**Background**

In January 2015, the Minister for Health & Social Services announced there would be £1m to support the implementation of each Delivery Plan. This would be recurrent and allocated through the Implementation Groups. Each group were asked to develop proposals in a way which best supports delivering progress for that group’s agreed priorities. The Stroke Implementation Group (SIG) agreed there should be a flexible fund ring-fenced each year for testing and developing future evidence base.

**Fund summary**

The Stroke Research, Innovation and Education Fund will support projects based on current evidence or best practice to improve stroke services across Wales.

The fund aims to drive research and innovative practice which will secure a significant and measurable improvement in service delivery or patient outcome. Money allocated is non‑recurrent and must be used within the financial year 2019-20. Any underspend will need to be returned.

Projects will need to demonstrate how they link with the agreed priorities:

1. The identification of individuals with atrial fibrillation (AF)
2. Reconfiguration of stroke services in Wales including the development of Hyper-Acute Services in Wales (HASU)
3. Community rehabilitation.
4. Embedding a stroke research infrastructure/network for stroke in Wales
5. Developing and responding to patient experience and outcome measures
6. The management of childhood stroke
7. Thrombectomy for stroke

Where possible the projects should be multi-disciplinary and involve collaborative working.

Projects should be a practical test of whether a new or significantly enhanced product or service delivers expected efficiency improvement, and can be adopted. It can also be to pump-prime services based on recent evidence provided by the organisation.

Research projects will automatically be adopted to the NHSC research portfolio and be expected to count towards Welsh stroke research activity. All bids should be discussed with your local R&D department at an early stage and a contact email from the R&D department provided.

**Bid requirements**

Projects should improve pathways / patient flow, reduce admissions / readmissions and link with primary and community care and to Prudent Healthcare.

Projects will be assessed on a number of areas, but where possible:

* The bid must link to current priorities agreed by the SIG
* Support improvements against SSNAP
* That the project has an Executive Sponsor from the health board and clearly link to IMTPs
* The bid has clearly set out milestones and timeframe. Projects will be supported for a specific length of time; finishing by the end of 2019-20 financial year.
* A project evaluation must be produced upon completion. If benefit evidence is presented organisations are expected to continue / roll-out and fund as core business. Learning should be shared with other pathways and health boards
* The project evaluation will be presented to the SIG for wider sharing or learning across Wales

Where possible and appropriate, health boards should work with third sector organisations and demonstrate multi-disciplinary working and engagement with key stakeholders

The fund is open to all health board, trusts, hosted services and third sector organisations across Wales. Projects will be selected and prioritised against the weighted criteria below. Funding will be made available to projects through an offer letter and quarterly claims in arrears against project expenditure. Supported projects will need to submit a quarterly report to the SIG (via the SIG Coordinator).

**Project reporting**

The SIG is responsible for overseeing the delivery and financial governance of projects supported by this fund. Each successful project will be required to produce a quarterly report providing details of spend, progress and benefits achieved to the SIG indicating:

* Spend to date
* Forecast spend / underspend
* Current progress status
* Risks / issues outside project
* Key activities taken / planned
* Areas of concern
* Key project risks

To support this process, templates for financial reporting and project monitoring will be provided to those awarded funding. Exception reporting is required to be submitted immediately should there become risks or slippage which will impact the project’s outcome. This must be reported immediately to the Implementation Group.

**Application document: Outline Project Proposal**

Please attach an Outline Project Proposal not exceeding four pages in length. The document should address each of the following weighted selection criteria, together with any further information as appropriate. Additional information should be embedded into the project proposal document.

* Impact [50%] – the intended improvement in pathway and patient outcomes
* Pace [20%] – the speed and/or certainty of delivery
* Strategic Fit [20%] – alignment with prudent healthcare and integrated medium term plans
* Affordability [10%] – funding and resources committed alongside the funds support

The assessment panel may request further information relating to the project, including after the closing date for applications. The SIG is not required to fund any project proposals and may award funding subject to conditions and / or amendments to project proposals.

For further information please contact: [stephen.davies2@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:stephen.davies2@wales.nhs.uk)

Quick check list: √

* Have you demonstrated the benefits of the project clearly enough, that someone that knows nothing about the concept can easily understand what you plan to do?
* Is there any supporting evidence for your initiative included in the submission?
* Have you got executive sponsorship and do they fully appreciate the nature of the project and support its submission?
* Is there a clear timeline and do the staged developments have milestones/dates?
* Have you considered what measures will be used to evaluate?
* Has the finance schedule been broken down into sections with staff and non-staff overheads?
* Finally, have you shared the paper with a critical friend to give everything a sense check?

Please remember that the panel that will be assessing the application won’t necessarily have your inside knowledge about this initiative and therefore you have to demonstrate what you plan to do and how it will benefit patients in a clear and concise way.