

Issued: Monday 20th March 2006

Southwark and Lambeth health issues to benefit from major injection of research funding

Staff at Southwark and Lambeth Primary Care Trusts are being invited to apply for grants to undertake primary and social care research projects. The three-year Research and Development PCT Infrastructure Project, worth over **£1.2million**, has been funded by **Guy's and St Thomas' Charity** to boost the level of research activity geared towards tackling health issues relevant to Southwark and Lambeth.

The Project was launched at the annual Primary, Community and Social Care Research and Development Centre (formerly the Research Support Unit) conference, hosted by Southwark Primary Care Trust, on 17 March 2005, to an audience of health and social care staff from across Lambeth and Southwark.

The first cohort of grants is due to be awarded in July this year. Successful applicants will receive support from academics from King's College London and London South Bank University to develop their projects and publish their findings. Successful applicants will be encouraged to become research champions within their area and will benefit from associated courses, seminars and learning sets.

Lambeth Primary Care Trust, Chief Executive, Kevin Barton said: "This is the largest research grant of its type that our two PCTs have received and reflects the strong partnership between the local NHS, local centres of learning and Guy's and St Thomas' Charity.

"It reinforces our commitment to encourage research innovation, which in turn can help us deliver better health and social care services to our local communities.

"We're particularly keen to promote new research into mental health and cardiovascular disease, as these are significant causes of ill-health locally and reflect the health inequalities we seek to tackle."
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Research Infrastructure fund/2

Chris Bull, Chief Executive of Southwark Primary Care Trust, said: "The £1.25million infrastructure fund presents a unique opportunity for staff to pursue research which interests them and supports their own personal and professional development.

"We are very grateful to Guy's and St Thomas' Charity for making this funding available. It will have a real impact on enriching the research capacity within the PCTs and enable us to make significant improvements to our services".

A project manager is being appointed to provide guidance to applicants and support them throughout their projects, including help with reporting and exploring external funding for future projects.

David Jones, Director of Grant Making for Guy's and St Thomas' Charity said: "We are extremely pleased to be able to offer this support to the Lambeth and Southwark Primary Care Trusts for research. We hope it will enable some interesting projects that will help enrich local health services and improve local health, as well as provide wider learning for the health service."

Further details and an application form can be downloaded from the Research and Development Centre's website at www.researchdevelopmentcentre.nhs.uk

Ends

Note to News Editors:

1. Photographs of David Jones, Director of Grant Making for Guy's and St Thomas' Charity presenting the grant cheque to Chris Bull, Chief Executive of Southwark PCT and others involved in the Project can be obtained from Kate Dawson, Head of Communications, Guy's and St Thomas' Charity on Tel: 020 7188 1218 or email: kate.dawson@gsttcharity.org.uk or from Laura Mason, Communications Assistant on Tel: 020 7188 9083 or email: laura.mason@gsttcharity.org.uk or out of office hours: 0772 2119 1570
2. Guy's and St Thomas' Charity provides funding to support health services in Lambeth and Southwark and to benefit the wider NHS. For further information contact Kate Dawson (as above) or visit www.gsttcharity.org.uk
3. Lambeth and Southwark PCTs are responsible for improving the health of their local population, providing community and primary care services and commissioning hospital and other specialist services. For general information about Lambeth PCT please get in touch with Farah Butt, Communications Team, Tel: 020 7525 2246/44, email: Farah.Butt@lambethpct.nhs.uk
To speak to someone at Southwark PCT please contact Andrew Pike, Head of Communications, Tel: 0207 525 0400, email: andrew.pike@southwarkpct.nhs.uk