

Request to participate in an expert group review of child health research gaps and priorities in Ireland and Northern Ireland

Dear Colleague

We are working with an FP7 funded project - RICHE (www.childhealthresearch.eu). Our goal is to produce an inventory of child health research in Europe, identify gaps in existing and on-going research, and devise a series of roadmaps for the future of child health research. This is co-ordinated by Anthony Staines from DCU, and Michael Rigby, from the Nordic School. This specific phase of the project is being co-ordinated by Matilde Leonardi and Giorgio Tamburlini in Italy.

We would be very grateful if you could take part in our short survey on child health research gaps and priorities and contribute to the future development of the child health research agenda in Europe.

We would like you to complete this short questionnaire. We invite you to prioritize a range of topics in child health. There is scope to add two priorities of your own. Please then give more details of your chosen priorities, of the groups of children whose lives will need more research efforts, and give a few examples of the projects which you would fund if you could fund three new projects in child health research.

Please can you return this questionnaire by January 27th 2012

Thank you for your co-operation,

Anthony Staines, Dublin City University
for RICHE

FP7 RESEARCH INTO CHILD HEALTH IN EUROPE

Project Coordinator Prof. Anthony Staines

WP3 Gaps in Child Health Research – WP Leader Matilde Leonardi and Giorgio Tamburlini

Gaps in Child Health Research RICHE Survey

Our aim is to define and implement a process for finding gaps and set the priorities in European child health research. In this phase we aim to collect information on **gaps/needs in child health research** at country and European level. The gathered information will provide a European wide view on current child health research gaps allowing the setting of priorities for future European research.

Based on your experience and knowledge we ask you to please answer **the following questions**.

Your country: Ireland and Northern Ireland

Your profession: Public Health / Health Promotion

Your job position/title: Senior Policy Officer

Your email address: helen.mcavoy@publichealth.ie

1. PLEASE LIST 3 RECENT PROJECTS IN CHILD HEALTH IN YOUR COUNTRY (NATIONAL OR REGIONAL LEVEL) THAT YOU CONSIDER THE MOST RELEVANT/IMPORTANT FOR CHILD HEALTH, not necessarily involving you personally.

1) Project title/area: Young Ballymun

Coordinated by: Young Ballymun

Partners: Multiple including HSE, Community Mothers, Dept of Children, CAN etc

Funded by: Dept of Children and Youth Affairs, Atlantic Philanthropies

Other info: Also the Evaluation of PFL programme being conducted by Geary Institute UCD very valuable project

2) Project title/area: Health Behaviour in Schoolchildren Survey research and publications

Coordinated by: National University of Ireland Galway

Partners: European

Funded by: ?

Other info: _____

2) Project title/area: Growing Up in Ireland – National Longitudinal Study of Children

Coordinated by: Dept of Children and Youth Affairs

Partners: ESRI, Trinity College Dublin, International partners detailed at www.growingupinireland.ie



Funded by: Dept of Children and Youth Affairs

Other info: _____

2. PLEASE IDENTIFY 10 PRIORITY AREAS IN CHILD HEALTH RESEARCH (each corresponding to one box), from a European perspective, and rank them from 1 (Highest priority) to 10 (Lowest priority). Please consider the two main arms of research – epidemiological and clinical/health services under the 5 headings.

Please use the last two empty rows if you want to add further areas that have not been included.

Please comment on your choices after completing the table.

CURRENT KNOWLEDGE GAPS					
Disease Group	<i>Epidemiological/social/psychological research</i>		<i>Clinical/health services research</i>		
	Size of problem (Burden of disease & trend)	Risk factors (Biological - psychological - social)	Effective interventions (Prevention, diagnosis and therapy)	Effective implementation	Other dimensions (Costing, ethical issues)
Pre & Perinatal conditions	3	2	3	4	4
Congenital anomalies	5	3	2	5	5
Mental health problems	4	4	1	6	6
Neurological & Neuromuscular	6	6	10	8	8
Infectious diseases	8	3	8	10	7
Chronic inflammation, immune disorders, allergy	9	10	5	7	9
Cancer	10	5	9	9	10
Injuries and other environmental exposures	7	9	4	2	5
Child development and well-being	1	1	2	1	1
Environmental aspects of child	10	7	6	3	2

development					
3 Family studies and parent-child relationships	2	8	7	2	3

Please provide some more details of some of your priorities. The areas in the table are broad, so your examples would help us to better understand your choices.

High priority

Family studies and child parent-relationships have been prioritised here as these factors are known to have a very significant relationship with child outcomes. This is particularly relevant in view of changes in family structures, parents work practices and issues related to the economic recession.

The findings from the EU-SILC set of childhood deprivation indicators shows that we still have a long way to go in capturing and understanding the ways in which family circumstances impact on children’s wellbeing and this can best be understood from the family unit perspective.

The early years and pre-natal areas have also been prioritised in view of the magnitude of the population health burden associated with this area and the evidence of ongoing inequalities in these outcomes. There is a need to foster research that allows pregnancy factors and maternal factors to be more comprehensively linked to child health outcomes.

It’s a pity there was no category for childhood obesity and chronic conditions associated with this?

I have given lower priority to childhood cancers and treatment of other disorders mentioned - the health service outcomes eg survival for premature infants, children with cancer continues to improve but efforts in the area of prevention have been less successful – hence the balance in the scoring here.

3. There are many dimensions of child health research that are important, e.g. age, gender, specific population groups, such as migrants, ethnic minority children, children of deprived families, rural children etc... Please indicate those dimensions that have more child health research gaps and thus will need more research efforts:

See above.

Research on children with disability a priority taking a holistic view that encompasses family factors, education etc.

Policy based research that better quantifies and understands the impacts on children of policy measures including budgetary decisions.



Tightening up on the research policy cycle for children

Children in care



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Contract no. 242181

4. If you were responsible for allocation of funds for child health research, please indicate and describe briefly three child health research projects that you would finance:

1. Review of data collected as part of routine child developmental assessments conducted in primary care including public health nurses in Ireland – to ascertain data quality, coverage, referral patterns, extent and profile of developmental delay or anomalies detected.

2. Ongoing funding of the Growing Up in Ireland study with a facility to support the incorporation of a small number of nested studies to explore vulnerable subgroups of children (e.g. socially, family structure, particular diseases that may not be sufficient in numbers in a random sample) – to gain maximal utility from the data collection system already in place

3. Evaluations of high level policy and more proximal health promotion interventions to assess their effectiveness in addressing childhood obesity – funding interventions and evaluations that are large enough on scale and adequately linked to policy directives to realistically inform national policy and programmes.

5. If you have any other ideas or comments, please share them with us:

Happy to discuss any of the above – will forward to some of my colleagues also

Please keep me informed of further work

Thank you for your co-operation!





Please return this completed form to:

jean.kilroe@dcu.ie



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