Annex 8: Other research
The Economic and Social Research Council and the Medical Research Council made national funding available through the Lifelong Health and Wellbeing Research Partnership Awards\(^1\) to support research which addresses employer/stakeholder needs associated with promoting health and wellbeing in the older workforce. It was identified that a number of areas could be addressed through collaborative research between public/private employers and academics. Outline research proposals were therefore sought from researchers and employers to work together.

**Extending Working Lives in the NHS: Opportunities, Challenges and Prospects**

The Audit highlighted a lack of NHS-specific evidence. The NHS Working Longer Review is therefore pleased to be supporting the Extending Working Lives in the NHS research. This research will investigate the management of employment change in the NHS following the abolition in the UK of the mandatory retirement age and aligned changes in the state and public sector pension provision. It will also examine the significance of these changes in the context of the NHS and their impact on staff.

This five-year longitudinal study, due to complete in 2018, will help the service in the future to consider other steps it might take in managing an ageing workforce. A number of NHS organisations are supporting the research and the review will continue to monitor and learn from its progress.

The steering group worked closely with the researchers undertaking the study to identify potential research questions, which included:

- Are older workers less effective than their younger counterparts?
- What are the key considerations that shape the retirement decisions of older workers?
- Can the goals of increasing productivity and efficiency be reconciled with longer working lives in ways that are sustainable, fair and equitable?
- What combinations of management practices and employment policies might best promote the internal flexibilities that can reconcile these critical policy objectives?

Support was also offered to the researchers in finding NHS organisations that would be content to be involved and have research conducted within their organisation. This will include looking at different occupations within different types of Trusts, conducting interviews and collecting data. The letter of support from the Working Longer Review can be found below.

The study will have three main strands:

- productivity and age
- policies, practices and structures affecting extended working life
- mental maps and extending working lives: factors affecting decisions on working life

Throughout the study, the researchers will be identifying barriers to extended working lives and considering how working lives might better be extended. This will take into account the employee and employer preferences, service needs and the various dimensions of the employment system.

It was confirmed in July 2013 that the research bid was successful. The research commenced in October 2013 and the Working Longer Review will continue to support it.

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\(^1\) Lifelong Health and Wellbeing extending working lives: research partnership awards
Lifelong Health and Wellbeing: Extending Working Lives Research Partnership Awards

Letter of support
Further to the proposal that is due to be submitted for the LLHW Extending Working Lives Research Partnership Awards by Hilary Metcalf, National Institute of Economic and Social Research, Peter Nolan, Centre for Sustainable Work and Employment Futures and Andrew Weyman, University of Bath. The NHS Working Longer Review Group that is a partnership review consisting of the NHS Employers organisation, NHS Trade Union Representatives from the NHS Staff Council, would like to provide their support in this research proposal.

The NHS Working Longer Review Group is currently set up to review the impact of NHS Staff working longer as a result of the changes to the NHS Pension Scheme which has changed the Normal Pension Age to link to State Pension Age. The review is therefore looking at which staff this will affect and how, and what employers should do to support staff working longer. Further information can be found at the following online address: http://www.nhsemployers.org/Pages/home.aspx

Support will be offered to the researchers in conducting research in other NHS organisations (a list of initial NHS organisations that have registered their interest in having research conducted in their organisation can be found in Appendix A attached to this letter).

Therefore please accept this letter as the demonstration of our intention to support this research further should the proposal be successful.

We shall look forward to working together in this research and hope this letter provides confidence that we have a commitment to supporting the successful delivery of research in the NHS.

Yours Sincerely

Andrea Hester
Head of Pensions and Reward
NHS Employers

Joint Chairs of the Working Longer Review Group:
Appendix A

Ealing Hospital NHS Trust
Yorkshire Ambulance Service
Southampton University Hospital NHS Trust
Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust
Ashford and St Peters Hospital Foundation Trust
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust
Kent and Canterbury Hospital