



RCN Foundation Call for applications

A feasibility study to co-design and preliminarily test a nurse-led, holistic, neurological rehabilitation intervention which supports the psychosocial rehabilitation and survivorship of young adults following an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). This will incorporate a three-year PhD nursing scholarship.

Introduction

The RCN Foundation is an independent charity (1134606 – England and Wales, SC043663 – Scotland) and a company limited by guarantee (7026001). It was set up in 2010 and aims to support and strengthen nursing to improve the health and well-being of the public. The Foundation delivers its purpose by:

- ***Supporting*** individual members of the nursing team (nurses, midwives and health care support workers) by providing grants for hardship and education purposes.
- ***Investing*** in the nursing profession to improve patient care by funding research and practice development projects in our priority areas.
- ***Championing*** nursing by raising the profile of the profession and public understanding of its contribution to improving the nation's health.

Our grants are open to any current or former nurse, midwife or health care support worker, and they do not need to be a member of the RCN to receive support from the Foundation.

Background

In 2018, the RCN Foundation successfully received a grant from CAF America from monies raised by a fundraising campaign fronted by the actor Emilia Clarke. The purpose of the grant was to support a programme of work relating to Advanced Nursing Practice for Neurological Rehabilitation and Care. Working in partnership with SameYou, the brain injury charity founded by Emilia Clarke and her family, the programme has so far funded:



- A research study by the London School of Economics (2020) demonstrating the economic case for investing in advanced nurse practitioners in neurological rehabilitation and care to support the delivery of specialist co-ordinated neurological rehabilitation services for young adults following an ABI.
- The Young Adults Rehabilitation Needs and Experiences following Stroke (YARNS) exploratory study by the University of Edinburgh of the lived experience of the neurological rehabilitation and care of young adult patients aged 18 to 40 years, following an ABI.
- A UK wide post-graduate certificate in neurological rehabilitation and care with the aim of enhancing advanced nursing practice in this speciality.

YARNS (Holloway et al, 2021) provided a greater understanding of young adults' experience of neurological rehabilitation following an ABI. The main findings of this study were:

- A greater understanding for nurses of patients' experiences of neurological rehabilitation, following an ABI as a young adult. This in particular related the individual's physical, cognitive and emotional rehabilitation journey from their former self to their present self, and onto their emerging self.
- Identification of a gap in the national provision of age-related neurological-rehabilitation. This is particularly relevant to the psychosocial support provided once the individual had been discharged from hospital to home. One quote from a participant in YARNS in particular summarised this experience:

*"I was released from hospital and told to "live my life."
How could I live my life, with no answers and worries going
on in my head?"*

(Holloway et al, 2021)

- Recognising the importance of the stroke nurse which is central to the individual experiences of holistic neurological rehabilitation.



Through their Stroke Priority Setting Partnership for Investment, the James Lind Alliance (JLA) and the Stroke Association (2021) have also identified neurological rehabilitation and care following a stroke as priority for further research: They have called for a need to:

“explore how community stroke services can be resourced and organised in all regions to provide effective home/community-based rehabilitation that meets the needs of all groups of stroke survivors including young adults.”

(James Lind Alliance and the Stroke Association Stroke 2021)

YARNS demonstrated that young adults currently experience challenges with their psychosocial rehabilitation and emotional wellbeing following an ABI (Holloway et al, 2021). The study identified a significant gap in the provision of relevant, age-appropriate neurological rehabilitation for young adults who have experienced an ABI. As reported by the participants, this gap in provision, results in delayed psychological recovery which for many, limits their survivorship and chance to embrace the “new me” and move on with their life. This is demonstrated through one participant reporting:

*“Recovery for me has been a massive journey,
even now six years on I’m still in recovery.”*

(Holloway et al, 2021)

The YARNS study, coupled with the JLA priority, demonstrates an urgent need to address this gap in the psychosocial provision within neurological rehabilitation, which is currently hampering the holistic rehabilitation and quality of survivorship for young adults following an ABI.

Central to the call, is the need to develop a nurse-led psychosocial rehabilitation intervention, which addresses young ABI survivor’s mental health and emotional wellbeing, so that they can achieve the greatest degree of survivorship to fully embrace their life moving forward.



Survivorship is associated with the steps taken by an individual following an ABI, to reclaim their life and enable them to move on with their new life rather than simply surviving the physical outcomes of an ABI.

Call for applications

In view of the current lack of age related holistic neurological rehabilitation interventions for young survivors of ABI, as demonstrated in YARNS and the JLA and Stroke Association partnership, the RCN Foundation is launching a call to fund a nurse-led feasibility study that will:

- ***Co-design and preliminarily test a nurse-led, holistic, neurological rehabilitation intervention which supports the psychosocial rehabilitation and survivorship of young adults following an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI).***
- ***Incorporate a three-year PhD nursing scholarship in Neurological Rehabilitation and Care within the grant.***

The aims of the research are to:

- Identify the extent and range of the current neurological rehabilitation provision for young survivors of ABI in the UK, through the findings of a mixed methods literature review.
- Explore how stigma associated with an ABI can influence rehabilitation and survivorship of young people.
- Understand the current nursing contribution to the psychosocial neurological rehabilitation provision for young survivors of ABI in the UK.
- Develop and test a co-designed, holistic, neurological rehabilitation intervention for nurses to implement to support the psychosocial rehabilitation and survivorship of young adult ABI survivors.



- The co-design approach should include contributions from young adult ABI survivors and their families, and other key stakeholders including but not limited to general and specialist nurses, healthcare support workers and members of the multi-disciplinary team working with young adult ABI survivors. Academics and charities working with young adult ABI survivors should also contribute to the design of the intervention.
- The psychosocial rehabilitation intervention needs to demonstrate that it is an accessible, sustainable, co-designed and age-related, intervention with reach across the four countries of the United Kingdom.

The research questions to be addressed through the study are:

- What is the current level of accessibility and range of psychosocial neurological rehabilitation for young adult survivors of ABI in the UK?
- What is the nursing contribution to current psychosocial neurological rehabilitation provision for young adult survivors of ABI in the UK?
- What are the fundamental components of an accessible, sustainable, co-designed and age-related holistic, rehabilitation intervention, for nurses practicing across the UK, to implement, to support the psychosocial rehabilitation and survivorship young adult survivors of ABI?
- How are the mental health and emotional wellbeing challenges often faced by young adult ABI survivors addressed through the intervention?
- How does stigma associated with an ABI affect the young persons survivorship and how can the intervention aim to address this?
- How is the young adult survivor of ABI and their families voice heard throughout the study?
- If testing demonstrates the intervention to be successful, how will it be made accessible to *all* young adult survivors of ABI across the UK?



The RCN Foundation welcomes applications that will produce high impact outputs and outcomes which demonstrate originality and innovation.

The study must cover initiatives across all four countries of the UK. The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion must be transparent throughout the study.

The RCN Foundation is seeking applications from individuals or organisations to work with our Trustees and staff over a 36-month period. Funding available is up to the value of £300,000. The project should be undertaken in 2022-2025. The funding available could cover direct research-related salaries, research expenses within reason and dissemination costs. The funding will not cover indirect costs such as organisational overheads, capital costs or purchase of non-specialist equipment.

Applicants will be required to attend regular, virtual update meetings with Trustees and/or Foundation staff. The successful individual/organisation will be required to submit regular update reports which will be mapped to an agreed payment schedule. There will also be an interim report at the mid-point of the study and a final report which presents the co-designed, nurse-led, holistic, neurological rehabilitation intervention which supports the psychosocial rehabilitation and survivorship of young adults following an ABI.

Application

To apply for this funding call, please submit a research proposal to:

grants@rcnfoundation.org.uk

The proposal should address the following headings:

Section A: Application details

Please include the details of the project lead and the organisation from which you are applying. Please give a brief description of the organisation and list all the members of the team undertaking the study. In addition, please list any partner organisations involved in the research.



The ideal application will demonstrate:

- Considerable experience of conducting evidence-based research around issues in nursing.
- How it best meets the objectives of this call.
- Experience of producing influential reports at a policy level.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Experience of providing written reports and presenting findings to both nursing professionals and non-specialists.
- Understanding the equality, diversity and inclusion issues relating to young adult survivors of ABI across the four countries of the UK.
- How the research design will aim to include hard to reach groups.

Section B: Project Details

Research design and methods

This section will introduce the aim and objective(s) of the study along with the research questions. It should identify the research design and methods you plan to use to co-design and test the nurse-led, holistic, neurological rehabilitation intervention which supports the psychosocial rehabilitation and survivorship of young adults following an ABI.

Ethical approval

Please indicate what type(s) of ethical approval are required for the study. It would be helpful to understand the timelines for any ethical approval processes.

Timelines and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Please present an overview of the proposed timelines of the study in a Gantt chart. This should include the key phases, deadlines and milestones of the study, as well



as any other relevant information. Please complete the following table outlining the proposed KPIs and timelines.

KPIs <i>e.g. x number of participants recruited; x number of research sites recruited; ethics approval secured</i>	Date <i>Please provide the date by which each KPI is expected to be achieved</i>

Outputs, evaluation and impact

Please describe the main outputs and outcomes of the study and how these meet the RCN Foundation’s priorities. Please explain how the short, medium, and long-term impact of the study’s findings and recommendations will be demonstrated and if appropriate measured.

Please also explain how the study will be evaluated.

Dissemination

Please outline how you propose to disseminate the outputs and outcomes of the study, identifying the key activities, and the audiences at whom this will be targeted. Please include details of the communication activities which will be required to support the dissemination.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Consideration needs to be given to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion within the proposal. Please provide information on how this study will address and incorporate these within the research design.

Sustainability



Please outline how the application will demonstrate sustainability beyond the study period if appropriate.

Key Risk

Please provide an indication of the key risks associated with this study and mitigations which may be taken to reduce these risks.

Section C: Study Costs and Resources

The maximum budget for this call is £300,000. Please provide a detailed breakdown of costs in the table below:

Budget:

Item	Cost £	Explanatory note	Funded by? <i>i.e. RCN Foundation/other organisation/applicant organisation</i>

PhD Nursing Scholarship

Within the grant there is also funding for 1 FTE PhD Nursing scholarship. Please provide details of the primary and secondary supervisors who will be overseeing the student as they undertake this scholarship.

Please also provide details of the organisations’ successful PhD nursing candidates from the last five years.

Next Steps



The closing date for applications is **17 June**

Interviews will be held w/c **4 July** and applicants will be informed of the decisions by **8 July**

Proposals received after the closing date will not be considered.

Completed proposals should be submitted by email to: grants@rcnfoundation.org.uk

Should you have any questions about this funding call please contact Dr Sarah McGloin, Head of Grants and Impact at the RCN Foundation on sarah.mcgloin@rcn.org.uk

Application checklist

Please ensure that you have included the following in your application:

Does the research require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Research Authority (HRA) approval for England and Wales • NHS Research Ethics Service approval for Scotland • HSC Integrated Research Application System in Northern Ireland • University ethical approval 	Yes/No
A comprehensive proposal including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research design and methods • Evaluation method • How the principles of EDI are addressed • Comprehensive dissemination plan • Impact measurement • Sustainability of the project 	Yes/No
A clear and comprehensive indicative budget	Yes/No
CVs for the research team	Yes/No
A timeline presented in a Gantt chart	Yes/No



KPIs presented in a table	Yes/No
Key Risks	Yes/ No

References

Holloway A. et al. 2021. Young Adults Rehabilitation Needs and Experiences following Stroke (YARNS): A review of digital accounts to inform the development of age-appropriate support and rehabilitation. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. DOI: 10.1111/jan.15076

James Lind Alliance 2021. Stroke Rehabilitation and Long-term Care Top 10 Priorities. Available at: [Stroke Rehabilitation and Long-term Care Top 10 Priorities James Lind Alliance \(nihr.ac.uk\)](https://www.nihr.ac.uk) accessed 10 May 2021
