

Future View for NIHR Academic Training: Questions for Consultation

- The Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine (IPEM) is a professional association and Learned Society with 4,450 members working in hospitals, academia and industry, who are physicists, engineers and technologists working with applications of physics and engineering applied to medicine and biology.
- As a charity, IPEM's aim is to advance the application of physics and engineering to medicine for the public benefit and to advance public education in this field. We do so by supporting and publishing research, and supporting the dissemination of knowledge and innovation through project funding and scientific meetings; and by setting standards for education, training and continuing professional development for healthcare scientists and clinical engineers.
- Members of IPEM's NIHR online forum were consulted for their views on this consultation.

Which aspects of NIHR's research training pathways do you think have worked best over the last 10 years and could be potentially expanded and why?

The healthcare scientist (HCS) dual NHS/University fellowships are an opportunity for medical physicists, engineers and technologists to take advantage of academic opportunities while remaining in permanent employment. In addition, the pathways targeting the earliest stages of research have successfully enabled NHS professionals who otherwise would not have had a chance to become involved in research to get some training and an idea of what research is about. Internships are a good way for people who are not sure about research to get a sense of what it is like.

Which aspects of NIHR's research training pathways would benefit from refinement, downsizing, combining or discontinuing and why?

There should be more emphasis on HCS training opportunities to help other professionals such as midwives, nurses and Allied Health Professionals understand the work of medical physicists, engineers and technologists is of patient benefit even if they are not necessarily patient facing.

What areas of training in the health and social care sector are not covered adequately at the moment and what ideas for potential solutions do you have?

A retraining pathway would be of benefit.

This exercise is focussed on the next ten years; which aspects of health and social care research are emerging and will most likely need fresh attention from NIHR's research training pathways?

Fellowships based on data analysis and public health and finances should be a focus for the NIHR.

Do you have any other comments on NIHR training or its interactions with the wider health and social care sector?

Become more IT and technology aware and up-to-date.