

Delivering Tomorrow's Treatments Today

Research and Development Strategy

Our commitment to research

University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust is the largest hospital in the south west, at the centre of an integrated care system serving a population of half a million people. This document sets out an ambitious plan for our development of clinical research over the next 5 years. The commitment made by UHP's Board in collaboration with our strategic research partners is in line with the national drive to support Research & Development in the NHS.



Measuring our success

By 2025 we will have:

- ✓ Embedded a culture of research as part of usual clinical care across the local integrated care system.
- ✓ Established a portfolio of studies in the areas most relevant to our local population.
- ✓ Established research in preventative medicine as a key part of our research strategy.
- ✓ Built an otherwise balanced & financially viable research portfolio, including a commercial portfolio of studies.
- ✓ Several grant funded Health Services Research projects running, measuring the value of our healthcare delivery pathways.
- ✓ Digitalised Information systems across UHP and partners to facilitate research operations and delivery.
- ✓ Established an annually recurring internal grant scheme awarded by panel review, supporting local Chief Investigators, including allied health professionals towards NIHR project grants.
- ✓ Developed joint research administration & governance arrangements with the University of Plymouth to support a thriving health research program.
- ✓ a Hub for Health & Lifesciences research in Plymouth in which UHP has played a vital role.
- ✓ Purpose built research facilities – a space for delivering clinical trials & health research for community & staff.

National context

The NHS Five Year Forward View (5YFV) set out a clear direction and actions required to deliver the vision of a better NHS including improved ability to undertake research and apply innovation. Notably, the 5YFV states:

“Research is vital in providing the evidence we need to transform services and improve outcomes.”

NHS England took stock of progress at the half way point of the 5YFV and recognised the importance of R&D in helping to put money back into the NHS and the UK economy. More recently, the NHS Long Term Plan (2019) reaffirms the enormous value of research and innovation to drive improvement.

Breakthroughs enable prevention of ill-health, earlier diagnosis, more effective treatments, better outcomes and faster recovery.

Linking and correlating genomics, clinical data and data from patients provides routes to new treatments, diagnostic patterns and information to help patients make informed decisions about their care. ‘Research-active’ hospitals have lower mortality rates, with benefits not limited to those patients who participate in research.

Aim 1 - Needs of the population

We host an ageing and dispersed population, characterised by inequalities of access to healthcare and with a high prevalence of physical & mental diseases related to lifestyle. Our research strategy mirrors our emerging People First healthcare strategy. The key focus of our research is to reflect the needs of the local population, in particular where these reflect the healthcare research priorities of the nation. We will do this by:



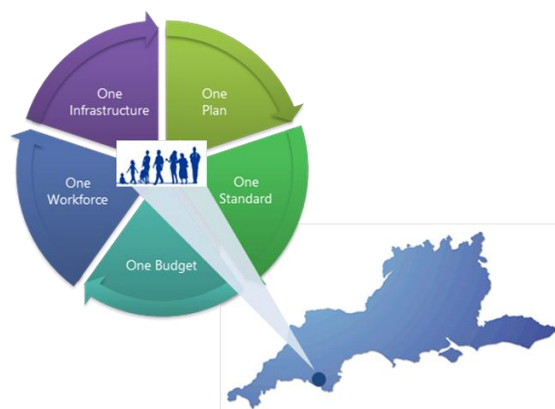
- Introducing preventative & life coach approaches to secondary and acute care, in line with the NHS 10 year plan.
- Increasing the number of people registering to participate in health research by using a range of channels and media to promote involvement.
- Working with our Patient Experience Committee and other patient groups to consider their priorities and providing greater visibility of research opportunities.

Our contract with the NIHR CRN requires that we are able to support research in all speciality areas where we have a clinical pathway. Over the medium term we will focus on recruitment and local Chief Investigator development in our areas of local research strength (particularly where these overlap with University of Plymouth’s research strategy) and where there is a viable commercial return.

Over the longer term we will aim to develop additional research capability where it is currently lacking in those areas which are of particular relevance to the local population. Our areas of research strength don’t always overlap with the health priorities of our local population or our largest areas of clinical need. Our long term strategy is to close this gap.

Aim 2 - Transformation (including digitisation)

Services across Plymouth are developing an Integrated Care System, bringing together local primary and specialist care, physical and mental health services, and social care organisations with shared leadership & action to redesign care and improve population health.



We have introduced a series of transformative projects at the interface of primary and secondary care. Our partnership with Livewell Southwest allows a specific focus on support for research across the whole care pathway. Our partnership with Care UK in elective orthopaedic & elective upper GI surgery is a national vanguard partnership and supports our developing research collaboration, the first with a Care UK provider.

These represent excellent opportunities for Health Services Research (systematic evaluation of healthcare pathways), in which the University of Plymouth has a strong academic pedigree.

We will plan for an array of research opportunities provided by advances in information technology such as a global healthcare research database and a sophisticated anonymised dataset linking several systems to characterise the southwest population.

Aim 3 - Research rich climate

Research is everybody's business and, as such, we will develop a culture in which all staff are encouraged to participate. This will include:

- Establishing regular reporting arrangements and key performance indicators for the Board, Executive, Care Groups and Service Lines.
- Promotion of the Trust as an attractive place to work by making clear our 'research offer' to new and existing staff.
- Developing a 'research contract' with each Care Group and Service Line, outlining incentives and responsibilities.
- Supporting the University of Plymouth's Integrated Academic Training program.

We will also support Chief Investigators (CIs) to translate ideas into research proposals and attract grant funding.

Aim 4 - Multi-disciplinary workforce

Our partnership with the University of Plymouth's Clinical School holds great potential for nurse, midwife and allied health professional led research. We will ensure that our research activity adopts a multi-disciplinary approach. This will include:

- Working with the Clinical School to increase capability and capacity and attract and retain highly educated non-medical staff.
- Increasing the number of non-medical Clinical Investigators and Principal Investigators.
- Promotion of women in science.
- Continuing to utilise our own charitable funds to support first time researchers and, in particular, non-medical staff to encourage participation and capacity in undertaking research.



Aim 5 - Financial sustainability

The global research and development market is buoyant with an industry wide research investment of more than £4.2 billion each year. The UK Industrial Strategy strongly endorses ongoing NHS involvement in commercial research. The nature of the industry is such that rapid drug development is imperative and reliable partners are required to deliver studies in a timely way.



The Trust has a reputation for its efficient set up of research projects, attracting the pharmaceutical industry back to Plymouth time and again. This underpins our commercial portfolio, supporting both income and drug savings & reducing costs through better clinical care.

We will maintain a balanced portfolio of studies prioritising the key areas that deliver local patient benefit and contribute to a sustainable future. In doing so, we will prioritise recruitment to NIHR non-commercial studies which affects our annual CRN budget allocation and to commercial studies.

We will seek to secure grant funding for local Chief Investigators, either NIHR grants (which draws research capability funding) or commercial (which attract funding predicated against the CI).

We are among the few UK centres holding a licence for research in Genetically Modified Treatments (GMO) & will develop local capability to support at least "Level 2" GMO studies

Aim 6 - Clinical Research Facility accreditation

NIHR accreditation as a Clinical Research Facility (CRF) is a kitemark of a safe, quality assured environment for delivering clinical research studies, draws additional funding from the CRN and facilitates partnership with industry.

Our ambition for CRF status makes an unequivocal statement embodying the Trust's vision to embed research within all aspects of its core activities and to attract clinical key opinion leaders and those with a robust reputation for research delivery.

CRF status requires flexible accommodation to support the needs of the hospital and deliver a broad research portfolio of investigators undertaking high-quality early phase research across a diverse range of clinical areas.

We will work with the University to align strategies and pathways to develop synergy across mutual key research themes. The University's Derriford Research Facility (DRF) & Brain Research Imaging Centre (BRIC) provide laboratory based, translational research & imaging capacity to run in parallel with our clinical research.

In the medium term we will refit our existing estate in the Lind Research Centre to deliver these objectives, with the long term aim to develop a new purpose built facility.

Strategic enablers

High standards of governance and ethics

We will adopt consistently high standards of governance and ethics to ensure that we make best use of our resources and put the interests of the public first. This will include:

- Agreeing joint working arrangements between respective organisations and a clear governance framework. This will include an ambitious program for investigator advice & support, in collaboration with the University of Plymouth's Faculty of Health: Medicine, Dentistry & Human Sciences.
- Developing robust management arrangements including regular monitoring of KPIs and publication of an Annual Research Report.
- Establishing an 'engine room' to identify, coordinate and optimise funding opportunities across partner organisations.

Communications

We will develop a comprehensive communications plan to raise the awareness of our research activities.

Externally, this will include visible promotional materials, the engagement of local press, MPs & community leaders and an enhanced social media presence.

With our staff we will promote the message that research is everybody's business by developing clear and regular communication on our research priorities. We will also ensure that induction training for all staff covers research & innovation.

Annual Research Plan

We will agree an Annual Research Plan which will set out key focus areas and specialities for translating our strategy into practice. Success at achieving the key objectives will be reviewed annually and reported to the Joint Research Committee and Trust Board.

Collaboration with local partners

We will continue to strategically align our healthcare research with the University of Plymouth, a natural fit as our partner Higher Education Institution.

A research rich environment offers the opportunity to engage with medical dental, nursing & allied health professions students at an early stage to encourage research active clinicians for the future.

We will explore opportunities to collaborate with Plymouth Science Park, a hub for innovation in health and life sciences. We will also work in collaboration with the Peninsula Clinical Research Network, SW Academic Health Science Network, Peninsula Applied Research Collaborative, IQVIA, pharmaceutical & industry partners to continue to grow high quality health research in the South West for the benefit of our local population.

We will work with Plymouth City Council, Public Health, Local authority & partners as above to promote Plymouth in the context of the regional and national research agenda beyond healthcare research.

