

Brief Report:

Inaugural meeting held to coordinate operational approaches to improving the uptake of clinical research in healthcare culture through cross-organisational oversight and collaboration

On the 8th October 2020 we held a meeting to bring together a number of national bodies who are funding clinical research or supporting work to embed research activity (the doing of research), in health and care.

Despite great progress made in enabling 100% of NHS organisations to become research active and a renewed energy for research that has been supercharged by the pandemic, we believe there is still much work to do to enable research to happen across the system and to bring research into the everyday business of care.

Individual surveys undertaken by the NHS R&D Forum¹, Royal College of Physicians² and the NIHR CRN³ have highlighted the historic and persistent gap between the will of healthcare teams to contribute to research, and their perceived ability and capacity to do so. Subsequent recent timely reports from the ABPI⁴ and Academy of Medical Sciences⁵ have also called for action to address the needs of both our life science and clinical-academic sectors, now exacerbated by the challenge of pausing and restarting studies, which may affect our research resilience and capabilities for the future.

The purpose of this group meeting was to facilitate understanding between members and to support each other by sharing initiatives, issues, challenges and solutions and to agree how we would work together going forward. A separate policy workstream will now also be established and supported by the original group.

Main messages from our inaugural meeting

- There is general agreement that we have an unhelpful separation of research from care, which hampers our ability to improve research activity in the UK
- As national organisations we risk contributing to the problem if we fail to coordinate
- There is an appetite to share and to align language where we can
- We will aim to support each other in our individual initiatives

¹ Report in draft

² <https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/projects/outputs/research-all-analysis-clinical-participation-research>

³ https://mcusercontent.com/442e19d6ae871c5a27d2813bf/files/bebabab4-1cd4-43dd-b24e-c59f963be029/Report_Research_Delivery_Staff_Survey_V1.0_20200407_RS.pdf

⁴ <https://www.abpi.org.uk/medicine-discovery/clinical-trials/>

⁵ <https://acmedsci.ac.uk/file-download/23932583>

- Where there are opportunities for shared working, outcomes and influence we should join together and a separate policy implementation group will be established to support this
- The capacity for the healthcare system to deliver care will also affect its ability to do research and should be considered
- To address the problem and the gap between research and care we will need to engage more broadly and also assess the infrastructure needed to support clinical teams to do research. We often talk to ourselves about research.

Attendees:

- Adrian Baker, NHS England & Improvement
- Alastair Henderson, Academy of Medical Royal Colleges
- Angel Yiangou, Academy of Medical Sciences
- Anna Zecharia, British Pharmacological Society
- Ashley Solieri, Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust & NHS R&D Forum.
- David Cloke, British Medical Association (Apologies)
- Helen Bodmer, Medical Research Council
- Jordan Marshall, Royal College Physicians
- Julie Sanders, Royal College of Nursing - Research Society & 70@70 Nurses
- Kate Greenwood, NHS R&D Forum
- Lucy Gallagher, NIHR CRNCC
- Maria Palmer, NHS R&D Forum (Apologies)
- Nick Kirby, Shelford Group (Apologies)
- Paula Robblee, General Medical Council
- Rachel Knowles, Medical Research Council
- Rebecca Smith, North Bristol NHS Trust & NHS R&D Forum
- Robert Peveler, Clinical Director for NHS Engagement, NIHR Clinical Research Network
- Roger Steel, NIHR CRNCC
- Ruth Harris, Royal College of Nursing – Research Society
- Sarah Williams, Solent NHS Trust, NHS R&D Forum & UKRD
- Sheuli Porkess, Association of British Pharmaceutical Industries
- Tom Baggaley, Association of Medical Research Charities

The meeting was conceived, planned and facilitated through a collaborative effort between NHS R&D Forum, NIHR Clinical Research Network, and the Royal College of Physicians.

Key contacts: Kate Greenwood Manager, NHS R&D Forum, Roger Steel NHS Engagement Programme Manager, NIHR CRN, and Jordan Marshall, Policy Manager, RCP