

2021 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal

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Health Research Council
of New Zealand

Te Kaunihera Rangahau Hauora o Aotearoa

Understanding the scope
and intent of the HRC's
investment in health
delivery research for 2021

Discovering a healthier tomorrow
New Zealand Government

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HRC objectives for investment

The HRC supports health delivery research that directly informs changes to policy, practice or systems in the Aotearoa New Zealand health and disability sector. The HRC seeks applications that are within the scope of this, the 2021 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal and meet the requirements for each health delivery funding opportunity set out in the respective application guidelines published on HRC Gateway.

Why invest in health delivery research?

Health delivery research directly impacts healthcare and health outcomes for New Zealanders. Excellent and robust health delivery research helps shape effective models and ways to deliver care, to meet increasing cost pressures on the health system and rising public expectations for healthcare. The importance of health delivery research is emphasised in the New Zealand Health Research Strategy¹.

What does this investment aim to achieve?

By investing in health delivery research, the HRC aims to

- improve equity of access, and consistency and continuity of care for all New Zealanders
- uphold the *Treaty of Waitangi* and advance Māori health outcomes
- strengthen the use of evidence to inform decision-making in health practice and improve the health system
- improve the quality, safety, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of healthcare.

We do this by:

- prioritising health equity and Māori health
- growing capacity, capability and engagement of the research workforce in health sector settings
- responding to research needs and opportunities in real-world, practical settings
- investing in a way that is people-focused and connected
- improving translation and uptake of research findings in policy, practice and systems.

2021 Health Delivery Research funding opportunities

Prospective applicants can use the information in Appendix A to identify the most suitable funding opportunity. Instructions for applying and information about the assessment processes are set out in the guidelines for each grant type.

The following opportunities are available in the 2021 HRC Health Delivery Research Investment Round:

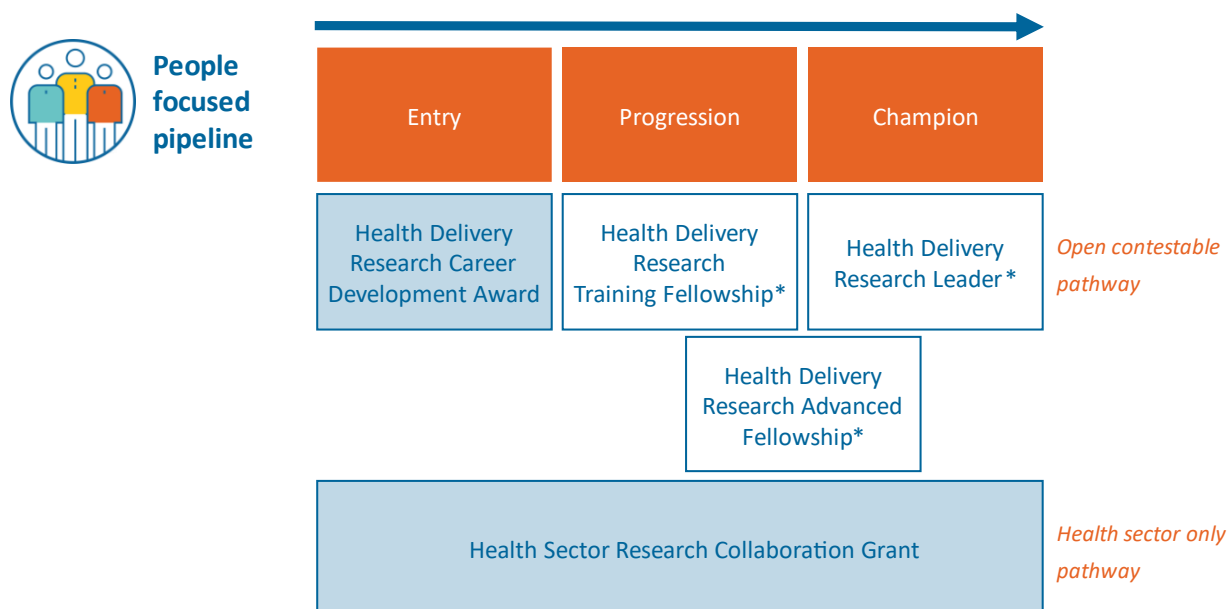
- Health Delivery Research Activation Grant
- Health Delivery Research Project Grant
- Health Delivery Research Career Development Award
- Health Sector Research Collaboration Grant (limited pilot, launching later in 2021).

The HRC intends to roll out planned health delivery research funding opportunities in several phases to complete a full range of funding support; a project pipeline to enable and develop research projects and a people pipeline to enable and develop researchers.

¹ New Zealand Health Research Strategy, 2017. Available at: www.health.govt.nz/publication/new-zealand-health-research-strategy-2017-2027



*Not available in 2021



*Not available in 2021

Funding decisions will be made by the HRC. The distribution of the funding budget across the funding opportunities in this round is expected to fluctuate based on evidence needs, research opportunities, and the number and quality of applications. Around 50% of the funding is expected to comprise Health Delivery Research Project Grants.

HRC's key focus areas for the 2021 round

All research in scope of the 2021 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal will be considered for funding in the 2021 round. However, the HRC encourages:

- research that advances the health and wellbeing of Māori and Pacific peoples, led by Māori and Pacific researchers
- health services research, led by or involving people working across the health and disability sector (including clinical and non-clinical roles)
- cross-disciplinary research teams with a focus on developing early-stage researchers in a safe environment, i.e. with adequate support and supervision.

Scope of health delivery research supported by the HRC

To be considered within scope for funding in this round, the proposed research must:

1. have the potential to directly inform changes to **health delivery** policy, practice or systems, **and**
2. demonstrate a clear connection to a **healthcare need**.

Health delivery can include the delivery of healthcare by way of prevention, detection, diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, care and support, at all levels of care (i.e. primary through to tertiary and community-based care), and at a local, regional and/or national level in Aotearoa New Zealand, acknowledging that international connections can support this.

Healthcare needs are expected to be identified with involvement of health delivery sector leadership or meaningful end-user involvement, and substantiated by evidence of a gap in knowledge. As such, end-user engagement is expected, comprising consumer, clinical, health provider, support worker, community or population collaboration and/or partnership from the outset of the research proposal and throughout the research process.

The following examples are research areas commonly in scope of health delivery, acknowledging that research may relate to more than one. Kaupapa Māori approaches to research are supported across all these disciplines.

- **Health services**
Research to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health professionals and the healthcare system, investigating equity of and access to healthcare, and the quality and cost of healthcare to improve the health of individuals and populations.
- **Health economics**
Research into economic aspects of healthcare delivery, including the value of healthcare systems, interventions (prevention and treatment), and user experiences.
- **Health technology**
Research on innovations (technologies, tools and devices) where these are likely to impact on clinical practice, healthcare service provision or health systems. Please note that the technology itself is not in scope for funding.
- **Clinical (later stages)**
Clinical trials of new or existing clinical interventions where focused on informing immediate changes to healthcare delivery for the intended health benefit of the Aotearoa New Zealand population (including results that can be applied in multiple regions or settings) and where study protocols and/or interventions have been adapted to Aotearoa New Zealand populations or conditions. For example, comparative effectiveness trials.
- **Social science**
Research into human society and social relationships to support healthcare delivery, with a focus on equity in our health system.
- **Implementation science**
Research on methods and strategies (including evaluation) to promote the uptake of viable health research findings in policy, practice or systems to improve the quality and effectiveness of healthcare. Looking at what works, for whom, and in which circumstances, and identifying areas for potential (accessible and equitable) adaptation and scale-up.

Not in scope

Research that represents business as usual operations, for example, health provider quality improvement programmes, is not within scope of the 2021 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal.

The HRC offers many other funding opportunities in related areas for research not within scope of the 2021 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal.

New Zealand Health Research Attributes

Research funders, research providers and research teams are tasked with advancing the vision of the New Zealand Health Research Prioritisation Framework². HRC-funded research must meet the New Zealand Health Research Attributes:

- Why in New Zealand?
- Mana Tāngata
- Excellence
- Impact
- Equity

The requirements to satisfy the New Zealand Health Research Attributes are built into the application and assessment processes for each funding opportunity set out in the respective guidelines for each. Applicants are encouraged to ensure they clearly articulate how their proposed research meets these Attributes.

² Available here: <https://www.hrc.govt.nz/resources/new-zealand-health-research-prioritisation-framework>

Appendix A: Identifying the most suitable Health Delivery Research funding opportunity

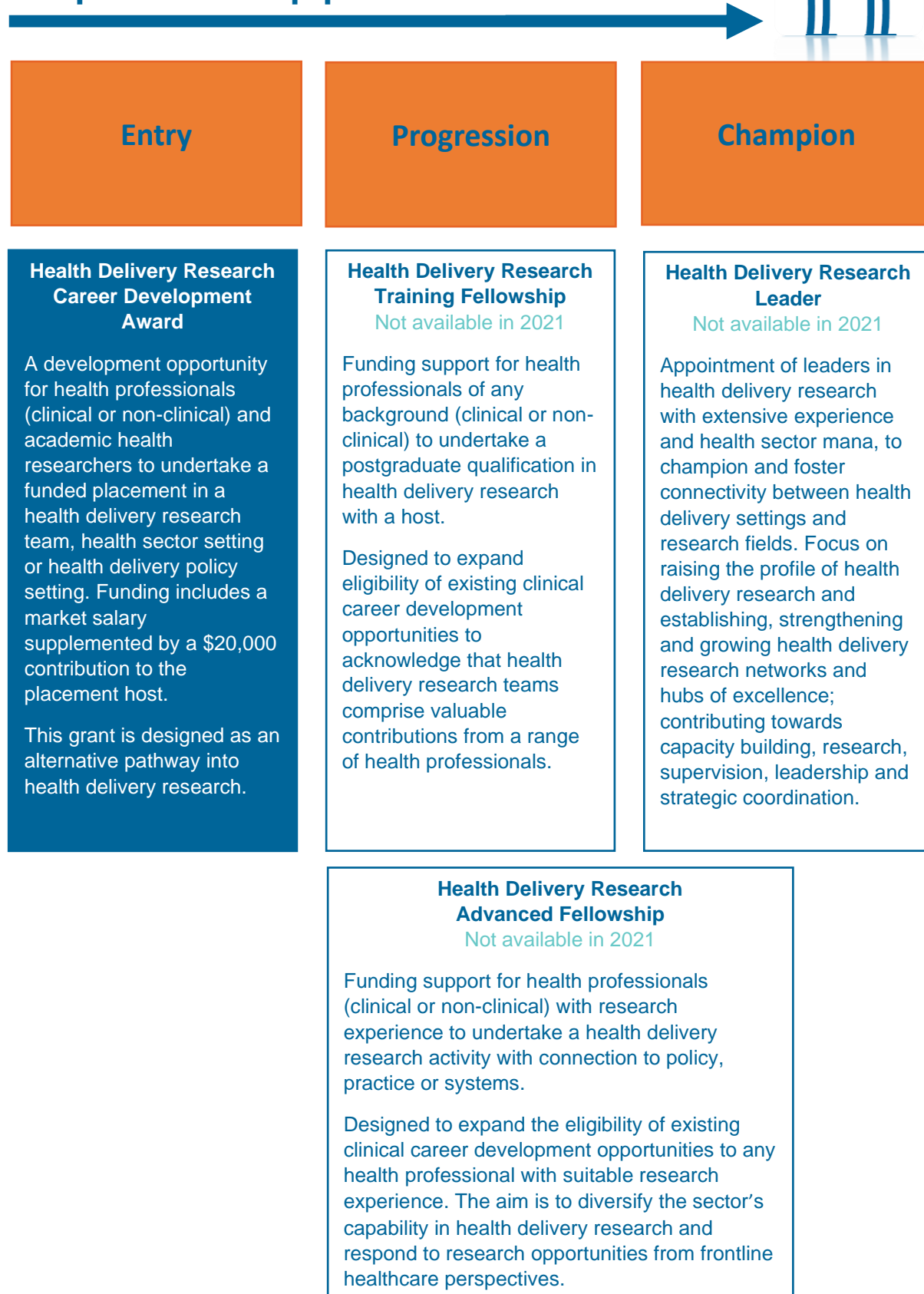
Project focused pipeline



*In 2021, the Health Sector Research Collaboration Grant will provide targeted support for district health boards and Māori and Pacific health providers. All health providers are encouraged to apply for the other HRC Health Delivery Research funding opportunities.



People focused pipeline



Note: the HRC's existing Clinical Career Development Awards will continue as usual in 2021.