressing or emotional circumstances |

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Attribute** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
|  | **Education and Qualifications** |  |  |
|  | Postgraduate qualification (eg. Postgraduate Diploma) in a relevant subject or equivalent level of experience. | **✔** |  |
|  | Degree | **✔** |  |
|  | Degree in health or science discipline |  | **✔** |
|  | Training in project management |  | **✔** |
|  | Evidence of continual professional development | **✔** |  |
|  | **Knowledge and Experience** |  |  |
|  | Comprehensive understanding of research, the NHS and the wider health and care system including associated responsibilities to the public and patients | **✔** |  |
|  | Comprehensive understanding of life science industry’s needs and requirements with regard to health and care research | **✔** |  |
|  | High level of understanding of governance and legislative framework for clinical research in the NHS | **✔** |  |
|  | Understanding of the UK research pathway and funding | **✔** |  |
|  | Specialist knowledge of RDN Portfolio eligibility (including terms and conditions) and of cost attribution (ACoRD, SoECATs, NCVR) | **✔** |  |
|  | Knowledge of national systems, structures and processes for supporting clinical research in NHS and non-NHS settings | **✔** |  |
|  | Knowledge of utilising Business Intelligence solutions to work within a performance management framework | **✔** |  |
|  | Knowledge of methods, tools and techniques for problem-solving and continuous improvement | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of health and care research management, including the support of studies pre-approval and post-approval | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of facilitating meetings | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of delivering health and care research support services | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of managing high quality customer centric services for commercial and non-commercial customers | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of managing effective collaborations and partnerships | **✔** |  |
|  | Professional operational research leadership within the organisation |  |  |
|  | Professional operational research leadership at system level |  | **✔** |
|  | Experience of direct line management and managing colleagues to deliver clear objectives and performance targets |  | **✔** |
|  | Experience of supporting the implementation of business plans | **✔** |  |
|  | Experience of facilitating continuous improvement projects | **✔** |  |
|  | Project management experience, working as part of a team to deliver complex projects involving multiple agencies and individuals to tight deadlines | **✔** |  |
|  | **Skills and Abilities** |  |  |
|  | Demonstrable leadership, strategic thinking and planning skills | **✔** |  |
|  | Proven interpersonal skills to work with clinical and management colleagues at all levels across a range of organisations | **✔** |  |
|  | Able to adapt to any arising projects/tasks that may be required within the remit of the post to promote research and improve processes as set down in approved SOPs | **✔** |  |
|  | Strong problem-solving skills, including a proactive approach to identifying and addressing potential future issues | **✔** |  |
|  | Ability to communicate difficult information both orally and in writing, both internally to colleagues and externally to a range of audiences | **✔** |  |
|  | Ability to analyse, interpret and present highly complex information | **✔** |  |
|  | Ability to deliver complex projects involving multiple agencies and individuals | **✔** |  |
|  | Excellent IT skills, particularly in the use of web applications, Google Workspace and Microsoft Office | **✔** |  |
|  | Empathetic approach to resolving conflict, with the ability to work with sensitivity and tact | **✔** |  |
|  | **Values and Personal Qualities** |  |  |
|  | Flexible approach to working and enthusiastic attitude towards challenges | **✔** |  |
|  | Meticulous attention to detail, exhibiting thoroughness and efficiency | **✔** |  |
|  | Acts as a champion for patients, carers, the public and their interests, ensuring the public voice has an impact on RDN activities | **✔** |  |
|  | Constantly strives for improvement, bringing a 'can do' attitude and seeking out innovation | **✔** |  |
|  | Goal-oriented, with a focus on tangible results that are aligned with organisational objectives | **✔** |  |
|  | Committed to ongoing learning and development, proactively seeking opportunities for personal and team growth | **✔** |  |
|  | Takes a professional approach to all interactions, remaining diplomatic under pressure and fostering a solution-focused environment | **✔** |  |
|  | Prepared and able to travel to different locations across the region and nationally to attend meetings and conferences | **✔** |  |
|  | Highly motivated with the ability to lead and inspire others, internally and externally to the organisation | **✔** |  |
|  | Promotes inclusion within and beyond the organisation, listening to, involving, respecting and learning from the contribution of others | **✔** |  |
|  | Works in accordance with the values of the RDN and the employing NHS Trust | **✔** |  |