

Strengthening Social Care Analytics programme

Frequently asked questions

August 2020

1. What is this award programme hoping to achieve?

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has focused national attention on the challenges faced by people who use, commission or deliver social care services. Unfortunately, efforts to respond to the crisis have been hampered by the lack of detailed, actionable and accessible data about social care.

The Health Foundation has [explored the key data challenges the sector is facing in the post-COVID-19 era](#). We have hosted workshops with people who use care services, carers, providers, care technology developers, local authorities, researchers and membership bodies for providers and for front-line staff. Participants have come from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, from domiciliary care and residential care, and included adults with a range of ages, needs and experiences.

This funding programme will launch for expressions of interest on **24 August 2020**. Social care providers and commissioners can bid for up to £60,000 to run projects that demonstrate what good social care analytics looks like, and how it can be harnessed to address the challenges we've set out to contribute to better health and care for all.

2. What does good social care analytics look like?

In designing this funding programme, we have put much effort into developing criteria for what good analytics looks like in social care. These criteria have been informed by our workshops and conversations with stakeholders. We hope they will have a lasting impact on how the social care analytics sector evolves, stimulating further innovation and establishing norms. Projects should seek to align with these areas of focus:

- First and foremost, there should be **excellent engagement across the sector that underpins the clear need for the analysis**. Providers, commissioners and

people that need social care should understand and commit to this. Developing trust and facilitating collaboration between these groups of stakeholders will be key to building a social care system that uses data effectively.

- Second, **partnership with people that need social care, their carers and families is crucial**; much of the data collected and shared at present serves operational purposes rather than being used to understand and meet the needs of people that need social care and their loved ones.
- Finally, **appropriate use of analytical methods by strong analytics teams that maintain good communication with stakeholders and are open with sharing those methods, code and learning, will ensure that social care analytics improve sustainably**. This achieves two aims:
 - a. Promoting the sharing of data and information between social care organisations; which, as we learned during engagement exercises, is a great barrier to change due to concerns around trust and culture. This prerequisite that asks projects to publish and present their findings sets a standard for openness.
 - b. By sharing methods, code and learning through GitHub, the grant holder organisations will dock into existing learning infrastructures and the entire analytical community will gain through shared understanding and prevented duplication and waste. Good analytics should always be open and accessible.

3. Who is eligible for funding?

There will be up to five awards of up to a maximum of £60,000 made available to organisations that have a direct role in the provision or commissioning of adult social care services. Each project can partner with other organisations within the health and care sector, as long as the lead organisation fits the eligibility criteria of providing or commissioning adult social care services. The *Expression of interest form* lists a number of types of organisations that we might expect to lead or partner on a project.

4. How many partner organisations can I have?

We have not set a limit on the number of partner organisations that any project can have, as long as the project is feasible in terms of its deliverables and timelines and meets the criteria for funding.

5. Can lead applicants have partner organisations that are not based in the UK?

Yes. We welcome bids where partner organisations are from outside the UK, so long as the benefit of the award is being felt wholly within the UK.

6. What challenges within the social care system have the Health Foundation focused on for this award programme?

We are primarily interested in projects that approach and address one or more of the following three challenge(s):

- *Improving the quality of social care for cohorts of people that experience the worst outcomes.*
- *Building a resilient, safe workforce.*
- *Understanding the lived experience of people needing social care.*

7. Can my project focus on addressing another challenge that hasn't been highlighted by the Health Foundation?

Yes. We are also open to funding projects that address other challenges facing the social care system. If you would like to focus your project on addressing a challenge that you yourself have identified, please describe the following in your expression of interest:

- What is the challenge?
- Who faces this challenge?
- How does it prevent social care being delivered effectively?

8. What outputs will each project be required to produce?

We expect that each of the projects will produce learning for the rest of the social care system, evaluate impact on care and demonstrate good social care analytics as described above.

Each project will deliver the following outputs (of which we expect d. and e. to be shared outwardly – see question 9):

- a. Evidence of better care. Each project will be asked to demonstrate at the outset that there is a demand for the analysis, and describe how it will be used to improve care. At the end of the project they will be required to evaluate how the analysis has been used, and what impact it has had or might have on care.
- b. A skills audit. Each project will be asked to describe how skills were developed within each organisation and reflect on priorities going forward.
- c. A case study on culture and collaboration. We will ask projects to reflect on the process through which they collaborated with stakeholders, including a section on engaging with people that need social care, carers and advocates.
- d. Sharing methods and code. We expect that projects developing data solutions will share their methods and publish their code and we will support them to do so via channels including GitHub and the community of practice (see question 15).
- e. Sharing findings. Projects will be required to share the findings of their analysis within their local care system, with their fellow award holders and to the wider stakeholders that contributed to the scoping of this award programme.

9. Why is it important to produce practical outputs for the rest of the system?

We will look favourably upon projects that are able to contribute to the practice of social care analytics, as described above. A key part of this is the development and sharing of practical outputs, described in bullet points d. and e. above. Our experience is that the practice of sharing fosters relationships and promotes an open culture. It also enables us, as a funder, to scale and spread the benefits from one project across an entire system.

The community of practice (see question 15) will help us share the learning and outputs of each project.

10. I do not yet have the data permissions and agreements in place to undertake the project – can I still apply?

Yes. We recognise that not all of these may be in place, but we need to be reassured that if the project is supported, these can be obtained in time for the project to begin no later than March 2021. Final funding decisions may well depend on getting agreements in place.

11. What can I request funding for?

Up to £60,000 per project is available to cover the following costs:

- backfill
- service user involvement honoraria
- administrative support
- project management support
- consumables
- technical expertise
- consultancy/subcontracting
- dissemination materials
- travel and subsistence.

12. How does the allocation of funds affect my bid?

For this funding programme, we have not set a limit on subcontracting costs. However, as a charitable organisation, we always consider value for money when awarding funds to projects. Therefore we will ask each project for a justification for all spending.

13. Why is service user and public involvement and engagement important in this award programme?

The engagement exercise that was undertaken to develop this programme demonstrated the benefits of involving many stakeholders in planning and delivering projects in social care. The sector has historically been siloed, contributing to disincentives and fractured

delivery of care. By undertaking meaningful engagement with people that need social care, carers and their families and advocates, each project will be shaped with the person that needs care in mind. This is a key step to achieving a social care system that delivers effective, fulfilling and meaningful care.

14. Why is diversity and inclusion important in this award programme?

The Health Foundation is developing an approach to diversity and inclusion across all of our work programmes. We are interested in how your project considers diversity and inclusion of:

- those in your team who will be delivering the project
- people that need social care, their carers, family members and members of the public whom the project will impact
- data from service users that will be used in the project.

15. What is the community of practice and who is Future Care Capital?

Future Care Capital (FCC) is an independent charity shaping the future of health and social care. FCC drives innovation and improvement through leading edge research and policy insights and by bringing together policy makers and practitioners.

The Health Foundation and FCC have teamed up to explore how to strengthen social care analytics during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Together, we co-hosted the workshops that informed the design of this funding call.

These workshops highlighted the importance of bringing together a community that could help to address how the data and analytics system in social care could evolve to support better care. This is the community of practice that we are developing with FCC alongside this funding programme.

Building this community of practice provides an opportunity to bring together historically siloed stakeholders, to develop a platform through which to share progress and learning and to create a vision of social care analytics and a set of priorities to achieve it.

All applicants to the funding programme expressing interest in the community of practice (to be completed in section F of the *Expression of interest form*) will be invited by FCC to join, regardless of success in securing funding.

16. How will my data be used?

All the information you provide on this form will be held by the Health Foundation for assessing this application and the decision-making process and for no other purposes.