

11/3002 Parenting support programmes

Research Question(s)

- Which targeted parental support programmes are most effective and cost-effective in reducing the prevalence of maltreatment of pre-school aged children; and what are the effective components within targeted parental support programmes?
 - **Population:** Expectant parents and parents with pre-school aged children. Applicants may wish to focus on children from specified vulnerable groups.
 - **Intervention:** A new parenting programme or an intervention designed to assess which elements of existing parenting programmes work. Interventions may be delivered in NHS and/or non-NHS settings.
 - **Comparator:** Different parenting intervention with evidence of efficacy. Ideally there would be evidence of efficacy in the UK context.
 - **Outcomes:** Prevalence of maltreatment of pre-school aged children – which may be assessed by direct or proxy measures (applicants will need to describe the evidence relating proxy outcomes proposed to direct measures); emotional and social wellbeing; cost-effectiveness. Child-centred outcome measures would be welcomed. Researchers to specify and justify.
 - **Duration of follow up:** Researchers to specify and justify.
 - **Impact on inequalities:** Research should consider the impact of the intervention on health inequalities, including differential effectiveness of the intervention: researchers to specify and justify.
 - **Design:** Primary research, researchers to specify and justify.
 - **Setting:** Researchers to specify and justify.
 - **Public engagement:** Proposals should incorporate a mechanism for public involvement.

Background to commissioning brief:

Child physical abuse and neglect are significant public health and societal problems. Child maltreatment is one of the most serious events undermining healthy psychological development. Children who experience maltreatment suffer reduced socio-emotional development, mental and physical health. Maltreating and abusive parents are less positive, supportive and nurturing of their children, and more negative, hostile, and punitive than non-maltreating parents. Limited evidence shows that some parenting programmes may be effective in improving some outcomes that are associated with physically abusive parenting. Reducing the prevalence of maltreatment could be by prevention and/or reducing repeated maltreatment in families where it has already occurred. The intervention should be set in a life course approach to health and wellbeing, which recognises the social determinants of health.

Notes to Applicants

The remit of the Public Health Research (PHR) programme would normally only consider the evaluation of non-NHS interventions. However, we recognise that the public health environment is complex and does not always allow for a clear

distinction between NHS and non-NHS interventions. For the commissioning brief entitled 'Parenting support programmes' we invite proposals evaluating both NHS and/or non-NHS interventions. Please note that the PHR programme will only accept proposals evaluating NHS interventions when a commissioning brief explicitly requests them.

If your proposed study includes NHS costs, please refer to the guidance notes for outline applications for further information on where to list these costs.

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