

Ethics and Research in Lower and Middle Income Countries

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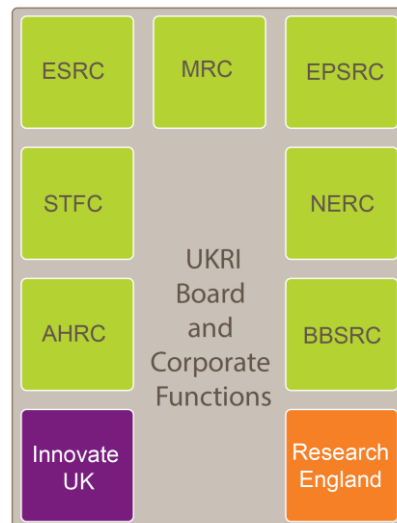
4th July 2019

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The changing landscape: MRC is now part of UKRI

UKRI established 1st April 2018

- MRC leads on scientific discovery to improve human health
- Councils maintain their identity, but have more opportunities to support cross-disciplinary research

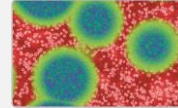


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MRC Research Boards

Infections & immunity

Global health: Immunity and infection through the life course
Data integration and systems approaches



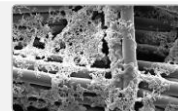
Neurosciences & mental health

Understanding dynamic biological systems
Exposures, biological mechanisms and disease
Radiation oncology & biology



Molecular & cellular medicine

Mental health studies Neurodegeneration Insight into
the living human brain



Population & system medicine

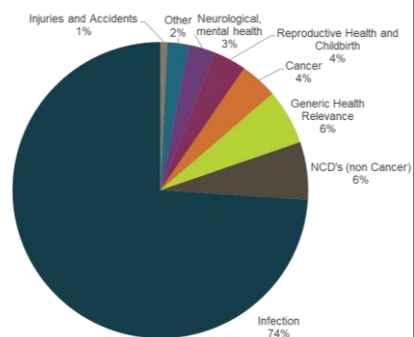
Multimorbidities: Mechanisms and models of human diseases
Integrated population health Nutrition



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Global Health

- MRC has a broad global health remit: from basic science through to health systems research
- MRC now spends approx. £100m per year on global health research
- **Health Areas**
- Global infections remain a priority
- Also funding mental health, cancer, maternal, child and adolescent health
- Multidisciplinary work is key, e.g. urbanisation, environmental threats



2016/17 Global Health Spend by Health Area

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Global Health

- Partnership funding with DfID and Wellcome, e.g. Joint Global Health Trials programme
- Newton Fund bilateral partnerships with ODA countries
- European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership



E D C T P



GCRF strategic funding for:

- Non-communicable diseases
- Mental health
- Global public health
- Vaccine development

- Increasing focus on research leadership, and capacities and skills development, including
 - ethics expertise and capacity
 - African Leaders Fund



Global Forum on
Bioethics in Research

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MRC Principles



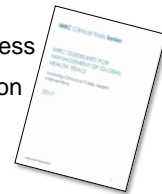
Researchers should

- Only carry out research that is relevant to the needs of the community in which it is undertaken
- Take account of the specific balance of benefits and risk in each study context
- Take special care to seek informed consent
- Agree with LMIC partners the plans for dissemination of findings to local participants and communities

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Ethical issues in LMICs

- Consent
 - seeking agreement from a community leader or assent from a family member may be appropriate in some contexts – but individual participant consent should also always be sought
- Standards of care
 - If possible offer the universal standard of care for the condition – as a minimum the best intervention available in local healthcare systems
- Ethical review of research
 - Review in country(ies) hosting and country(ies) sponsoring research
- Community engagement
 - Consulting communities through a meaningful participatory process
 - Involving them in the research design, conduct, and dissemination of results



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Fair Partnerships and Good Collaborations

MRC places emphasis on:

- Fair partnerships – shared and transparent decision-making
- Equitable sharing of resources, responsibilities, and benefits
- Sharing benefits with the community
- Building local capacity and expertise



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MRC Requirements for Ethics Review

- MRC policy for funded studies taking place outside the UK is that **ethics review should take place in the UK and in the host country**
 - to ensure that the research is acceptable to the local community
 - and in accordance with relevant local customs and traditions



Studies should also conform to any relevant legal and research governance requirements (e.g. data, human tissue)

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Supporting and facilitating research



- The MRC Regulatory Support Centre publishes specific regulatory guidance and responds to enquiries



National Centre
for the Replacement
Refinement & Reduction
of Animals in Research

- The NC3Rs works towards the replacement, refinement and reduction of animals in research
- NC3Rs will provide ethics review and advice for animal research in global research partnerships



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