



Keep the magic alive

Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity

Research Strategy

March 2010

Our research mission

To support high quality research with the potential to improve the lives of the patients of Great Ormond Street Hospital, through better diagnosis, treatment, improved care or cures.

Background

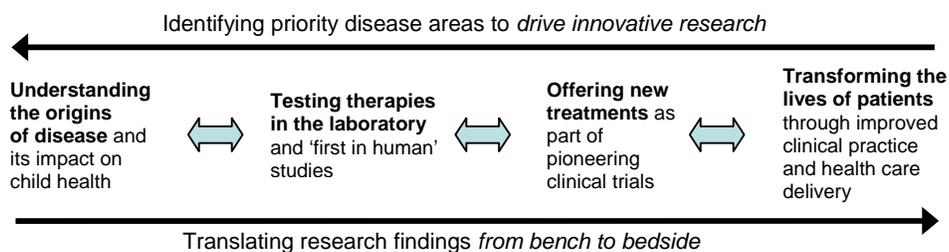
Every year Great Ormond Street Hospital treats thousands of children facing life-threatening and life-limiting conditions. Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity raises funds to enable the hospital to provide world-class care for these young patients and their families. As such, the charity seeks to raise over £50 million each year to contribute to the rebuilding and refurbishment of the hospital, fund the most up-to-date medical equipment, and provide accommodation and other support services for children and their families and to pioneer research into new treatments and cures for childhood illness.

The hospital has a responsibility to undertake research to improve diagnosis and treatment, or to develop strategies for prevention of childhood disease, as it is the place of last hope for many children who cannot be seen elsewhere, or not in sufficient numbers to support research. Working in partnership, Great Ormond Street Hospital and the UCL Institute of Child Health represent the greatest concentration of child health expertise outside North America.

Research expertise at the joint institution benefits not only children at the hospital, but right across the UK and, ultimately, around the world. This has been recognised through the award of Biomedical Research Centre status by the National Institute of Health Research – the only such UK centre focussing exclusively on children's research. Furthermore, the hospital and Institute have been awarded Academic Health Science Centre status, as part of UCL Partners, alongside partner hospitals and University College London. This status recognises our commitment to world-class research and clinical collaboration for improved patient benefit. Child health is one of the key themes embraced through the partnership.

Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity has committed to provide at least £5million every year to support a wide variety of research with the potential to improve the lives of the hospital's patients, through better diagnosis, treatment, improved care or cures. We recognise the importance of sustaining the full spectrum of research, from laboratory-based studies, through to trials of new therapies in clinical practice, to better ways of delivering those therapies in order to combat childhood illness.

We also recognise the importance of integrating treatment and research to make sure children benefit from findings as quickly as possible, as depicted by the following diagram:



What we will fund

We will fund projects which address one of our two research priorities, namely:

- 1) **Discovering the origins of disease** and the factors underpinning childhood illness.
- 2) **Pioneering and testing new therapies, treatments and care pathways** which will improve the health and well-being of children at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

All applicants must demonstrate how they will either:

- 1) **Build on previous successes** of individuals/groups with a proven track record of research to improve patient care by pump-priming new advances and/or applying their learning to new diseases or treatments, or;
- 2) **Develop innovative research programmes** in areas where there is a clear patient need at Great Ormond Street Hospital, but little research activity.

What we expect

Quality – projects put forward for consideration will meet the rigours of our research assessment procedure, having undergone formal evaluation by our independent research assessment panel. It is also our intention that from 2011 all funding applications will undergo specialist external peer review prior to evaluation via the assessment panel.

Deliverability – we will fund research which outlines clear and achievable goals that deliver real patient benefit, in line with our mission to help patients at Great Ormond Street Hospital. Defined research outputs must map into a clear timeline for translating findings into improvements in child health.

Engagement – grant-holders will be expected to demonstrate progress against agreed milestones through regular reporting and to demonstrate impact in line with agreed goals through a final project report.

Collaboration – where appropriate, we expect all applicants to demonstrate how they will actively bring together a balance of clinical and scientific expertise, to encourage translational research which will benefit patients.

Value – applicants should demonstrate why GOSHCC funding is critical to progress, as we would like to see our funds used where other funding is not available, or cannot easily be accessed. We will not support any institutional overhead or indirect costs associated with research, nor NHS service support costs where such costs could otherwise reasonably be reclaimed from NIHR Comprehensive Local Research Networks.

Sustainability – we are keen to see how our funding might best be used to pump-prime initiatives and expect applicants to explain what will happen at the end of any funding received from us. We also encourage applicants to demonstrate how our funding might be used to lever additional support from other sources, creating a multiplier effect, and expect applicants to take a proactive approach in declaring and protecting (where relevant, and subject to prior negotiation with the charity) any intellectual property rights arising from the results of research that may be commercially exploitable.

Funding streams

We will direct our research funds through four different funding streams:

- 1) **National funding** – from 2010/11 we will make funds available nationally, through open competition, for specific themed areas of research to be announced annually, which address key areas of patient activity at Great Ormond Street Hospital. Themes will reflect areas of identified research need with the potential to improve care for Great Ormond Street Hospital's young patients.
- 2) **Leadership funding** – working with the senior management of the hospital and its research partner the UCL Institute of Child Health, we will consider proposals of a strategic nature to underpin the work of senior research staff at the joint institution falling within this research strategy.
- 3) **Local investigator-led funding** – in response to “local” calls for applications, we will consider projects proposed by individuals based at Great Ormond Street Hospital NHS Trust and/or UCL Institute of Child Health, which meet our research priorities.
- 4) **Supporter-led funding** – we seek to work in partnership with supporters who wish to make a significant contribution to child health research at the Hospital/UCL Institute of Child Health and whose ambitions meet the tenets of our research strategy and our charitable objects.

All funding streams will be managed by the charity's independent research assessment panel on an ongoing basis, and reviewed formally at the point when each has run for a minimum of three years (anticipated date for this review will be September 2014). From 2011, we intend that any decision to restrict funding streams to a single institution will be taken subsequent to formal independent review of an expression of interest against set criteria laid out by the Charity.

Funding Criteria

We will support capital and revenue costs, justified in terms of their ability to deliver specific healthcare benefits, as part of either one-off or multi-annual grants, to include:

- **staff** (research leaders, scientific support staff, clinical researchers, collaborators);
- **equipment** (underpinning multiple research programmes, or linked to individual research projects);
- **buildings** (core facilities to expand research into a specific area, or upgrade of existing facilities to enable new research);
- **research consumables.**

Application Process

Calls for proposals and full details of the application process will be advertised on the Charity's website at www.gosh.org/research.