NIHR King's Clinical Research Facility

Guidance for Investigators

Introduction

The NIHR Clinical Research Facilities provide dedicated facilities and staff to support the delivery of externally funded early translational (experimental medicine) research: including early-phase studies (Phase IIa and earlier) and high intensity or high complexity experimental medicine elements that are nested within later-phase studies (Phase IIb or later).

The King's CRF is keen to facilitate the work of established investigators and encourage and support the use of the facilities by new investigators. It also provides an environment in which the pharmaceutical industry can collaborate actively with clinical investigators.

The CRF works to Good Clinical Practice and Good Manufacturing Practice guidelines and has processes in place to maintain the standards required by these, as well as ensuring compliance with the current legislation relating to clinical research.

This document provides guidance on what researchers need to do to get studies set up and running in the CRF and also guidance on the standards expected by the CRF for all studies.

Governance Arrangements for CRF Studies

Please note that for studies being conducted in the CRF, there are different governance and approval requirements, depending on whether the study involves patients or healthy volunteers/non-NHS subjects.

All users of the CRF MUST have an appropriate contract in place before their work can start, this can be KHP passport, NHS Research passport or any other valid document as per HRA guidelines.

All students who are not eligible for a KHP passport or research passport, should have a letter of supervision acknowledging their status from their main supervisor.

Please contact Kingscrf@kcl.ac.uk should there be any queries.

Please refer to the flowchart on page 8 which summarises the requirements for all CRF studies. For further advice, please contact your R&I/R&D department or contact the CRF.

Studies Requiring Sample Processing and/or Storage Only

It is possible for researchers to use the CRF's centrifuges and/or freezers for the processing and storage of study samples, even when the study visits are not being conducted in the CRF. The CRF has both -80°C and -20°C freezers available.

Samples should not be stored for longer than 3 months and all stored samples need to be recorded on the logs provided.

The costs for using the CRF's centrifuges/freezers are:

- Receiving whole blood and processing for dispatch - £10 per sample.
- Storage only - £10 per box/package.

If you wish to use the CRF for the processing/storage of samples only, you must still submit the study to the CRF as per the process described below.

The Application Process

Investigators are encouraged to approach and meet with the CRF Manager/team (in addition to the CRF Director) for study feasibility and to establish their research requirements.

Applications can be made pre- or post-grant stages and also in conjunction with IRAS/university ethics applications.

To make an application to undertake a study in the CRF, please click on https://kings.crfmanager.com/ and request access to complete the online form. You will be sent a username and password to access the form. Please complete the application form in full (including the upload of any available final study and research governance documentation) and submit it when complete.

The Post-Application Process

Once the application form has been received, the study will be assessed for risk and intensity, to ensure it is feasible to conduct the study in the CRF. The costs for space will be provided to the KHP CTO or relevant Trust R&D/R&I department.

The study will be reviewed by the CRF and the outcome will be sent to you. Once successful a formal CRF approval letter will be generated and sent out.

All of this can take place in parallel with your other regulatory applications.

Costs:

Charges for using the NIHR King's Clinical Research Facility:

Staff time vs Space charges - where a clinical study is utilising CRF staff to support patient focused activity in the CRF, the hourly staff charge rate is designed to cover the cost of the space (e.g.: examination room, day case chair, ward bed etc.) occupied by a single concurrent patient. Space charges are only applied when:

A researcher is using the CRF on a space only basis and brings their own team into the CRF to support the patient focussed activity (without recourse to CRF staff).
The charges are designed to make the CRF a highly attractive place to undertake clinical research whilst also providing an income stream to cover marginal costs and thereby supporting business development and growth.

Industry contract studies (e.g.: pharmaceutical company)

In line with requirements placed on the NHS, industry funded studies are charged for all costs above the standard NHS treatment costs. All industry or commercial studies are costed using the NCVR , the CRF charges include direct, indirect costs and a capacity building element and are managed in conjunction with the KHP Clinical Trials Office.

All Non-commercial hosted studies (e.g.: non-KHP sponsored studies), Non-commercial/Industry collaborative local investigator-led studies or NIHR BRC-funded research studies

Non-commercial NIHR portfolio studies CRF charges are designed to cover the CRF direct staff costs and provide a contribution to the marginal costs associated with the use of space and equipment within the facility.

The table below sets out the charges:

Item	Commercial/Industry funded	non-Commercial NIHR Portfolio
	Commercial - Industry funded/sponsored	***KHP Investigator, portfolio, NIHR BRC funded studies***
Nurse Time (per hr)	NCVR	£50
CRF Patient Space (per patient per hour)	£0	£10
Pre-analytical Sample processing	NCVR	£10 per sample Inc consumables
PBMC processing	£100 inc consumables	£90 inc consumables
Lumbar puncture	£250 inc consumables and nurse	£80 inc consumables and nurse
Sample Storage in freezer		£10 per box, one off charge

Consumables – the CRF is content to order your consumables once you have provided a cost code to purchase these items. They will be stored with the other general consumables in the CRF for you to take when required. The CRF is limited in terms of storing consumables, therefore, if you have been provided with consumables or study kits, please bring with you only what you need for one or two visits.

Acknowledgement:

All studies that use the NIHR King's Clinical Research Facility (CRF) research facilities, samples, staff, expertise or data must acknowledge the unit as follows:

"This study represents independent research supported by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) King's Clinical Research Facility and the NIHR Biomedical Research Centre at South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and King's College London. The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NHS, the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care."

Induction to the CRF:

All staff working in the CRF are required to undergo an induction prior to the start of the study. This is to ensure that they are familiar with the CRF's health and safety requirements and emergency procedures, and that they have received training on relevant CRF equipment and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Inductions are conducted by the CRF's Quality Assurance Manager or their delegate. Please contact the QA Manager as soon as possible to arrange an induction for **all** staff who will be involved in working on the study in the CRF.

All staff will need to provide a copy of a current GCP certificate before or at induction (GCP training should be renewed approximately every 2 years).

Staff who do not have a substantive contract with KCH will also need to provide one of the following:

- A KHP Honorary Passport
- A SLaM contract
- An Honorary Contract or Letter of Access for KCH or SLaM

Students: BSc, MSc and PhD students from KCL, who are not eligible for a KHP Honorary Passport, are permitted to provide a formal 'Letter of Supervision' from their study supervisor, which must include confirmation that they have received DBS and Occupational Health clearance.

Non-KCH staff and students will be asked to attend a KCH Fire Evacuation drop-in training session before working in the CRF. Details of how to do this will be sent before induction.

Staff who will be working in the CRF's MRI suite must attend MRI Safety Training which is held at the CNS at KCL (located in De Crespigny Park, SE5 8AF). The training can be booked by e-mailing mri.booking@kcl.ac.uk. A Safety Questionnaire will also need to be completed at the CRF Reception prior to entering the MRI suite.

An Induction Pack for the CRF is available during CRF induction.

During induction, staff will be given a tour of the CRF and an induction checklist will be completed and signed off, to ensure that all administrative, security and health and safety information has been discussed.

After induction, the QA Manager or delegate will e-mail an SOP Training Log to the staff member, listing the CRF SOPs/Policies which they need to read. Some of these can be found on the CRF's website here: CRF SOPs/Policies. Any additional SOPs will be provided by e-mail. The SOP Training Log should be signed and returned within 3 weeks' of induction to indicate that the staff member has read and understood the SOPs and agrees to work to them.

Staff should also send in copies of any documentation not provided, or not available, at induction.

CRF Study Requirements

- Study Protocols should be written on a GCP Protocol template. Copies of these templates can be found here: Protocol Templates

- The CRF is unable to manage the ISF for studies, owing to the large number of ongoing studies within the facility. All study participants seen in the CRF will have a KCH Hospital Number and study notes (source documents). These notes will be kept at the CRF but may be photocopied if necessary and taken to another site.

- If study participants are seen outside of the CRF for any of the study visits, the PI is responsible for ensuring that the study notes (or a copy of these) are provided to the CRF and filed.

- Study teams must inform the CRF of any study amendments and provide any amended study documents to the CRF team.

- Bookings for rooms in the CRF should be sent to kingscrf@kcl.ac.uk. Room bookings can be made in advance but should be cancelled at least 24 hours prior to the visit if the room is no longer required. Researchers are kindly requested to refrain from block-booking rooms on a long-term basis for individual studies.

  All booking requests and any cancellations should be made Monday-Friday, 09.0017.00. A cancellation fee of £30 may be charged when appointments are cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice.

- The CRF kindly requests that any study updates and end-of-study notifications / reports, which are provided to Ethics and R&I, are also provided to the CRF.

Additional CRF Requirements for Phase 1 Trials

- All First in Human studies will be sent a Phase 1/FIH Study Risk Assessment to be completed after submitting their application, which will be reviewed by the CRF.

- It is the policy of the CRF to register all healthy volunteers participating on Phase 1 CTIMPs on TOPS (The Over-Volunteering Prevention System). This requires consent

to be taken from the volunteers. It is recommended that you incorporate consent for this in your Informed Consent Form for your study. There is guidance on this, and what to write, here: HRA TOPS. However if you have already submitted your application, the CRF has a consent form which can be used and which has approval from the Health Research Authority. Please note that the volunteer's National Insurance Number, or Passport Number and Country of Origin for non-UK citizens, is needed for TOPS.

- The CRF requires photographic ID (e.g.: Passport) to be collected for all healthy volunteers participating on Phase 1 CTIMPs in the CRF, a copy of which should be filed in the study notes.

- All Phase 1 study PIs, and researchers conducting the trial, will be requested to provide evidence of their qualifications as well as evidence of their experience of Phase 1 studies, particularly for FIH studies.

- All Phase 1 studies are subject to scrutiny of all pre-clinical data. Sponsors should be made aware that this data may be requested by the CRF.

- Principal Investigators will receive safety data during the progress of the study from the Sponsor. The process for this should be agreed and documented prior to the start of the study.

- The PI or appropriate delegate must remain in the CRF during dosing and for an agreed time after dosing (dependent on the study and IMP).

- PIs should confirm if the Intensive Care Unit need to be aware of the study if a bed may be required.

Abbreviations

BRC	Biomedical Research Centre
C&C	Capacity and Capability
CNS	Centre for Neuroimaging Sciences
CRF	King's Clinical Research Facility
CTIMP	Clinical Trial of an Investigational Medicinal Product
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
FIH	First In Human
GCP	Good Clinical Practice
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practice
GSTT	Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
HR	Human Resources
HRA	Health Research Authority
IMP	Investigational Medicinal Product
IoPPN	Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience
ISF	Investigator Site File
KCH	King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
KCL	King's College London
KHP	King's Health Partners
KHP CTO	King's Health Partners Clinical Trials Office
MCA	Mental Capacity Act (2005)
MHRA	Medicines & Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
NIHR	National Institute for Health Research
PI	Principal Investigator
PK	Pharmacokinetic
QA	Quality Assurance
R&D / R&I	Research and Development / Research and Innovation
SLaM	South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

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