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UKCRC Partners recommend routine use of the Research Passport for issuing NHS Honorary Research Contracts. The Research Passport now forms part of the *Research in the NHS – Human Resources Good Practice Resource Pack* (October 2007) issued for use by all NHS organisations in the UK.

The UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC) is a partnership of organisations working together to establish the UK as a world leader in clinical research. The partnership includes the major stakeholders in clinical research in the UK, including the Health Departments in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and the other main funding bodies, the NHS, regulators, academia, industry and patients.

The UKCRC recognises that efficient governance is fundamental to a first class clinical research environment and strongly supports initiatives such as the Research Passport system.

The Research Passport was originally prepared and launched in the north-west of England by the North West Strategic Health Authority working in partnership with local NHS organisations and universities. Following this success it was prepared by the UKCRC for UK-wide use.

The Research Passport is designed to save the valuable time and resources of Human Resources, R&D departments and researchers. It promotes consistent use of honorary research contracts by the NHS and its partners, and provides clear guidance on their use. The Research Passport system also provides a streamlined, standard application system for honorary research contracts. Importantly, it minimises the demand for repeat checks for every honorary research contract, by providing guidance on the circumstances when it is reasonable to rely on assurances offered by those who have already conducted these checks.

The Research Passport is the new standard approach to issuing NHS honorary research contracts to those, with no contractual relationship with the NHS, wishing to conduct studies in the NHS. It is designed for use throughout the UK. It forms part of the **Research in the NHS – Human Resources Good Practice Resource Pack**.

The Resource Pack additionally contains clear guidance regarding the use of pre-engagement checks for those already in a contractual relationship with the NHS: i.e. with either a substantive employment contract or honorary clinical contract - and who wish to conduct research across several NHS organisations.

The Resource Pack was produced with guidance and support from numerous UKCRC partners and stakeholder organisations and individuals including the UK Health Departments; NHS R&D Forum; NHS Employers and their legal advisers; Universities UK; Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA); Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA); Universities Personnel Association (UPA) and the Medical Schools Council.

Using the Research Passport and the Resource Pack will help to speed up the research project start up process and initiate research at the earliest opportunity. It will also save valuable resources by reducing duplication of work. For this to happen, the new approach needs to become standard practice.

The UKCRC partners strongly advocate the routine use of the Research Passport for issuing honorary research contracts in the NHS and the *Research in the NHS – HR Good Practice Resource Pack* as the definitive guidance on sharing pre-engagement checks across sectors and between NHS organisations.