

Call - Better health and care, economic growth and sustainable health systems

SC1-BHC-19-2019: Implementation research for maternal and child health

Specific challenge

Each year, an estimated 213 million women become pregnant and 140 million newborn babies are delivered. However, many of the women and infants receive no appropriate care or care that is below evidence-based standards; others suffer from over-medicalisation. Access to quality care, during and after pregnancy, is essential to ensure good maternal health and the favourable early development of the child.

The gap between countries with the lowest and highest maternal mortality rates has doubled between 1990 and 2013 and huge differences exist within countries in Europe and globally. The burden of maternal mortality in both contexts falls disproportionately on the most vulnerable groups of women and girls: Every day approximately 830 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth; 99% of maternal deaths occur in developing countries.

Although there is a consolidated evidence base of what works in improving maternal and newborn health, the "knowledge-do" gap has not been bridged and evidence based guidelines are insufficiently implemented or integrated in routine training and service provision. Therefore, more and better targeted implementation research is needed.

Scope

Proposals should focus on implementation research for improving maternal and child health with a focus on the first '1000 days' from pregnancy until two years of age. This research can take place in either high income countries or low and middle income countries, or in a combination thereof.

The implementation research in the first 1000 days may cover:

- new or improved health service delivery interventions that strengthen maternal and child health; and/or.
- the scaling up and/or adapting of existing evidence-based interventions to new contexts.

Neither pre-clinical research nor clinical trials in the context of product development are within the scope of this call.

The research should take into account the specificities of different contexts and situations. The research should be integrated from different perspectives, e.g. recognising the interdependent relationship between mother and child; addressing prevention, health promotion and treatment; allowing for the specific needs of vulnerable groups (e.g. preterm infants, adolescents, migrants); addressing different concurrent pathologies; avoiding the creation of parallel or vertical programmes, etc. Research may cover physical and/or mental health, as well as communicable and non-communicable diseases. The integration of social sciences including gender analysis and the use of mixed methods research is strongly encouraged. In addition, particular attention should be given to equity issues.

The interventions should build on but may go beyond existing state-of-the-art knowledge on biological, psychological and social determinants of maternal and child health. Research is expected to be carried out in continuous partnership, in particular with the end-users, i.e. the concerned women, the fathers, and their community, in addition to policy makers, politicians, and the media, to ensure that evidence can be translated into policy and practice.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting an EU contribution between EUR 2 to 4 million would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected Impact

The proposals should address one of or combinations of:

- Identify high-risk populations with a view to tailor early detection and diagnosis or to optimise prevention.
- Improve early detection and/or diagnosis and/or prognosis of cancer adapted to specific settings.
- Provide evidence to national programmes and policies focusing on screening, early detection and/or diagnosis and/or prognosis.
- Provide novel opportunities for the development of targeted therapies.
- Contribute to attaining sustainable development goals for non-communicable diseases.

Type of action	Research and Innovation action	
Deadline	1 st stage - 02 October 2018	2 nd stage - 16 April 2019
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Topic information	http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/sc1-bhc-19-2019.html	

