

# Paper 1: 2023-24 Research Capability Funding (RCF) Spending against the Spending Plan

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## Purpose

This paper shows the 2023/24 RCF Spending Plan and our actual spending. The aim is to identify and explain any variance between the Plan and the actual spend.

**Section 1** shows the total spend by Category showing the planned spend (recommended by the Advisory Group) and the actual spend. This section identifies any variance and provides an explanation.

**Section 2** shows the itemised spend listed by category for transparency of spend.

With the intention of highlighting any questionable or inappropriate use of funding, and providing advice where use could be improved, the Advisory Group members are asked to:

1. Consider the variance presented and the reasons provided in Section 1
2. Scrutinise the within-Category spend in Section 2
3. Any missed opportunities that future spending plans should incorporate

# Section 1

## The Spending Plan and actual Spend by Category

| Category                          | Planned Budget         | Actual Spend | Variance | Explanation of variance   |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------|---|
| 1. Responsive Calls               | £195,000<br>(£255,000) | £304,238     | £109,238 | In November the Advisory Group recommended increasing the budget from £195,000 to £255,000.<br>We received 14 applications valuing ~£300k for the January Round of Responsive Call RCF applications. We identified further underspend and CMO approval was provided to re-allocate these to Category 1. |
| 2. Career Development posts       | £156,000               | £154,651     | -£1,349  | Minimal N/A   |
| 3. Departmental Development posts | £378,000               | £378,487     | £487     | Minimal N/A   |
| 4. Career Fellowship              | £155,000               | £181,161     | £26,161  | Salary costs of Launching Fellowship and Academic Career Award post holders were higher than anticipated. Underspend from Category 6 was used to meet the increased costs.  |
| 5. Researcher in Residence        | £45,000                | £28,059      | -£16,941 | Further three projects were planned, due to slow progress these were moved to Financial Year 2024/25. Underspend was reallocated to Category 1.   |
| 6. ICS Research and Evidence      | £95,000                | £65,057      | -£29,943 | Underspend incurred on PHM Coordinator/Data Science Manager role because the Secure Data Environment (SDE) funding met majority of these costs. Underspend reallocated to Category 4.   |

|   |                   |                   |           |  |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|--|
| 7. Research support and Hosting               | £358,000          | £345,395          | -£12,605  | Clinical Lead for Research reduced from 3 sessions per week to 1 session per week. Underspend was reallocated to Category 1.   |
| 8. Bridging funding                           | £3,000            | £0                | -£3,000   | No applications received. Funding was reallocated to Category 9.   |
| 9. Maternity Sickness backfill                | £3,000            | £6,171            | £3,171    | One application was received that was double the amount allocated in this category, underspend from Category 8 & 13 was used to meet increase.   |
| 10. Extensions to existing awards             | £8,000            | £10,289           | £2,289    | 4 applications were received, contingency funds (Category 13) were used to meet overspend.   |
| 11. Senior Investigator Awards                | £75,000           | £0                | -£75,000  | The Senior Investigator Award for Prof Lucy Yardley ended as of March 2023. £75,000 was re-allocated for the Category 1 Responsive Call as reported to the Advisory Group in November. |
| 12. Bristol Health Partners Annual membership | £75,000           | £75,000           | £0        | No variance  |
| 13. Contingency                               | £2,901            | £2,901            | £0        | Contingency funds were used to cover additional funds requested for Categories 9 & 10  |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>£1,548,901</b> | <b>£1,548,901</b> | <b>£0</b> |  |

Table 1: Entire RCF spending in 2023/24 by BNSSG ICB, segmented by Category.

## Re-Allocation of underspend from previous RCF Awards

Underspend of multiple previous RCF Awards at UWE with a total value of £14,623.10 returned to us and, as per our agreed process, we have reallocated these funds to other uses in line with RCF spending rules:

| <b>Costs covered from funds returned</b>                   |               |
|--|---------------|
| Laptop for Health Economist (UWE)                          | 2,400.00      |
| Laptop for Researcher in Residence (UWE)                   | 2,400.00      |
| GP Deep End and Pipeline projects Katherine Kearley-Shiers | 4,896.00      |
| GP Deep End and Pipeline projects Hyunkee Kim              | 4,896.00      |
| Balance  | <b>£31.10</b> |

Table 2: RCF underspend reallocation

## Section 2

### Category 1: Responsive Calls

| Lead applicant     | Topic  | Organisation | Amount  |
|--------------------|--|--------------|---------|
| Vikki Wyld         | Project to identify and understand the musculoskeletal research priorities for people from ethnic minority backgrounds.  | UoB          | £4,990  |
| Kushala Abeysekera | What is the most efficacious, acceptable and cost effective way to screen for liver disease in the community?  | UoB          | £10,254 |
| Sarah Denford      | How can vaccinations be delivered opportunistically in primary care and community settings in a way that is feasible, accessible, and acceptable, and leads to increased vaccine uptake in adults? | UoB          | £13,772 |
| Praveen Kumar      | Could rehabilitation exercise videos be given as part of standard care by health care professionals (HCPs) to people with stroke (PwS) prior to discharge from the hospital?                       | UWE          | £23,974 |
| Kerstin Nothnagel  | Clinical- and cost-effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-guided ultrasound (US) in the primary care setting to usual care Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) diagnostic pathway.                   | UoB          | £9,085  |
| Melanie Smith      | What does effective and efficient healthcare navigation look like in multi-specialist GP Practices?  | UWE          | £24,146 |
| Berrou & Jones     | Research capacity among the pharmacy workforce.  | UWE          | £3,000  |
| Madeleine Cochrane | Exploring stakeholder concerns around children and young people's access to community mental health care.  | UoB          | £3,000  |
| David Williams     | Functional Neurological Disorders – Ambulance services recognition, care and management of FND patient presentations.  | UWE          | £3,000  |
| Matthew Jones      | Joint Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise Support Services (VCFSEs) and the North & West Bristol Locality Partnership (LP) to improve the health and well-being of residents           | UWE          | £49,898 |

|                              |   |                          |         |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------|
| Sam Creavin                  | Ddevelop a way for testing cognitive symptoms in primary care to increase expertise in the diagnosis of dementia in the community.  | UoB                      | £23,816 |
| Alex Pearce                  | Could self-directed gaming device (GripAble) enhance the practice of self-directed arm exercise and upper limb (UL) activity in people recovering from stroke in the community?             | UWE                      | £14,929 |
| Alice Berry                  | Understanding factors impacting the uptake, acceptability, and effectiveness of implementing a digital musculoskeletal self-management intervention into primary care: A Realist Evaluation | UWE                      | £10,870 |
| Katherine Kearley-Shiers     | Menopause; Perimenopause, awareness, knowledge and support for women experiencing menopausal symptoms.  | Hartcliffe Health Centre | £6,000  |
| Hyunkee Kim and Polly Duncan | Continuity of care in General Practice.   | UoB                      | £6,000  |
| Helen Nicholson              | Paramedic Active Lives Promotion for Older People (ParAde)  | UWE                      | £23,750 |
| Michael Daly                 | Process and outcome evaluation of preconception health promotion through sexual and reproductive health services  | UoB                      | £20,381 |
| Sahdia Parveen               | Implementation and evaluation of the ADAPT toolkit to improve the dementia care pathway for South Asian Families (ADAPTi)   | Bradford                 | £24,562 |
| Tom Allport                  | 'Find your village' - culturally-coordinated understanding and action for communities with migrational heritage   | UoB                      | £28,185 |

**Table 3:** Breakdown of Category 1 spend.

Other spends within this Category are shown below:

| Description of activity   | Amount paid |
|---|-------------|
| PPI review on quarterly applications – paid at INVOLVE rates as per NIHR funding guidance | £625        |

**Table 4:** Breakdown of Category 1 spend on any/all items not included in RCF application forms received.

### **Variance**

Significant overspend on the original budget is reported. We had exceptionally high numbers of applications in April and July, meaning we had to cancel the October funding opportunity. In November 20223, the Advisory Group recommended using £60,000 underspends identified to increase the available budget to provide an opportunity in January, bringing the total Category 1 budget to £255,000.

In January we received 14 applications. It is worth noting that this is as many applications as we previously received per annum. We identified further underspend and obtained CMO approval to increase the total available budget for category 1 to £304,238.

4 applications were jointly ranked 1<sup>st</sup> and we were able to award all of these.

A further 4 applications were jointly scored as next highest, and insufficient budget available to fund all 4 of these applications. Scores were reviewed on individual factors prioritised by the Research Team in the order of Practitioner Assessment, Health Inequalities, System Priorities and PPI. Two further applications were awarded.

## Category 2: Career Development Posts

| Post   | Organisation | Amount  |
|--|--------------|---------|
| Career Development Fellow in primary care mental health research | UoB          | £12,517 |
| Public Health Career Development SRA                             | UoB          | £36,202 |
| GPs at the Deep End  | UoB          | £90,957 |
| Matt Ridd's professorship - Systematic reviewer                  | UoB          | £14,975 |

**Table 5:** Breakdown of Category 2 spend.

### Variance

Negligible, nothing to report.

## Category 3: Departmental Development Posts

| Post   | Organisation | Amount  |
|--|--------------|---------|
| Post in Knowledge Mobilisation and Musculoskeletal Health          | UWE          | £19,232 |
| Senior Research Fellow in Health Economics                         | UWE          | £79,011 |
| Senior Research Fellow to build capacity amongst social care staff | UoB          | £53,155 |
| Information specialist   | UoB          | £31,997 |
| Bristol Trials Centre Senior Research Project Manager              | UoB          | £35,529 |
| Lecturer in Health Economics and Economic Evaluation               | UoB          | £68,242 |
| Database Analyst   | UoB          | £26,854 |
| Population Health Sciences - Statistician                          | UoB          | £58,465 |
| People in Health West of England                                   | UoB          | £6,000  |

**Table 6:** Breakdown of Category 3 spend.

### Ratio of spend

We aimed for a 80:20 ratio of spend in favour of University of Bristol in consideration of the relative contributions of RCF generating NIHR awards.

The ratio of spend in Category 3 was 74:26 in favour of University of Bristol over UWE.

The ratio of total spend on the **combined Category 2 & 3 was 82:18** in favour of University of Bristol.

### Variance

None to report

## Category 4: Career Fellowships

| Awardee          | Area of expertise   | Organisation | Amount  |
|------------------|---|--------------|---------|
| Charlotte Archer | Managing Anxiety in primary care  | UoB          | £17,272 |
| Julie Armoogum   | chronic pain after cancer treatment   | UWE          | £96,115 |
| Helen Cramer     | Domestic abuse, mental health, cardiovascular conditions and the delivery of primary care | UoB          | £67,774 |

**Table 7:** Breakdown of Category 4 spend.

### Variance

The salary costs of the Academic Career Award post holder were substantially higher than the estimated costs based on previous awards (~£45k). Underspend identified in Category 6 transferred to this category to meet increase.

## Category 5: Researcher in Residence

| Role  | Organisations | Award   |
|---|---------------|---------|
| Evaluation of Woodspring Locality Partnership integration                         | UoB           | £13,059 |
| Evaluation of Weston, Worle and Villages locality, One Weston Care Home Hub       | UWE           | £5,000  |
| The use of Melatonin to aid sleep in patients suffering with Dementia             | UWE           | £5,000  |
| Service evaluation of Self injury Support's ICB commissioned peer support service | UWE           | £5,000  |

**Table 8:** Breakdown of Category 5 spend.

### Variance

Further three projects were planned, however progress of setting these up slowed down due to lack of engagement by ICB teams. These were moved to Financial Year 2024/25. Underspend was reallocated to Category 1 and Category 3.

## Category 6: ICS Evidence

| Role                                   | Organisations | Award   |
|--|---------------|---------|
| ICB Clinical Lead for Data Analytics   | ICB           | £31,395 |
| PHM Coordinator (Data Science Manager) | UoB           | £34,057 |

**Table 9:** Breakdown of Category 6 spend.

### Variance

No substantial change since November 2023: the underspend of £30K that was reported in November 2023 was reallocated to Career Fellowship.

## Category 7: Research support and Hosting

| Post                                    | Organisations | Amount  |
|---|---------------|---------|
| Senior Research Fellow                  | UWE           | £38,682 |
| Contracts Manager                       | UoB           | £35,800 |
| Research Manager                        | ICB           | £73,456 |
| Research Portfolio Manager              | ICB           | £57,735 |
| Research Finance Support                | ICB           | £34,160 |
| Research Portfolio Officer              | ICB           | £54,850 |
| Research Portfolio Support              | ICB           | £27,283 |
| Associate Medical Director for Research | ICB           | £23,428 |

**Table 10:** Breakdown of Category 7 spend.

### Variance

- 1) As reported in November 2023 £33,308 commitment to the Sponsorship Department at University of Bristol was met through reallocation of previous RCF awards within University of Bristol.
- 2) Although salary costs for all staff members were higher due to incremental progression and inflationary rises, underspend was incurred in this category on the Clinical Lead for Research post because these costs have been shared with the ICB's Secure Data Environment award.
- 3) £5,176 income was received for the Research Portfolio Support for supporting a Tech for Better Care award funded by the Health Foundation.

## Category 8: Bristol Health Partners Annual membership

| Post                  | Organisations  | Amount  |
|-----------------------|--|---------|
| Project Managers (3x) | Bristol Health Partners Academic Health Science Centre | £75,000 |

**Table 11:** Breakdown of Category 8 spend.

### Variance

No variance to report.



## Category 9: Bridging Funding

No applications received. Funding was reallocated to Category 9.

## Category 10: Maternity & Sickness cover

| Applicant      | Organisation | Project  | Reason   | Amount |
|----------------|--------------|--|--|--------|
| Caroline Coope | UoB          | PP4M – Managing multimorbidity in primary care | Supporting an extended period of sickness leave (2 months) | £6,171 |

**Table 12:** Breakdown of Category 10 spend.

### Variance

One application was received that was double the amount allocated in this category, underspend from Category 8 & 13 was used to meet increase.

## Category 11: Extensions to Existing Awards

| Applicant             | Organisation | Original RCF Category | Reason  | Amount |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|---|--------|
| Sandi Dheensa         | UoB          | Responsive Call       | Due to colleague being made redundant, there was not sufficient capacity to analyse data within originally planned timeframe  | £5,000 |
| Christine Ramsay-Wade | UoB          | Responsive Call       | Additional PPI activity to strengthen grant application   | £1,775 |
| Kirsty Roberts        | UoB          | Responsive Call       | PPI payment to strengthen grant application   | £50    |
| Toity Deave           | UWE          | Responsive Call       | Award holder sadly passed away and Toity Deave has taken the project over. Substantial delay due to unusual circumstances resulted in delay, thus additional staff costs, as well as additional PPI activities are planned. | £3,464 |

### Variance

4 applications were received, and contingency funds (Category 13) were used to meet the increased costs.

## Category 12: Senior investigator Awards

No spend to report: as agreed on Research and Knowledge Mobilisation Advisory Committee meeting November 2023, these funds were used to contribute to Category 1.