

Dublin Centre for Clinical Research Disease and Clinical Interest Group Policy

September 2008

Introduction

The DCCR has resources at its disposal that can be allocated to groups wishing to undertake clinical research. However, these resources are limited and the purpose of this policy is to set out the DCCR's approach to the selection and support of clinical interest/disease groups.

Policy

The DCCR will support Disease Groups and Clinical Interest Group that are consistent with the grant application made to the Wellcome Trust/Health Research in January 2006. The formation of disease or clinical interest groups needs to have a reasonable chance of satisfying the aims and objectives identified by the applicants in their application. Criteria that will be used to judge the suitability of a DCCR Disease Group/Clinical Interest Group include:

1. Prospect of genuine collaboration involving ideally all three, but no less than two of the Medical Schools and clinicians from multiple teaching hospital sites.
2. Harmony amongst group members and their ability to provide the leadership required.
3. Focus on a research theme that can be related back to those identified in the original application: Infection and Immunity, Cardiovascular, Neuropsychiatry, Cancer, Other.
4. Track record of successful research and publication held by members of the group.

These four criteria will be used to set priorities for DCCR Disease Groups.

Range of DCCR Resources to be Provided

The DCCR is a new organisation and the services it will provide are not yet fully developed. The DCCR is not a source of funding for specific research studies. It provides the resources required to initiate a disease group and that permit it to build a foundation upon which to launch focused research proposals. Therefore its role in supporting Disease Groups will extend to the following types of activities:

- Providing secretariat services for the group by organising and supporting its meetings
- Through the DCCR Operations Team provide research nursing and data management support that will permit the disease group to establish a baseline of clinical information that will provide the foundation for further funded clinical studies (e.g. DNA collection and capturing information about the general patient group).
- Through the operations team provide the city-wide research IT infrastructure required to carry out multisite research programmes
- Support the development of research proposals for funded studies relevant to the DCCR and its Clinical Research Facilities
- Facilitating linkages between DCCR Groups and potential collaborators elsewhere in Ireland (ICRIN), Europe (ECRIN) and internationally.

These resources and support will only be provided to Disease Groups/Clinical Interest Groups that have had their Terms of Reference approved by the DCCR Management Team.

Approaches from Other Groups

Approaches to the DCCR for assistance from other groups not designated as a DCCR Disease Group will be advised on how to approach other agencies for assistance. Groups wishing to use DCCR resources will be encouraged to secure the funding required to carry out their research. DCCR services will be provided only if (1) costs can be recovered¹ and (2) the DCCR and the associated facilities and resources have the capacity to provide the services required.

¹ A common approach to costing academic studies and drug trials is to be developed by ICRIN in concert with the DCCR and other CRFs.