

## The Cutler Group

### Raising the academic profile of general practice in South Yorkshire

General practice is a robust and flexible model of health care that has lasted from before the inception of the NHS to the present day.

It has been a key element in the delivery of affordable healthcare to all. It has responded to the challenges of moving from single-handed to group practices, has fostered and incorporated a multi-professional ethos to care, has responded to (and sometimes anticipated) organisational and political changes, has introduced and developed an envied scheme for post-graduate training, appraisal and now revalidation, but has never been an influential contributor to NHS research.

While South Yorkshire practices have been involved in research initiatives over the past 15 years, these initiatives have not funded infrastructure costs and have not been sustainable.

The SYCLRN is supporting recruitment to portfolio studies by funding the development of a group of practices – the Cutler Group – that can incorporate research activity. This group comprises practices in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield that can offer some GP and administration time to facilitate this process.

The Cutler Group is modelled on other groups set up by PCRN EMSY and NEYNL CLRN.

#### Glossary

**NIHR:** National Institute for Health Research incorporating the **UK CRN** Clinical Research Network, which is the central organisation that fosters high-quality research in the NHS by incorporating certain trials in the CRN portfolio – so-called ‘portfolio studies’. **Portfolio studies** can be either included by the CRN if they are funded by independent bodies or adopted if they are funded commercially.

**SYCLRN:** South Yorkshire Comprehensive Local Research Network, responsible for supporting recruitment to CRN portfolio studies. The **NEYNL CLRN** performs the same task in North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire.

**PCRN EMSY:** Primary Care Research Network East Midlands and South Yorkshire, which is a topic-specific network identifying and rolling out trials in primary care.

**AUPMC:** The Academic Unit of Primary Medical Care at the University of Sheffield, which supports the Cutler Group across South Yorkshire.

## What do practices get out of membership of the Cutler Group?

- The group will take part in important NHS research that is based in practices and involves patients in the community. The results of studies will therefore be more relevant to primary care and be less affected by selection bias due to patients selected solely from secondary care.
- Research training and support offered by researchers who understand general practice
- Backfill funding
- Any support funding offered by specific trials (for instance, the PANDA study about decision aids in diabetes offers more than £1,000 for each practice and £50 per consented patient, but this is unusual!)
- Choice of studies
- Opportunities to enhance GP STP and undergraduate teaching

## What do practices have to do in return?

- Access certain clinical records in accordance with ethics approval
- Recruit to an agreed number of studies
- Nominate a specific GP who will act as research lead and liaise with the AUPMC, attend quarterly Cutler meetings and keep the practice up to date with developments
- Decide how involved they want to be. Some practices will want to recruit to complex trials, while some will want to recruit to a few simple studies. Some practices will want their practice nurse to take part, while others may want help from a research nurse.

## There are three levels of engagement

1. Agree to recruit patients to one complex and three other studies annually through one practice nurse session per week, one nominal GP session a month and some administrative costs totalling approx £5,500 pa.
2. Agree to recruit to one complex or three other studies through two hours' practice nurse time per week, one nominal GP session monthly and some administrative costs in total estimated at approx £4,000 pa.
3. Agree to facilitate recruitment to one complex or two other studies through 10 GP sessions a year, administrative costs and by providing a PC and desk space for a Cutler research nurse totalling perhaps £3,000 pa.

The SYCLRN is funding this for a year initially but if successful, funding will continue year by year.

For more details, please contact Dr Henry Smithson, Deputy Head AUPMC, or Brigitte Colwell, Research Associate AUPMC.

henry.smithson@sheffield.ac.uk  
b.colwell@sheffield.ac.uk  
0114 226 6809 (ansafone)