

# Frequency Asked Questions

## CRP Directory & Accredited Register Question's

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## Clinical Research Practitioner Directory & Register Questions

### **1) What is a Clinical Research Practitioner?**

The term Clinical Research Practitioner (CRP) serves as an umbrella title for a family of roles in research delivery that have a patient-facing element and where the post holder isn't currently registered to a healthcare profession. Clinical Research Practitioner therefore includes job titles like, for example, Clinical Studies Officer, Research Practitioner, Clinical Trials Practitioner, Clinical Trials Officer and many others. Those in CRP roles are often degree graduates, though not always.

### **2) Is the CRP Directory and Accredited Register for all healthcare professionals involved in research?**

No. The CRP Directory and Accredited Register is intended for those individuals who are currently not registered as a healthcare professional. Statutory regulation applies for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals, who have all qualified as healthcare professionals through specific education and training.

Clinical Research Practitioners have entered the research delivery workforce through other routes, predominantly as degree graduates but also as experienced professionals from a variety of backgrounds (e.g. progression through roles in healthcare, clinical research delivery, the life sciences industry or business).

There are overlapping identities in clinical research delivery and Clinical Research Nurses and Allied Health Professionals in research may also see themselves as Clinical Research Practitioners. However, registration as a CRP is not intended for professionals who are already registered. Everyone's contribution is essential and complementary and a mix of skills in the research delivery team is necessary and beneficial and recognition of skills and knowledge in clinical research is an important area that is being examined and addressed in a number of ways. If you are a registered professional looking for advice about your career and community, we recommend discussing this with the lead nurse, research nurses or AHP leads in your area.

### **3) What's the difference between the CRP Directory and the Accredited Register for CRPs?**

The CRP Directory was established to create a community of practice for Clinical Research Practitioners and lay the foundation for defining the professional identity of CRPs, including establishing a register.

To be listed on the CRP Directory, CRPs must be working in a research delivery role that involves direct contact with patients or other study participants, and normally not registered to a healthcare profession.

The CRP Accredited Register is part of the Professional Standards Authority's accredited register programme that supports over 90,000 practitioners across different health and care occupational groups.

CRPs wishing to join the CRP register will need to meet defined standards of proficiency and provide evidence of this that has been confirmed locally for verification by AHCS.

### **4) What happens to the CRP Directory when the Accredited Register for CRPs is established?**

The CRP Directory will remain a point of entry for CRPs, a place to connect with fellow

CRPs and a way to stay directly informed. In time the Directory will provide a platform for developing the professional leadership of the CRP community.

Listing on the CRP Directory will in time grant access to a dedicated community forum supported by NIHR. Registrants are not required to remain on the Directory.

### ***5) Will my details be safe?***

The information in your CRP Directory account and associated with the Accredited Register will be held in line with AHCS Privacy and Legal Policy. A data sharing agreement exists between the NIHR Clinical Research Network and the AHCS for the purpose of understanding more about the CRP workforce and informing future developments.

### ***6) What do I need to do to prepare to register as a CRP?***

A defined Scope of Practice and Standards of Proficiency set for the CRP Register will apply to all registrants. Applications will be assessed on a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates that the Standards of Proficiency have been met. The portfolio of evidence must address set requirements for experience, training and education and will be defined within the quality assurance framework for the CRP register. We encourage you to use the NIHR Integrated Workforce Framework (IWF) tool, alongside your local competency framework to assist you with your application.

### ***7) What were the PSA looking for in their review of the proposed CRP register?***

The significant amount of work undertaken by the NIHR and AHCS team to establish the accredited CRP register to pursue a formal application for accreditation was submitted to the Professional Standards Authority in December 2019. The process involved proposing a Notification of Change to the Authority which set out the reasons for and benefits of the new part of the AHCS register.

The PSA Accreditation Team undertook a rigorous assessment of the application, including taking feedback about the applying organisation from third parties including patients, service users, professional and representative organisations. The Accreditation team also carried out a documentary review related to the change and combined this with other sources of evidence to assess the proposed change. The Accreditation team submitted a summary report to the Moderator (a member of the Authority's Director-level staff) with its recommendation on whether to accept the change.

The change to the AHCS register to include CRPs was approved by the Professional Standards Authority in April 2020.

### ***8) Do you anticipate further work on common skills and competencies for CRPs?***

Yes. The NIHR Integrated Workforce Framework (IWF) is a means of alignment across competency frameworks in use and the NIHR CRN will continue to work with local and national research workforce experts on harmonisation and standardisation through a variety of approaches, including use of the IWF.

### ***9) How do I change my personal details on my application's once my application has been completed?***

Once the application has been completed, the account has been locked and therefore, the CRP needs to email the CRP Administrator team with what changes needs to be made to their profile.

## Clinical Research Practitioner Directory

### ***10) I'm on the CRP Directory, is there an annual renewal fee to stay listed?***

No. At this current time, it is free to join the CRP Directory. CRPs who successfully join the Accredited Register do not have to remain on the Directory. Registrants pay an application fee of £30 and annual fee of £30 to remain on the Accredited Register.

### ***11) I live in Spain; can I join the Clinical Research Practitioner Directory?***

Unfortunately, not the Directory and Register is for Clinical Research Practitioner's working in patient facing roles in the United Kingdom.

Delivering research care as part of research delivery teams in health and social care settings. This is in response to growing numbers of skilled practitioners who are not currently part of a statutory register like their clinical research nurse colleagues.

### ***12) How to search for a CRP on the Directory?***

To search for a CRP on the Directory, copy and paste this link into a webpage:

<https://crp.ahcs.ac.uk/search/18/clinical-research-practitioner-directory>. Then you can search for the CRP by searching for their: Name, ID Number, Town / City (They live in).

## Clinical Research Practitioner's Register Questions

### ***13) Do I need to make another account to apply to the Register?***

You don't need to make separate account to join the register, you can use your directory account to make the application. As you will need to have joined the directory in order to make an application to join the register.

To do this, please visit - <https://crp.ahcs.ac.uk/> and sign in with your username and password associated with your account. If you have forgotten your credentials, please email [crpadmin@ahcs.ac.uk](mailto:crpadmin@ahcs.ac.uk) or reset a new password. Once you are signed in, please go to dashboard, select 'Clinical Research Practitioner Register' from the list of AHCS registers. Then the CRP Register application will appear in your dashboard.

If you are unsure whether you hold a directory application, please email - [crpadmin@ahcs.ac.uk](mailto:crpadmin@ahcs.ac.uk) or check the directory for your name.

### ***14) Can I use the title Clinical Research Practitioner once I joined the accredited register?***

Joining the CRP Accredited Register is unrelated to your job title. Your job title is provided to you by your local employer and this won't change when you become accredited. However, you may wish to discuss your job title with your manager. There has been a growth in numbers of Clinical Research Practitioner job titles.

### ***15) When and how can I join the Accredited Register?***

The Register is currently open, though depending on the volume of applications, there may be times when we need to close applications for a short time. If this becomes necessary, we will inform you through the CRP Directory Communications and this website.

Those who wish to join can do so here: <https://crpregister.ahcs.ac.uk/>. Applicants must already be listed on the CRP Directory.

### ***16) Who can apply to join the accredited register?***

A continuing challenge in the journey to establish the CRP Accredited Register is terminology and the clear articulation of who the Register is for. The Accredited Register is for people who are working at the **level** of practitioner. This is outlined in the Skills for Health Career Framework at level 5 which details the elements of a practitioner role. These include comprehensive and specialised skills and knowledge, including problem solving, ability to make judgements and contribute to service and self-development.

The diversity in job titles that characterise the CRP community means that many roles have the word Assistant or Support in the title even though the individual is working at practitioner **level**. Having Assistant in a job title is not a barrier to applying to the Register, providing the applicant can demonstrate that they are working at the **level** of Practitioner. This is evidenced in the reflective statements and the other supporting evidence submitted with the application to register. Please ensure you have read the guidance documents and have the support of your line manager before you start the process.

The development of the register is enabling conversations about job titles and standardisation and this is welcome. The subject of job titles and job description is a matter for local employers. We encourage the sharing of learning and the development of more consistent and shared understanding of CRP roles and the development of a clearly defined career framework that clearly aligns with comparable NHS careers.

Currently CRPs also require a degree or equivalent to enter the Register. A pathway for experienced CRPs who do not have a degree will be available in the autumn of 2022 following engagement with CRPs and workforce leads over the summer.

***17) What will the criteria be for registration as a CRP?***

Eligibility for registration as a CRP will be assessed on a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates that the Standards of Proficiency have been met and you are working to an agreed Scope of Practice within your local organisation. There will be an expectation of there being a patient-facing element within the role together with experience at practitioner level.

***18) I am married, do I need to produce my marriage certificate?***

Yes, if documentation is in the maiden's name, the CRP will have to show proof of marriage and upload this into their 'portfolio' section.

Within the 'personal details' section of the application, the box 'Have you ever been known by another name?' needs to be ticked and the drop-down box needs to be filled in with the previous' CRP last names.

***19) I have been married more than once with pieces of documents in several names, what shall I do?***

In this situation, all documentation will need to be uploaded into the 'portfolio' section in the application. Within the 'personal details' section of the application, the box 'Have you ever been known by another name?' needs to be ticked and the drop-down box needs to be filled in with the previous' CRP name.

***20) Do I need to make another AHCS portal account when signing up to the Clinical Research Practitioner Register?***

No, when signing up to the Clinical Research Practitioner Register, the CRP will need to use the same account they used for the CRP Directory. As the CRP needs to be on the CRP Directory in order to be sign up on the CRP Register. CRPs who successfully join the Accredited Register do not have to remain on the Directory.

***21) I don't have an undergraduate degree; can I join the Clinical Research Practitioner Directory?***

Unfortunately, they cannot join the CRP Directory at this time. We are working on an equivalence route for CRPs without a degree, more information will come in due course.

***22) My undergraduate degree wasn't awarded by an UK institution, can I still sign up to the Register?***

Yes, the CRP can sign up to the Register. If the degree qualification was awarded by a non-UK institution, then the CRP will have to upload a copy of 'UK Eric' (Formerly known as NARIC) certification indicating comparability with UK standards.

***23) What qualifications do I need to show when creating an application for the register?***

When uploading qualifications, the CRP needs to provide a scanned copy of their degree certification (multiply uploads can be uploaded) and the current training in Good Clinical Practice (GCP).

***24) Can documents relevant to the application be signed electronically through Word/PDF if I am working from home?***

Yes, the documents can be signed electronically. It is important that managers and the



registered professional are involved in the submission have the opportunity to be involved and engaged in the process and so the application needs to be planned and time put aside for all input, including signatures.

***25) Once on the CRP register, I need to keep proof of CPD. Is there a certain amount of CPD that I must maintain each year?***

There is not a prescribed amount of CPD. Being part of the register provides an opportunity to take a planned approach to accessing learning and development and keeping records of that. You will be asked to provide assurance about CPD as part of the annual renewal of registration and you could be asked to submit your CPD portfolio to the Academy Registrar. <https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/our-registers/hcs-register/continuing-professional-development/>

***26) I have previous research experience but am not currently working in research. Can I still sign up in case I wish to return to delivery of research at some point in the future?***

If you are not currently working in a research role but have experience, then you have the option to join the CRP Directory, but you would not be able to join the CRP Register.

The requirement of the register is to involve colleagues in the application process and to reflect on your Scope of Practice and how your current role enables you to meet the Standards of Proficiency will be challenging for an individual not currently working in research.

***27) Can research staff of any banding apply to the CRP register or do applicants need to be band 5 and above?***

The pay band or title of your role are not assessed within the eligibility criteria to join the CRP register. The register is open to experienced CRPs who have a degree and can demonstrate that they meet the Standards of Proficiency and working within a defined Scope of Practice. The Skills for Health Career Framework describes the

career progression from Assistant through Practitioner Levels and we think that the work of many CRPs will fall into the category of Practitioner as described at level 5 of the Skills for Health Career Framework [https://skillsforhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Career\\_framework\\_key\\_elements.pdf](https://skillsforhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Career_framework_key_elements.pdf)

There is local variation in AfC bands and job titles and it is up to managers and CRPs to consider whether or not the applicant is working at a practitioner level regardless of their banding, although it would be concerning if a CRP in a band 3 role was working at the level of Practitioner. Many organisations are currently looking at banding and career progression and we hope the register provides an opportunity to continue to develop a more consistent approach to job descriptions.

***28) Who can confirm my application? Does it have to be a line manager?***

Your line manager can sign off the whole application as this provides assurance that everything is true and of the required standard needed to be on the CRP Register.

Your line manager doesn't have to be registered with a pin number or be in an CRP role. If they're registered (this can be any registration body) they can provide their PIN/Registration Number in the document.

Although, the professional development conversation needs to be signed off by a statutory registered professional and a PIN/Reg number is required.

### ***29) Where can I access the Good Clinical Practice training?***

The NIHR offer's Good Clinical Practice (GCP) training, please use this link to access the training: <https://sites.google.com/a/nihr.ac.uk/crn-learn-help/home>

### ***30) How can I access NIHR's Learn Platform?***

NIHR Learn Platform is a space to connect and share updates, experiences or advice with your fellow CRPs. It is open to everyone on the CRP Directory and register and it is a fantastic way to collaborate with others within your profession.

To access the Learn Platform, please use this link:

<https://learn.nihr.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=815> .

To site requires an access key, to access the enrolment key, please email:

<mailto:maya.leach@nihr.ac.uk>.

### ***31) Who do I contact for support in regard to GCP training?***

Please use this link for support in regard in to GCP training:

<https://sites.google.com/a/nihr.ac.uk/crn-learn-help/contact-us>

### ***32) How do I write a reflective statement about working across boundaries?***

Working across boundaries is identified as a key skill needed for effectiveness in the research delivery workforce and is always a focus for development of awareness and skills in negotiating permissions and extending the reach of your practice.

Start with thinking about how you engage with others. In your writing, you will be including a summary shaped around your experiences of engagement with others. This will be set in the context of organizational and professional ways of working that would apply when involving new clinical teams in research, either based in your own organization or in a different organization, or when you have been engaging a particular study participant group.

Consider what has been challenging for you in establishing ways of working together with others and then extend this to reflecting on how your practice has changed and developed to become stronger in this area.

When you come to write about what has been significant learning for the development of your practice, remember to make reference to one or more of the Standards of Proficiency 7 to 14, that most closely relates, and make reference to your learning of new skills, any new understanding gained (e.g. on the scope of practice of various professionals or the diverse needs of study participants) as well as or any specific responsibilities you came to undertake (e.g. in relation to study delivery for a new area of research or perhaps advising on requirements for GCP training, handling of information, confidentiality and security).

### ***33) Can managers/leaders apply to the register?***

If you are not currently working in a research delivery role or leading and managing others in such a role it would not be appropriate for you to join the Directory or Register. You may wish to stay informed through regular visits to the CRP website.