

WEDHS Policy on Research Protocols

What is the core aim of this policy?

The Wales Equality and Diversity in Health and Social Care Research and Support Network was established in 2005. Policies or programmes, such as WEDHS, that are specifically designed to tackle evidence of racial disadvantage or potential discrimination, do not need to be screened or assessed for their relevance to the race equality duty. As a research and support service, our remit extends to ongoing liaison, partnership work and research collaborations with other support services, the networks and other interested stakeholder groups. In regard to research, it is important to ensure that all protocols linked to WEDHS are of the highest quality, and that all research linked to WEDHS is screened or assessed for its relevance to the race equality duty. Moreover, based on the scoping study, the WEDHS research programme is rooted in targeted research strands, community development theory and practice (which includes participatory methodologies and patient & public involvement strategies) and the promotion of anti-racist (and any other anti-discriminatory) practice throughout the research and development infrastructure, and beyond. Thus, the majority of the research emanating from WEDHS (solely or in part) will be linked to WEDHS regional national research priorities, as developed through regional consultations and ongoing liaison with our key stakeholder groups.

The core aim of this policy is to establish the principle that all research linked to WEDHS must go through a process that considers the proposed study's (i) likely effects on promoting race equality (and the equalities agenda more generally), and the (ii) potential to improve health and social care outcomes of specific BME groups.

What are the benefits?

- Fostering confidence within BME population groups
- Establishment of an appropriate scrutiny and approval policy for research protocols developed by WEDHS (solely or in part)
- Recognition that research protocols developed by WEDHS (solely or in part) are of the highest possible standard, and reflect the specificities of research that has a focus on ethnicity or 'race'
- Increased awareness, throughout the network structure, of the importance of ensuring that all population groups are fully included in both the burdens and the benefits of research
- Fostering confidence amongst potential funders
- Creating confidence in the development of a 'linked-up', structured evidence base rooted in regional and national research priorities, as agreed by WEDHS key stakeholder groups

The Protocols

Criteria for inclusion:

- The use of WEDHS infrastructure in undertaking key aspects of the research process (i.e., recruiting participants or establishing regional contact points)
- Inclusion of WEDHS in a proposal (i.e., as a partner or collaborator – established or potential)

- Referencing of WEDHS (the research and support service) as an ‘added value’ element of the research protocol

Assessment procedure

All research proposals that fit the above criteria will also have to be assessed and approved by a committee nominated by the WEDHS Steering Group. The Assessment Committee decides on the suitability of projects to run under, or in collaboration with, WEDHS. This assessment will take place prior to, and not after, the submission of the proposal. To make an assessment, a copy of the proposal will be required, as will as the research approval form completed by the lead applicant. Given the fast pace of some grant submissions, the Chair of the WEDHS Assessment Committee should be alerted as soon as possible of any forthcoming submissions.

***** Please note, there is a fast track option – please contact WEDHS Central Office for further details.***