

Outdoor green and blue spaces

Research Question(s)

- What interventions are effective* in promoting health and wellbeing, and reducing health inequalities, through the use of outdoor “green” and “blue” spaces**?

A wide range of evidence suggests that contact with safe, outdoor “green” and “blue” spaces** can improve a number of aspects of mental and physical health and wellbeing. Access to these spaces can also increase levels of physical activity for all ages

The NIHR Public Health Research Programme wishes to commission research on the effectiveness* of interventions to promote health and wellbeing, and reduce inequalities, in outdoor “green” and “blue” spaces. Proposals must evaluate interventions with the potential for wider future application to build evidence for local decision makers. Studies must have a primary health outcome and may evaluate multi-component interventions. Natural experiments are of interest, including the health impacts of enhancement or loss of green and blue spaces.

The following issues are of interest:

- Interventions to promote health using green or blue spaces as a setting.
- Change in health outcomes associated with access to and use of outdoor green and blue space and long term effects.
- Factors promoting use of green or blue spaces for different population sub groups and how these might be applied in implementation.
- The health benefits or different types of green or blue spaces, including their size, and location in urban or rural contexts.
- The effect on population health of development of green space.

Research should consider the impact of interventions on health inequalities, incorporate a mechanism for public involvement and where relevant include a health economic evaluation.

For all proposals, applicants should clearly state the public health utility of the outcomes and how they would inform future public health policy and practice. Details on the potential impact and scalability of interventions, if shown to be effective, should be provided.

*‘Effectiveness’ in this context relates not only to the size of the effect, but it also takes into account any harmful or negative side effects, including inequitable outcomes.

** Green and blue spaces may be defined as natural or semi-natural areas, both land and water. Green spaces may include land that is partly or completely covered with grass, trees, shrubs, or other vegetation such as parks, woodland, community gardens, and natural areas such as river banks. Blue spaces may include: inland waterways, lakes and the coast.

Remit of Call:

All proposals submitted under this call must fall within the remit of the Public Health Research programme. Please go to www.nets.nihr.ac.uk/programmes/phr/remit for details.

General Notes:

The PHR programme evaluates public health interventions, providing new knowledge on the benefits, costs, acceptability and wider impacts of non-NHS interventions intended to improve the health of the public and reduce inequalities in health. The scope of the programme is multi-disciplinary and broad, covering a range of interventions that improve public health delivered in a non-NHS setting.

Notes to Applicants

The NIHR Public Health Research programme is funded by the NIHR, with contributions from the CSO in Scotland, NISCHR in Wales, and HSC R&D, Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland. Researchers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are eligible to apply for funding under this programme.

Applicants are recommended to seek advice from suitable methodological support services, at an appropriate stage in the development of their research idea and application. It is advisable to make contact at an early a stage as possible to allow sufficient time for discussion and a considered response.

The NIHR Research Design Service

(<http://www.nihr.ac.uk/research/Pages/ResearchDesignService.aspx>) can advise on appropriate NIHR programme choice, and developing and designing high quality research grant applications.

Clinical Trials Units are regarded as an important component of many trial applications however, they are not essential for all types of studies to the PHR programme. The CTUs can advise and participate throughout the process from initial idea development through to project delivery and reporting. NIHR CTU Support Funding (http://www.netscc.ac.uk/supporting_research/CTUs) provides information on units receiving funding from the NIHR to collaborate on research applications to NIHR programmes and funded projects. In addition, the UKCRC CTU Network (<http://www.ukcrc-ctu.org.uk>) provides a searchable information resource on all registered units in the UK, and lists key interest areas and contact information.

Transparency agenda

In line with the government's transparency agenda, any contract resulting from this tender may be published in its entirety to the general public. Further information on the transparency agenda is at:

<http://transparency.number10.gov.uk/>

http://www.ogc.gov.uk/policy_and_standards_framework_transparency.asp <http://www.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk/>