



25th September 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

NHS Scotland Assure Research Service Fund - Application for funding outcome

Are Inhaled Microplastics an Unappreciated Healthcare Risk?

Thank you for your application to the NHS Scotland Assure Research Service Fund. I regret to inform you that your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion.

Your application was reviewed by three independent peer reviewers. Each reviewer provided feedback having assessed the application against evaluation criteria which is shown in the peer review form.

Please find the anonymous peer review feedback on your application attached.

An Independent Advisory Board (IAB) panel was convened to consider all the applications and peer review feedback to select those applications that best fit the criteria of the fund. A summary of the panel's comments is provided in the table below including the outcome.

Thank you for applying to the NHS Scotland Assure Research Service Fund and we wish you well in your future research endeavours. Please contact me should you have any questions about the process and the outcome or if you wish to set up a call to discuss the feedback.

Kind Regards

Linda Johnston
NHS Assure Project Manager
Edinburgh Napier University



Independent Advisory Board (IAB) Comments and Outcome:

The IAB felt that the main problem with this application is that it does not fit easily into the NHSScotland Assure scope, either towards impact of the built environment nor practical infection prevention and control. The IAB were unanimous in declaring the role of microplastics in human health a seriously under investigated issue but did not support the application at this early stage. It was felt that the application might be better suited for Public Health or Medical Device funding in order to first ascertain magnitude of risk. There were some suggestions as to situations whereby the broader topic might complement work on the built environment and infection prevention & control. These included MPs shedding from urinary catheters and its possible relationship with catheter-associated urinary tract infections; and the presence of MPs in deteriorating internal ductwork in operating theatre ventilation systems. Another suggestion concerned potential shedding from plastic asthma inhalers, which could impact on a relatively large proportion of the population. However, much more detail was needed on the type of MPs, and also on the physical impact in human tissues and chemical effects emanating from additives associated with MPs, e.g., flame retardants, etc.

The IAB agreed that the project should be redirected to the MRC or similar as a proof of concept study in the first instance. It is hoped that the applicants continue to pursue this novel line of work.

Final outcome: Reject – Not Fundable

FINAL OUTCOME KEY:

a.	Fundable and will fund
b.	Fundable but not funded
c.	Reject and resubmit
d.	Reject - Not Fundable