

## New 'incubator' launched to boost nurse researcher workforce

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A new online platform has been launched to support and accelerate the development of the clinical academic nursing workforce.

The [Nursing and Midwifery Incubator](#) has been set up by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) with the aim of increasing the number of nurses and midwives in research careers.

*"Nurses have made to feel like they must choose between clinical based nursing or research"*

*Wendy Preston*

The incubator will build a "community of practice" for those interested in developing themselves or others as nurse or midwife researchers.

Guidance will be provided to help people make the most of the opportunities already available for clinical academics including training and funding.

The incubator has the support of Health Education England, the Royal College of Midwives and the Royal College of Nursing.

It is part of the new NIHR Academy, which was launched around a year ago to support professional groups that are not as engaged in research including nurses and pharmacists.

- [Professor signals 'tipping point' for nurse and midwife research](#)



Wendy Preston

Wendy Preston, Head of Nursing Practice at the RCN, said nurses had "for too long" been made to feel that clinical and research careers were mutually exclusive.

*"We recognise the need to increase the capacity and capability of the nursing research workforce to build a dynamic knowledge base of sufficient depth and coverage,"* said Ms Preston.

The RCN has supported nurses in research for at least 60 years when a group of nurse researchers first met in Cavendish Square to discuss this work which has grown into our International Nursing Research Conference.

*"For too long, nurses have made to feel like they must choose between a path in clinical based nursing or a path in research and it's reassuring to see institutions like NIHR bringing these two routes close together."*

Carmel Lloyd, head of education at the RCM, said the incubator "sits firmly" with the aims of its leadership manifesto, which it published earlier this year and aims to develop future midwifery research leaders.

*"Research is crucial to ensuring the care that women and their babies receive is safe and of the highest quality possible,"* she added.

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Carmel Lloyd *"It also ensures that midwifery practise is up to date, using the best and latest evidence."*

*"This is about delivering better care and supporting midwives and maternity support workers to do that."*

HEE deputy medical director, Professor Elizabeth Hughes, said it "very much welcomes" the scheme.

*"We want to see an increase numbers of staff across all clinical and public health professions with a proper understanding of research and its role in improving health outcomes, including an ability to participate in and utilise the results of research,"* she added.

Pete Thompson, director of programmes and impact at the NIHR Academy, said he hoped the incubator would encourage nurses and midwives to access existing funding opportunities offered through the NIHR Academy.