

Sir David Cooksey
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Dear Sir David

**Review of UK Health Research - Response from MRC HSRC Senior Scientists:
Professors Michael Calnan, Tony Ades, John Brazier, Susan Michie and Dr Kav Vedhara**

We are the senior scientists within the MRC's Health Services Research Collaboration. As such, we have contributed to the response to your review that has come from the MRC's Population Health Sciences Research Network. However, as health services researchers, we would like to emphasise two points that we believe to be of great importance to the formation of any new health research body in the UK.

- 1) We believe that it needs to take a wider view of the basic health sciences than that taken by either the MRC or the NHS R&D.

'Basic science' to the MRC largely means molecular or cellular studies, and there has been very little investment in any basic science by NHS R&D. However, health and health care delivery depend on input from, and interactions between many different sciences, including sociology, psychology, statistics, and economics. For example, if we are to understand the current 'epidemic' of chronic problems such as obesity we need to explore their social determinants and origins in human behaviours. If we are to devise effective and cost-effective solutions to the problems they present, we must invest in key methodologies such as statistics, health economics, decision science, policy research, health psychology and implementation research, as well as 'wet-lab' sciences.

- 2) We believe that the new body must be independent of any government or commercial interests.

We are concerned about the current linkage of health and health research to wealth creation. Many of the most important factors involved in the causation of disease, in inequalities in health in our society, and in the management of chronic conditions offer no commercial opportunities. The solution of our more difficult problems in health and health care will require commitment of long term funding to teams of researchers who are free of any political or commercial imperatives.

Yours sincerely



Paul Dieppe