Research Committee Authorisation Framework

Introduction
The Trust has an impressive history of driving and supporting research – both clinical and applied, which has impacted upon service delivery, created policy change, improved practice and generated income through training and other products. The Authorisation Framework ensures that robust governance is in place to enable teams operate more dynamically, share grassroots innovation ideas for research and development and create more impact and commercial opportunities, while giving assurances to the leadership team and the Trustees and accountability for the researchers, their teams and findings. The Authorisation Framework outlines criteria which must be satisfied for any research carried out within the Trust, against agreed priorities.

Objectives
The overarching objective of the Authorisation Framework is to set out a clear and strategic approach to approve research projects, which can benefit the people we support, or add to our body of knowledge about our areas of operation, as well as processes related to intellectual rights. The Authorisation Framework sets out an approval methodology that allows a more strategic, structured, timely and agile approach to carry out and implement research projects across the organisation. The methodology aims to maximise research benefits, exploit any arising partnership or commercial opportunities and align them with the Trust's mission, values and strategy. The Committee's Authorisation Framework also considers whether projects reflect at least one of the four Research Framework areas of focus approved by the Trustees' Research, Development, Policy and Influencing Committee, however, projects with other areas of focus will also be considered.

Focus
Outcomes and cost-benefits: dedicated to understanding what affects the clinical outcomes of brain injury and other long-term neurological conditions, how outcomes are best measured, and how they relate to wider economic and societal benefits.

Assistive technology and technology for cognition: examining the benefits and disadvantages of using technology in rehabilitation and support.

Clinical assessment and intervention: developing and evaluating measures and interventions that are sensitive to the effects of brain injury, brain disorder and neurodiversity.

Brain injury and society: investigating and raising awareness of the impact of brain injury, brain disorder and neurodiversity in society, including criminal justice, domestic abuse, and homelessness, and developing ways of supporting individuals and services in the community.

Scope & Process
Every piece of research carried out within the Trust receives an appropriate degree of governance and ethics scrutiny by the Committee. Processes are in place to monitor projects and evaluate whether they add value to the Trust and the people we support or whether they could lead to commercial opportunity or policy change and practice.

The Authorisation Framework applies to the full range of research types, contexts and methods for both clinical and applied research conducted by academia as well as the Trust's staff and other partners.

In order to consider an application:

1. A project synopsis, including an estimated budget, proposed methodology, staff and service users' involvement is to be submitted via an online form.
2. Online / email submissions are sent via research@thedtgroup.org to the Research Fellow (Dr Sara da Silva Ramos) and the Head of Foundation (Jocelyn Gaynor) who document a recommendation.

3. Preparation of full study documents, as required, after recommendation from Research Fellow and Head of Foundation.

In the first instance the Research Fellow and Head of Foundation are to make a recommendation to support or not support the project implementation based on the research synopsis. Their recommendation will also include consideration and review of the impact on the Trust core areas:

- Operations – Assistant Director of Operations
- Information Governance – Data Protection Officer and H&S Manager
- GDPR & Risk - Data Protection Officer and H&S Manager
- Safeguarding – Head of Nursing
- Clinical Leadership – Consultant Neuropsychologist
- Policy and Influencing – Director of Communications and Foundation

The project synopsis is further submitted for review to the recommended departments when applicable and to the Research Committee, who have the right mix of qualifications, skills and expertise to approve any projects and further report to the Senior Leadership Team. The qualifications, skills and expertise of the committee are determined in the committee terms of reference. Board level oversight and assurance is provided by the Research, Development, Policy and Influencing Committee who meets quarterly and review a detailed quarterly report featuring all completed, ongoing and authorised future projects, their aims, benefits and outcomes.

A project can commence after the three steps of review are completed and the Committee have approved it. The process is to take no longer than one month from submission to approval and may be supported by administrative staff (Executive Assistant of the Director of Clinical Services and / or to the Director of Governance and Quality Assurance) to meet deadlines and accomplish decision making in a timely manner.

- Research Fellow / Head of Foundation recommendation.

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- When required, departments' consultation and implementation oversight (Operations, Information Governance, GDPR & Risk, Safeguarding, Professional Support).

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- Research Committee review and approval.

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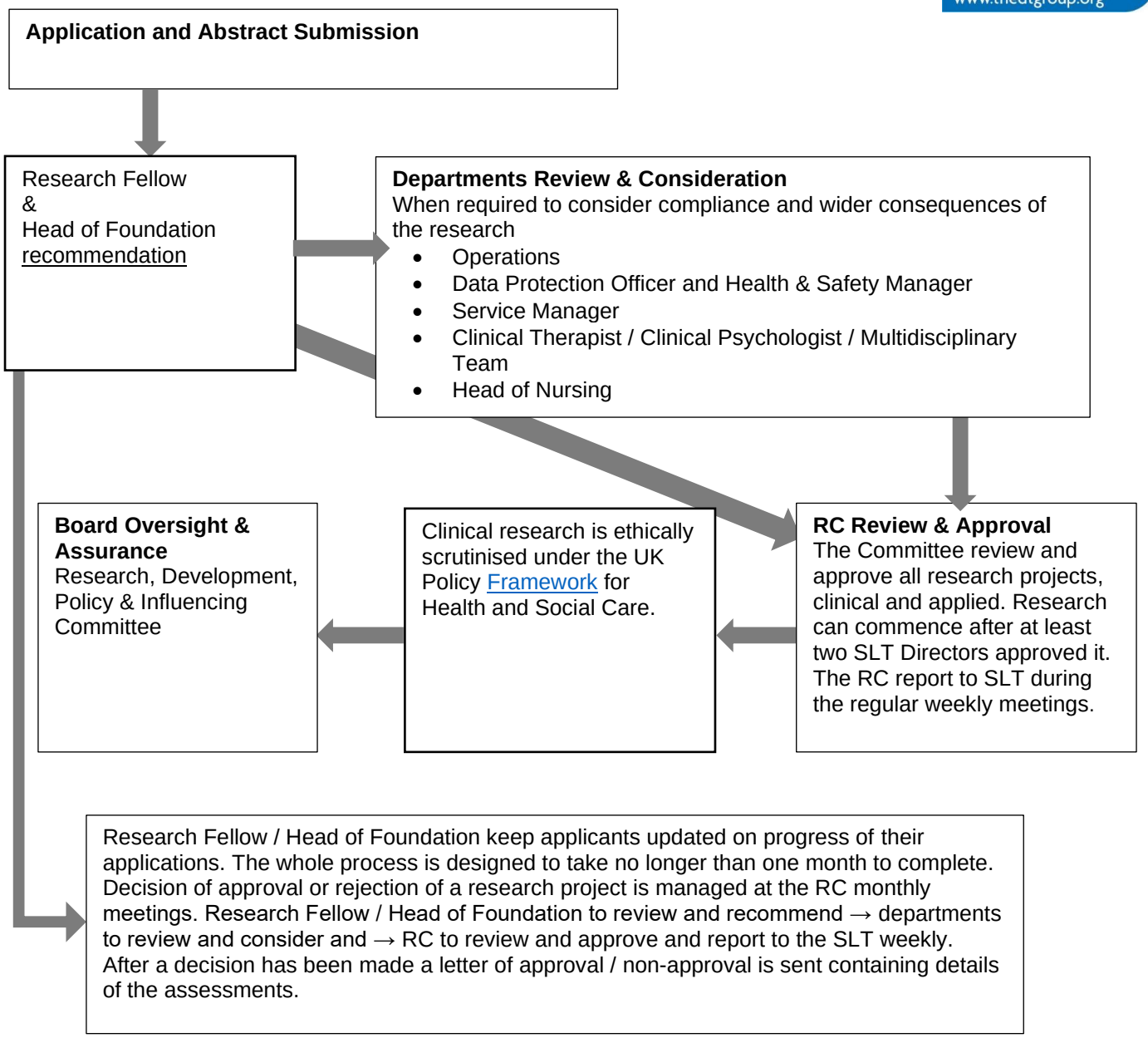
- When research (as defined under the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research, 2020), submission of a full project application, including scientific background, study protocol and full study materials for research ethics review by the Research Committee. For more details please see the flow-chart at the end of the document.

Recommendation, Assessment, Validation & Ratification

- In order to commit to the one-month timeline from submission to ratification, apart from the regular monthly Committee meetings, it is anticipated that all tools of communication are used to review and approve research project proposals. By way of example, research project proposals can be discussed and ratified via email by Committee members if other line of work does not allow its members to meet in person. This can be supported by admin staff who will keep record of who and when approved research project proposals.

Authorisation Chart



Upon approval, researchers are required to provide regular updates on progress, including the date of the first participant recruitment, any changes or deviations from the study protocol or changes in the planned duration of the study. The date of the last participant recruited and the date of the study completion. In addition, researchers are also required to submit a copy of the full study report, which is to be reviewed and summarised by the research team, who will also outline the implications, recommendations and opportunities arising from each study in a Quarterly Research Report, and in an Annual Research Report.

Translations and intellectual rights approvals follow the same schematics for seeking ratification from the Research Committee.

Audit, service evaluation and research review process