New South Wales Regional Health Partners
Centre for Innovation in Regional Health

Targeted Expression of Interest
Process and Timeline for Medical Research Future Fund 2018
Rapid Applied Research Translation Grants

New South Wales Regional Health Partners Background: NSW Regional Health Partners was accredited by the NHMRC as Centre for Innovation in Regional Health (CIRH) in 2017, and is one of nine national consortia that form the Australian Health Research Alliance (AHRA). The foundation members are Hunter New England Local Health District, Central Coast Local Health District, Mid North Coast Local Health District, Calvary Mater Newcastle, Hunter New England Central Coast Primary Health Network, Hunter Medical Research Institute, University of Newcastle and University of New England.

New South Wales Regional Health Partners Aims: The NSW Regional Health Partners aims to improve the health outcomes of people living in regional, rural and remote areas of Australia by delivering better regional healthcare and preventative health strategies and formulating relevant health policies and practices. It also aims to drive research for evidence-based innovation in areas such as clinical practice and new treatments; facilitate research and collaborative activity that drive improved clinical and population health outcomes; and enhance health systems decision-making. Our Purpose and Goals are set out in the Foundation Plan for 2017-2018.

New South Wales Regional Health Partners Governance and Structure: Corporate oversight of NSW Regional Health Partners includes a Governing Board chaired by the Chief Executive of the Hunter New England Local Health District, an advisory Translation Committee and a range of local, state and national working parties addressing agreed initiatives.

New South Wales Regional Health Partners Opportunity: NSW Regional Health Partners has an opportunity to submit an expression of interest (EOI) for potential funding by the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF). This opportunity is presented in the context of the MRFF Medical Research and Innovation Strategy 2016-2021 and the Medical Research and Innovation priorities 2016-2018.

The Medical Research and Innovation Strategy outlines that our health system must be innovative and responsive to future challenges, including new health technologies, communicable diseases, and an ageing population with complex, chronic health problems. Research is the best way to prepare for these challenges and contributes to health system safety and quality, ensures effectiveness of interventions, and enables better prevention and treatments. Priority focussed research funded by the MRFF will complement largely investigator initiated research funded by the NHMRC. The Strategy is focused on investment that cuts across the health system, is relevant to all National Health Priority Areas, delivers improved health for all Australians, contributes to a sustainable system and has potential for significant economic benefit.

The Medical Research and Innovation Priorities specify that AHRTCs and CIRHs will be supported (funded) to deliver on:
- Improving Clinical pathways and care transition by building collaboration across the care continuum, enhancing data integration and strengthening health services, implementation, and public and preventive research capacity and activity;
- Reducing Clinical variation by better use of health data and driving data linkage and integration as key components to understanding and reducing unwarranted variation in clinical care and outcomes; and
- Improving the health of vulnerable groups including those with chronic co-morbidities, those towards the end of life and disadvantaged ethnic and Indigenous groups.

See below and the NSWRHP EOI Guide for a full list of the MRFF priorities.
This MRFF RART Grant funding is distinct to other MRFF funding streams and is only available to AHRTCs and CIRHs.

**Eligibility of Project:**
- EOIs for MRFF RART Grants MUST align with at least one of the MRFF priorities; and
- Be able to deliver public and patient benefit or major process transformation within 12 months

Projects will be viewed favourably should they also align with:
- AHRA National Health Priorities; and
- New South Wales Regional Health Partners priorities.

Projects can fill gaps in current research or focus on the implementation of existing research. They need to be 'shovel ready' and be able to be implemented as soon as funding is made available. This includes ethics and SSA approvals being in place (if required for the project).

**New South Wales Regional Health Partners Priorities for 2018 include:**
- Capacity building in assessment of new models of care (including technology, processes);
- Capacity building in the implementation of knowledge transfer (any implementation science/strategy);
- Capacity building in the skills of health messaging in public and population health settings;
- Integration of new knowledge into professional training programs; and
- Capacity building in engaging consumers and community in research.

**Eligibility of Applicants:**
To be eligible to submit an EOI the lead applicant must be:
- An employee of one of the health partners (HNELHD, CCLHD, MNCLHD, CMN, PHN); and
- The project must be sponsored by the Translation Committee representative for their organisation, who must commit to supporting the project and advise the committee that the lead applicant has the skill and resources to deliver the project within 12 months; and
- A lead applicant can only submit one EOI.

**Prioritisation Process:**
Projects will be submitted for prioritisation by a partner organisation’s selection committee, then by Translation Committee for recommendation to the Governing Board. Successful EOI applications will then be assessed by the national AHRA Executive prior to submission to MRFF.

Each organisation will form and manage their own organisation’s selection committee. The organisation’s committees should:
- Contain a minimum of three people; and
- Be comprised of subject matter experts and leaders in research.

**Application Form:**
The EOI character limits adhered are to be adhered to. Only EOI that meet both the applicant and project eligibility criteria will proceed to assessment.

**Application Submission:**
Brief EOIs are to be submitted via the website portal at: [www.nswregionalhealthpartners.org.au](http://www.nswregionalhealthpartners.org.au) by 5.00 pm Tuesday 1 May 2018.

Should you have any questions regarding this process please contact Ellen Newman on 02 49855298 or ellen.newman@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au.
Criteria for Eligible Applicants for EOI proposals
(one EOI per lead applicant)

Employee of one of the health partners
(HNELHD, CCLHD, MNCLHD, CMN, PHN) with the capability and resources to deliver the project within 12 months

Translation Committee member endorsement and commitment (confirm leadership ability and resource commitment)

EOI Project Eligibility Criteria

- Involves a minimum of 3 NSWRHP organisations and MUST align with a minimum of one MRFF national priority areas for 2018:
  - Patient and Public Engagement
  - Health Services Improvement
  - Evidence Practice Gap or Clinical Variation
  - Care Across the Care Continuum (including end of life care)
  - Health Care Improvement
  - Primary Care or Community Health Related
  - Government Policy or Engagement
  - Aged care/ Elderly population
  - Vulnerable groups (including ethnic and indigenous groups)
- Alignment with NSWRHP and AHRA initiatives/priorities are preferred
- Must be already underway, i.e. teams formed, ethics approved if required and feasible to deliver impact at patient or system level in 12 months (‘shovel ready’)

Eligible applicants meeting project eligibility criteria complete EOI form using the online web portal at www.nswregionalhealthpartners.org.au for collation by 5.00pm Tuesday 1 May 2018

Each Partner organisation to assess projects (declare conflicts of interest if on any project submissions) and select top 5 based on scoring criteria by Thursday 10 May 2018

Ranking of prioritised EOIs by NSWRHP Translation Committee to select the top 5 across all partner organisations by Thursday 24 May 2018

NSWRHP Governing Board to assess NSWRHP Translation Committee ranking with an additional priority rating score and final rank by Friday 8 June 2018

Successful EOI applicants, NSWRHP Director and Translation Committee integrate and write NSWRHP proposal for MRFF grant, which is then approved by the Chair, Governing Board.* Successful applicants will be contacted as soon as possible (expected early June) to commence development of a detailed budget and work plan to feed into this proposal.

* In the event that HMRI services (e.g. Health Research Economics and Study Design & Statistics services) form a part of the proposal this will require sign off from the HMRI Director prior to Governing Board sign off.

National Alliance (AHRA) Directors to meet and discuss successful applications to ensure no duplicate projects.