

Statement of Intent – MESSAGE initiative

Sex and gender play fundamental roles in individual and population health. Sex and gender influence the medical conditions people develop, the symptoms they experience, the treatments and quality of care they receive, their disease progression and their overall outcomes. Studying and understanding sex and gender differences and similarities is essential for ensuring the safety and effectiveness of medicines and care, to improve the health of all people in the UK.

High-quality, reproducible and inclusive biomedical, health and care research requires consideration of sex and gender at every stage, from study design and recruitment to data analysis and transparent reporting of results. Unlike other high-income countries – notably Canada, the United States and European nations under Horizon Europe – the UK currently has no standard, unified guidance for researchers about how adequately to consider sex dimensions in cell and animal studies, and sex and gender dimensions in human studies.

The UK's MESSAGE initiative has co-designed a sex and gender policy which will be available from 2024. Culture change in this space will ensure the UK cements its position as a world leader in rigorous, sustainable science and provides the most effective evidence to improve outcomes for patients and society, which JDRF UK strongly supports.

We currently provide our research community with the guidance on ensuring their research proposals consider the needs of all people with type 1 diabetes, no matter their sex or gender or other characteristics. In line with the MESSAGE initiative, JDRF UK commits to providing the research community with further guidance and tools to ensure type 1 diabetes research is fully representative of all the people who live with this condition.