



SWSHRN

South West - School Health Research Network

PILOT STUDY

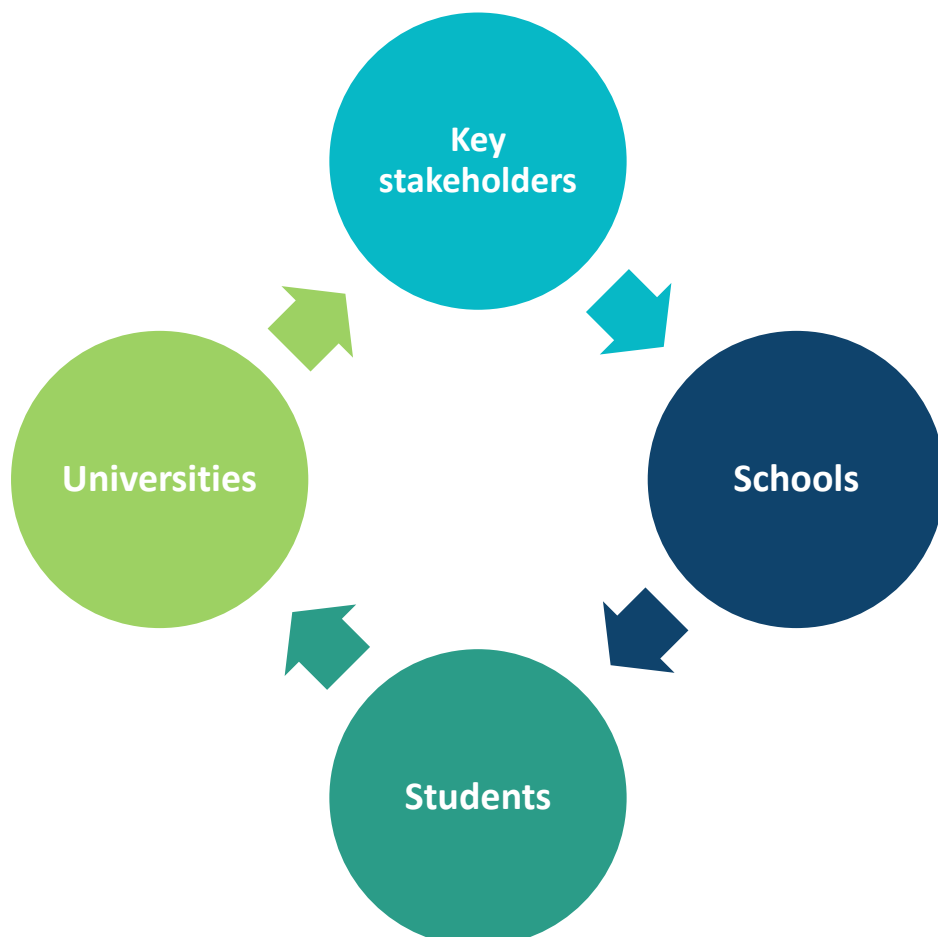
2021-2023

Information for schools

Researchers from the National Institute for Health Research School for Public Health Research are creating a new South West - School Health Research Network and would like to invite your school to participate in the pilot study.

What is SW-SHRN?

It's a collaborative framework to facilitate a long-term relationship between University research and key stakeholders in public health delivery for school-aged children, such as schools, local authorities, Department for Education, Public Health England, local public health teams . It will facilitate timely and efficient knowledge transfer between key stakeholders in child and adolescent health.



There are strong links between health and education. Students who are healthy learn more readily and educational attainment is associated with living longer, healthier and happier lives. Many behaviours established during child and adolescent years track into adulthood, therefore it is critical to set young people on healthy and sustainable paths. Schools are an important setting for health improvement both for the students attending them and the staff that work in them, and evidence suggests that attending to health in schools improves educational attainment. The University of Bristol is an international leader in school-based health research.

From 2020, **all students in England must be provided with health and well-being education** to help them make “*well-informed, positive choices for themselves*”. There is information available to help inform your teaching content and school health and well-being policies, however, SW-SHRN will provide you with timely, accurate information on the health and well-being of your students to help you to decide what areas of mental and physical health might require greater priority.

CASE STUDY

School Health Research Networks were established in Wales (shrn.org.uk) in 2014 and in Scotland (shine.sphsu.gla.ac.uk) in 2018. They were created to support effective partnerships between key stakeholders in adolescent health: secondary schools, public health practitioners and policy makers, and researchers. Both nations began with a small number of secondary schools and focussed on collecting data in a student survey. Wales has since progressed to including a school survey and data linkage (anonymously connecting survey data to education and health records).



SW-SHRN will follow the models working successfully in Wales and Scotland. However, responsibility for public health is based in local authorities in England not NHS based, as in Wales and Scotland. SW-SHRN will therefore operate at a regional level, which requires piloting before being established at scale.

The aim of the SW-SHRN is to create a new method of partnership working, bringing together schools, academic health researchers and public health teams in local authorities to improve the health and well-being of school-aged children and thereby improve educational attainment.

The SW-SHRN will:

- 🍏 Support schools to identify key health and well-being requirements by undertaking a biennial school survey with students.
- 🍏 Support schools to identify key health promotion policies and interventions for consideration by assessing their current school health promotion policies.
- 🍏 Further enrich the health and well-being data collected from students by anonymously connecting it to other routine data such as education data.
- 🍏 Provide each school in the network with informative and timely feedback reports on survey findings.
- 🍏 Offer each school's leadership team the opportunity to meet with a senior researcher to discuss the survey findings.
- 🍏 Provide feedback reports on student and school surveys to local authorities.
- 🍏 Build relationships between health researchers and schools to produce collaborative research addressing questions that schools want answers to.

The SW-SHRN pilot study is funded by the National Institute of Health Research.

The benefits to schools who join the SW-SHRN will be:

- ✓ **Tailored school feedback reports on students' health and well-being, with benchmarking to average data from all participating schools, and a 1-page summary which can be shared with students and parents.**
The student survey will contain questions on health behaviours, including diet, physical activity, smoking, alcohol, drugs, school life and relationships. Students in Year 10 only will be asked a small number of questions relating to sexual behaviour. Schools will be asked for students' date of birth and postcode to help us explore the data according to student age and living conditions.
- ✓ **A summary feedback report on school health policies across all participating schools.**
The school survey will contain questions on school health promotion policies and risk behaviour policies.
- ✓ **1:1 meeting between members of the senior leadership team and a senior researcher to discuss survey findings.**
- ✓ **Highlight areas of public health which require greater coverage in health and well-being education.**
- ✓ **Provides data to inform the Ofsted education inspection framework on the school's action to support their students to keep physically and mentally healthy.**
- ✓ **Access to academic reports published as part of the pilot study.**

In the SW-SHRN pilot study (2021-2023), we are asking schools to participate in our integral biennial survey and to provide valuable feedback on their participation in the Network. In return, schools will receive tailored feedback reports on the health and well-being of their students and an assessment of school health policies. As an additional thank you due to the extra requirements of being an early adopter school each school that completes all the research requests will receive a £200 gratitude payment, due to the extra requirements of being an early adopter school.

In summary, being an early adopter school will involve:

- **Nominating a member of staff to be the 'SW-SHRN School Co-ordinator'**
Dedicated role for an individual who will have authority to liaise with the SW-SHRN team and support co-ordination of the data collection.
- **Enabling and supporting students in years 8 and 10 to complete the student survey**
This would involve identifying one lesson where students can complete the survey; in school when all students are in attendance or during online learning when students are split between home and school. SW-SHRN can provide tablets for in-school data collection.
- **Enabling and supporting the SW-SHRN Co-ordinator to complete the school survey.**
Release the SW-SHRN Co-ordinator for an hour to complete a survey electronically.
- **Enabling and supporting a member of staff to participate in an interview to identify key practical issues in participating in the Network.**
This will help us learn how to refine the Network, improve processes, and identify ways that the Network can be more beneficial to schools.

Each school will be asked to sign a research agreement which details what is required of the research team and what is required of the participating school.

If the pilot study is successful, the SW-SHRN will seek further funding to continue. Pilot data collection will be carried out between 2021-2023. The survey can be completed in any school term at a convenient time for each school.

Please note, participating in the SW-SHRN as an early adopter school 2021-2023 does not commit your school to continued participation. As future studies develop, you will be invited to participate, and it is your decision whether or not to do so. Not taking part in a particular study (including this one) does not prohibit you from taking part in future studies co-ordinated by the SW-SHRN.

To build on the successful Networks established in Wales and Scotland, we are keen to explore how the Network can work in the South West of England, with a view to extending the model to other regions of England in the future.

We are providing up to 25 secondary schools in the South West of England with the opportunity to join the Network. Please consider if you would be interested in joining and participating in our biennial surveys.

Ethics approval

The research has been approved by Bristol Faculty of Health Science Research Ethics Committee (Ref: 110922), and is funded by the National Institute of Health Research's School of Public Health Research. The Principal Investigators of this study are Prof Rona Campbell (rona.campbell@bristol.ac.uk) and Prof Russ Jago (russ.jago@bristol.ac.uk). If you have any concerns about the research and do not feel comfortable speaking to the research team, please contact research-governance@bristol.ac.uk.

Want to know more?

Emily Widnall, SW-SHRN Senior Research Associate, will contact your school over the coming weeks to discuss your school's potential participation as an early adopter school in the SW-SHRN pilot phase. If you would like more information in the interim, please contact Emily using the following details and she would be happy to answer any of your questions:

Email: sw-shrn@bristol.ac.uk

Core SW-SHRN Team

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