

«Health Services Research» funding programme launched by the Bangerter-Stiftung and the SAMS

The Gottfried and Julia Bangerter-Rhyner-Stiftung (Bangerter-Stiftung) and the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences (SAMS) are jointly launching a «Health Services Research» funding programme. Health services research seeks to bridge the gap between biomedical/clinical research on the one hand and medical interventions performed under everyday conditions on the other; the subject of this field of research is, as it were, the «last mile» to the patient. Health services research is becoming increasingly important at the international level. With the aid of this funding programme, the Bangerter-Stiftung and the SAMS hope that health services research will also become more widely established in Switzerland. To this end, the Bangerter-Stiftung is making available around CHF 1 million per year for the period 2012–2016.

Basel, 1 December 2011. With the ageing of the population and the increasing prevalence of chronic disorders, the healthcare system now faces a wide variety of challenges. If complex services are to be effectively delivered in the health sector, a sound scientific knowledge base is required. Health services research aims to generate precisely this kind of knowledge by studying patient care and health care under real-life conditions, developing new concepts on this basis, and testing them in practice.

One of the defining features of health services research is that the topics it investigates generally cut across multiple areas:

- different areas of care (outpatient, hospital, rehabilitation, nursing)
- different health professions (physicians, nursing staff, occupations within healthcare organizations and administration, etc.)
- different scientific disciplines (e.g. biomedicine, clinical medicine, sociology of medicine, information science, health economics).

This diversity partly explains why, in this country, health services research has not yet received the support, which it in fact deserves – given its importance for the effectiveness of medical practice and the healthcare system. In the US and in some of Switzerland's European neighbours, government-funded programmes to support health services research have already existed for several years. In Switzerland, efforts are currently being made at the federal level to establish a national programme to support health services research.

Against this background, the Bangerter-Stiftung and the SAMS have jointly launched their «Health Services Research» funding programme. The aims of this initiative, which will run in the first instance from 2012 to 2016, are as follows:

- to facilitate high-quality projects in the field of health services research in the broadest sense;
- to support the development of young researchers in this area; and
- in the medium to long term, to build research capacity and infrastructure in the field of health services research in Switzerland.

To achieve these goals, the Bangerter-Stiftung is making available around CHF 1 million per year in funding for the period 2012–2016. The SAMS is responsible for the scientific management of the programme; responsibility for reviewing proposals lies with an Expert Committee comprising representatives of various disciplines and chaired by Professor Thomas Rosemann, Director of the Institute of Primary Care at Zurich University. Each year, there will be two deadlines for submissions, with the first deadline falling on 1 March 2012.

Further information on the «Health Services Research» funding programme is available at: www.samw.ch/en/Research/Health-Services

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The **Gottfried and Julia Bangerter-Rhyner-Stiftung** (Bangerter-Stiftung) was established by Paul Bangerter in 1970 in memory of his parents, Gottfried and Julia Bangerter-Rhyner. In his old age and having experienced illness himself, Paul Bangerter, who had no children, wished to place his fortune at the disposal of medical research and charitable organizations. For over 25 years, the Bangerter-Stiftung has been one of Switzerland's major funding bodies, providing substantial support for a series of pioneering projects. For further information see: www.bangerter-stiftung.ch

The **Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences** (SAMS) was founded in 1943 by the five medical faculties, the two veterinary medical faculties and the Swiss Medical Association (FMH). With its two main programmes – «Medical Science and Practice» and «Medicine and Society» – the SAMS focuses on the following activities:

- fostering high quality in biomedical and clinical research;
- promoting the development of young scientists, especially in clinical research;
- establishing closer links between medical science and practice;
- investigating ethical questions associated with medical developments and their impacts on society;
- reflecting in depth on the future of medicine;
- contributing to higher education, science and education policy, by providing advice and expertise to policymakers and authorities.

For further information see: www.samw.ch