

## Pump priming Parkinson's allied health professional posts

The kickstarting or 'pump priming' of posts by charities has been an impactful way of securing commitment from the NHS for the development of specialist services for a range of conditions. Parkinson's UK has successfully funded and supported 325 new specialist nurse posts across the UK via the pump priming model and 13 AHP posts.

With funds from Parkinson's UK, we are now looking to improve multidisciplinary care for people with Parkinson's by extending this model and investing in new allied health professionals (AHP) and mental health posts.

We've heard loud and clear from people with Parkinson's that they really value person centred multidisciplinary care. This helps them feel confident and in control of their condition.

Sadly, the [UK Parkinson's Audit](#) shows us that there are enormous gaps in access to this type of care. Data from the 2022 audit showed huge variation in the way multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) are structured, varying from fully integrated MDTs with established pathways into other services (e.g. falls services) to single doctor or nurse clinics. A third of clinics for people with Parkinson's are staffed by a doctor alone.

People's symptoms have worsened following the COVID 19 pandemic and there is an unprecedented demand on existing services. Data from a [survey](#) of more than 2000 people with Parkinson's, carried out by Parkinson's UK and Lancaster University, showed that:

- More than a third experienced either increased slowness of movement (39%), fatigue (37%) or stiffness (39%)
- More than a quarter experienced either increased tremor (27%), anxiety (31%) or sleep problems (26%)
- 13% experienced an increase in falls and dizziness.

“I was originally referred for a neuro physiotherapy appointment in early July 2021 [...]. I was in a terrible state following a fall. I finally got a 2 hour assessment with a London based neuro physio 10 months later. It has been transformative. I would have never believed how much difference it has made to my Parkinson's. The sad thing is that I have to travel 30 miles to London because the clinic 10 minutes down the road [...] has a 30 to 40 week wait!

Travelling to London for an appointment is not the end of the world for me but for some people that could be a deal breaker to getting better care. Also a person with Parkinson's needs to be physically strong and have a lot of stamina to do this and a strong support network. I worry that a lot of other people with Parkinson's could not be as fortunate as I am. It is heartbreaking that we have a two tier system of care for the haves and the have nots.”

Person who has lived with Parkinson's for 8 years

### Which posts are the Excellence Network open to funding?

We're open to receiving bids for funding to support the development of any new AHP or mental health post that is fully or partially dedicated to Parkinson's. This could include (but is not limited to) posts relating to any of the following professions: physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, clinical psychology, nursing associates, pharmacy or clinical coordination.

We welcome bids for posts that will truly transform the local service for people with Parkinson's, for example through: better access to integrated multidisciplinary care, improved anticipatory or preventative care and better inpatient management. We will prioritise these proposals above ones that are simply looking for an additional member of staff. We'll also prioritise bids that will produce high quality data and evidence about the benefits of integrated multidisciplinary care and have the potential to inform new models of Parkinson's care across the UK.

In deciding which posts to fund, we consider:

- The size and demographics of the local population of people with Parkinson's (we prioritise areas with high levels of health inequality)
- The current level of access to a multidisciplinary team of professionals
- The risks to the local community if the Excellence Network does not fund the new post

- The geography and size of the area that the post holder will be expected to cover, and whether the 'banding' of the new post is justified
- How the post will integrate across community and acute care
- How people with Parkinson's, our local community networks (including [Parkinson's UK local groups](#)), and local clinicians have been involved in developing the bid
- The financial status of the bidders: will they be able to continue funding the post following our initial investment?
- Whether there are alternative ways to improve services locally that should also be considered

## What does the funding cover?

We cover the cost of the creation of **new posts**. Pump priming money is **not** available to cover the replacement of existing posts that have become vacant due to resignation, retirement, long term sickness or maternity or paternity leave. The amount of funding available is flexible and depends on local circumstances.

We will only cover dedicated hours or posts that support people with Parkinson's. We will not fund generic neurological posts. If the post is to cover more than one condition, you must explain this in your bid and include details of how many hours or sessions will be dedicated to Parkinson's.

Funding covers the salary, employer pension and employer National Insurance (NI) contributions based on the [Agenda for change](#) pay scales. Please ensure that you have consulted with your local finance team to agree exact costs before submitting your bid.

We believe it is important the local NHS, ICS, health board or trust make a contribution to the post over and above the pump priming money. You must include details of how the local NHS will cover the associated costs (such as administration, equipment, office space and travel) in your bid.

## Are you considering creating new or modified roles?

Clinical roles are constantly changing and adapting to take account of advances in treatments and technologies, new ways of working, and workforce shortages. However, there is often a lag between changes in practice and updates to legislation, regulations and guidance for clinicians. This can make it challenging for clinicians working in new or modified roles and their managers, but there are clear legal frameworks in place to guide the scope of practice for different professionals.

In response to questions from clinicians within the Excellence Network about the rules around prescribing for Parkinson's Practitioners, we have developed an [FAQ document](#) to support you as you look to grow and develop your service.

## How do I apply?

Once you have decided that you might like to submit a bid, please submit your expression of interest using the [online form here](#). Once we have received your form, someone from the Service Improvement team will contact you to provide you with more information and talk you through the process.

You will then need to prepare a bid and send it to the Head of Service Improvement and Grants using the email address above. The bid must include:

- A business case
- A letter of intent. (This must be signed by either the Chief Executive, Chief Financial officer or equivalent)

Please note that you must have previously submitted an [expression of interest form](#) before you send in your completed business case and letter of intent.

## The business case

This should include:

- The aims and objectives of the post
- Details of the desired post: band, hours (only include dedicated Parkinson's hours), amount requested and duration of funding (please remember we only cover salary, NI and pension)
- Details about the service including geographical cover, population, current outcomes
- The clinical case for support (e.g. fewer falls, improved rates of diagnosis of Parkinson's related dementia, improved well being scores)
- The economic case for support (e.g improved non elective length of stay)
- The financial case for support. This should include the costings and an explanation for why you need Parkinson's UK to pump prime the post
- An options appraisal: what other options were considered and why is your desired post the preferred option?
- The risks or barriers to developing this post if funding is not granted. You should describe any contingency plans that are in place if The Excellence Network can not fund the post wholly or partly
- How people with Parkinson's have been involved
- How you will audit and evaluate the post.

### **The letter of intent**

- This must be from the organisation that will continue the funding at the end of the pump priming period.
- It must be signed by either the Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer or equivalent
- It should include:
  - The key aims and objectives that will be used to monitor the impact of the post
  - Any key performance indicators
  - The amount and duration of funding being requested

**If any of the paperwork is missing or incomplete the bid will be returned.**

### **The decision making process**

Decisions are made by the Pump Priming Funding Panel. The Panel reviews bids up to twice a year. The submission deadlines for the Panel meeting are on our website.

The membership of the Pump Priming Funding Panel includes:

- Director of External Relations, Parkinson's UK (Chair)
- Nurse and Therapy leads of the Parkinson's Excellence Network Clinical Leadership Team
- Associate Director of Policy & Health Strategy, Parkinson's UK
- Head of Service Improvement & Grants, Parkinson's UK
- A lay reviewer (person with lived experience of Parkinson's)

If specific expertise is required for a particular decision, the panel will co-opt additional members onto the panel to support decision making

### **What happens if the bid is successful?**

Once a final decision is made we will contact the person who submitted the bid to inform them of the outcome.

If successful, a formal letter will be sent to this person by the Chair of the Funding Panel detailing:

- The total amount funded
- Instructions for invoicing



- Information about our proposed ongoing involvement in recruiting and supporting the new member of staff
- Your key Parkinson's UK contact

## Support from the Parkinson's Excellence Network

Our Service Improvement team can support you in developing your bid. We can help with:

- Information and advice about different service models
- Development of your business case
- Example business cases
- Development of key performance indicators
- Evidence and data, including
  - [Prevalence data](#) for Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England
  - [Hospital Episode Statistics \(HES\)](#) data for Scotland, Wales and England
  - Prescribing data for Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England
- Links to community networks, including [local groups](#) and people with lived experience of Parkinson's

For more information or requests for support, please email [serviceimprovement@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:serviceimprovement@parkinsons.org.uk).

## Appendix

[View the 2024 pump priming timelines](#) (PDF, 87KB).

[Download the business case submission checklist](#) (PDF, 747KB)