

2024



East and North
Hertfordshire
NHS Trust

Research Strategy 2024

#ProudToBeENHT

Summary

This document sets out the Trust's four year research strategy. Our goal is **"to be recognised and valued as an organisation where people can take part in, and benefit from, research"**. This strategy supports, and contributes to, the organisation being ***"trusted to provide consistently outstanding care and exemplary service"***.

A number of strategic objectives have been set:

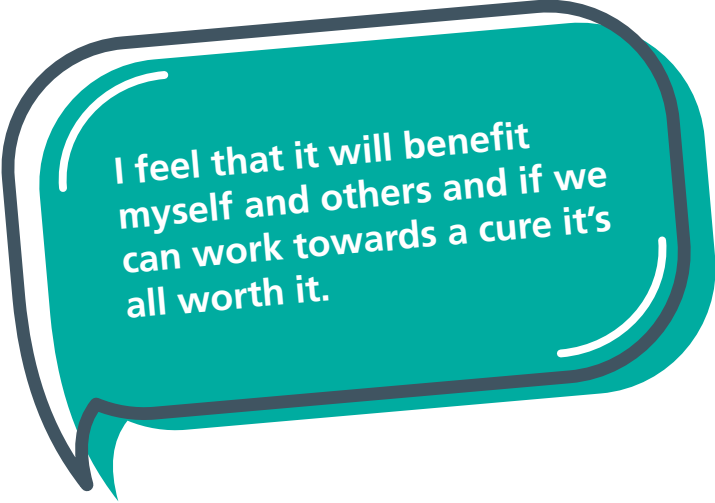
- 1** To align our research to meet the needs of local people
- 2** To ensure our research is inclusive both in design and participation
- 3** To develop and deliver our research in partnership with the public, patients, other organisations, healthcare systems, academia, the life science industry and the National Institute for Health and Social care Research
- 4** To be an organisation that considers research as a service expectation rather than as an additional activity
- 5** To develop and deliver a research workforce plan that supports an organisational culture that can generate and use research evidence to enhance or redesign services for the benefit of those we serve
- 6** To develop and deliver a data and digital research plan to make the best possible use of information and technology in a way that is trusted by the public

The R&D Board will oversee the development and delivery of the of the first year enabling plan and the subsequent three-year implementation with support from the R&D Steering groups at the Lister Hospital and the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre. This will include the identification of appropriate metrics and numerical indicators of success.

1 Background: We exist to serve our patients

1.1 Patients are at the heart of why we do research

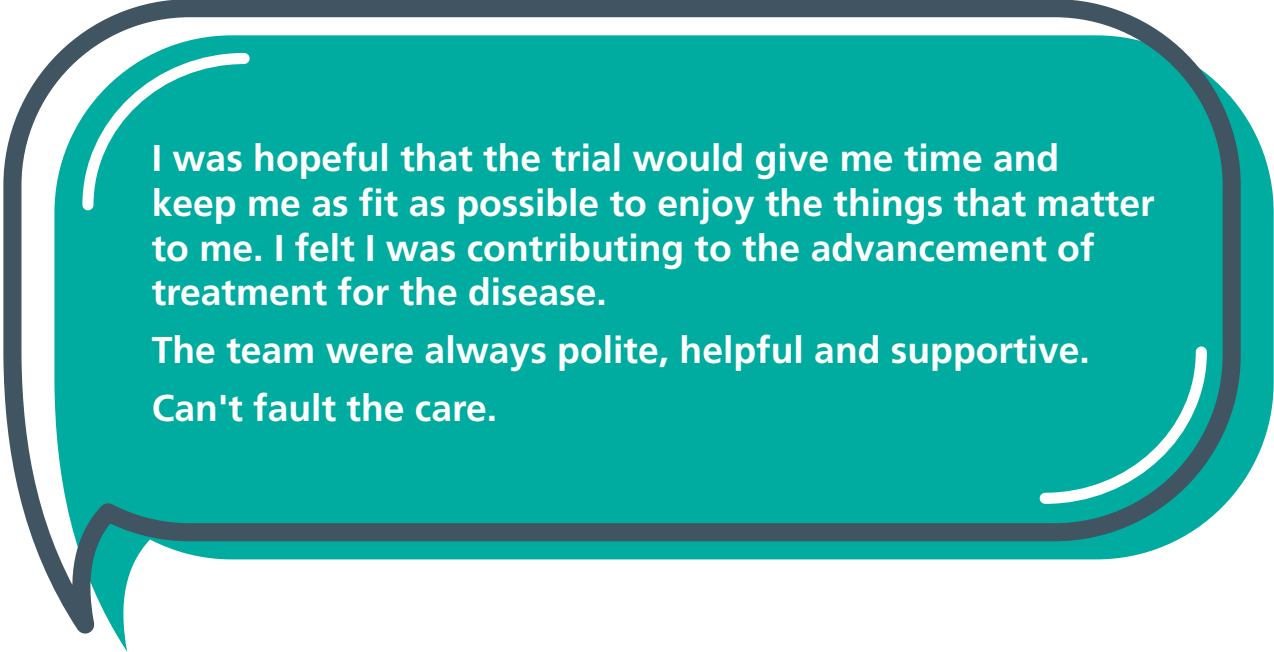
As an NHS organisation we asked our patients what they liked about taking part in research. We received numerous responses, such as:



I feel that it will benefit myself and others and if we can work towards a cure it's all worth it.



To be of help for future diagnosis, treatments and way forward for all diagnosed.



I was hopeful that the trial would give me time and keep me as fit as possible to enjoy the things that matter to me. I felt I was contributing to the advancement of treatment for the disease.

The team were always polite, helpful and supportive.
Can't fault the care.

1.2 We want more people to be offered the opportunity to take part in research

We believe that that this will have two main benefits. The first is that more patients will have the direct benefit of research participation. The second is that all patients, whether they are research participants or not, will have a better experience and improved outcomes because of the indirect benefits to the organisation from being research active.

1.3 Establishing a research culture in the NHS is a worthwhile challenge

There are four well established truths that we need to consider from a practical perspective. The first is that it is challenging for the NHS to provide the best possible care to the most patients. The second is that NHS organisations that have a research culture outperform those that focus solely on providing care. The third is that the healthcare needs of patients are both growing and changing. The fourth truth, and this is what brings us optimism for the future, is that through research our knowledge and opportunity to provide improved healthcare, at lower costs, and in a more inclusive way is growing at an incredible rate. We accept these truths and are writing this research strategy as one of the ways we can work towards being 'trusted to provide consistently outstanding care and exemplary service'.

1.4 We believe that a research culture helps us to better serve others

As a Trust, we have redefined our vision and values to clarify our strategic themes which will guide our work until 2030. Our vision includes not only consistently outstanding care, but also exemplary service. Research supports this vision and also our values in the following ways:



We value the diversity and experience of our community, colleagues and partners, creating relationships and climates that provide an opportunity to share, collaborate and grow together. Research involves public and patient engagement in the design and delivery as well as in the use of research findings.



We create a safe environment where we are curious of the lived experience of others, seek out best practice and are open to listening and hearing new ideas. A research culture is one of enquiry, developing new ideas, best practice and addressing inequality and lack of inclusion.



We are committed to continuously improve and consistently deliver excellent care through a creative workforce that feels empowered to act in service of our shared purpose. Research skills empower our workforce, and the research process identifies gaps in our understanding and develops new knowledge to improve services.

1.5 We have a strong research foundation to build upon

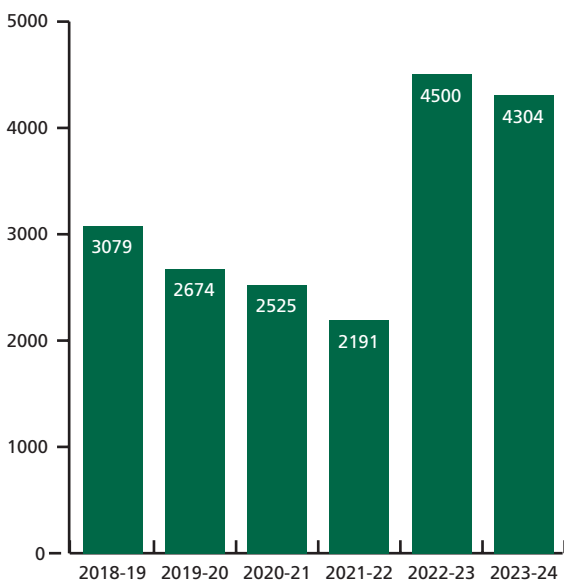
The trust is already recognised as an internationally important research-active organisation with a long-held track record of generating research-based evidence that makes a difference for patients. Our research activity is mainly at the Lister Hospital and at the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre. This is illustrated in the graphs below and can be summarised as:

- a high and sustained level of
- a high number of research publications.

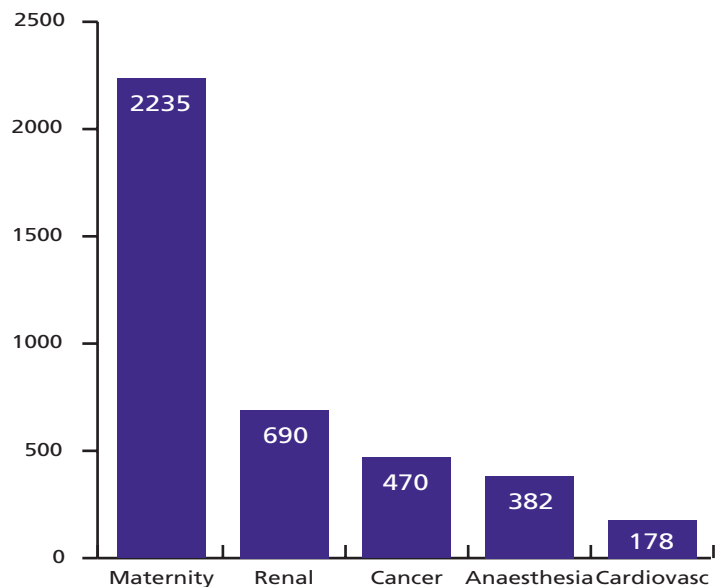
If we take a detailed look at our research over the three year period from 2021/2 to 2023/4 we see the following:



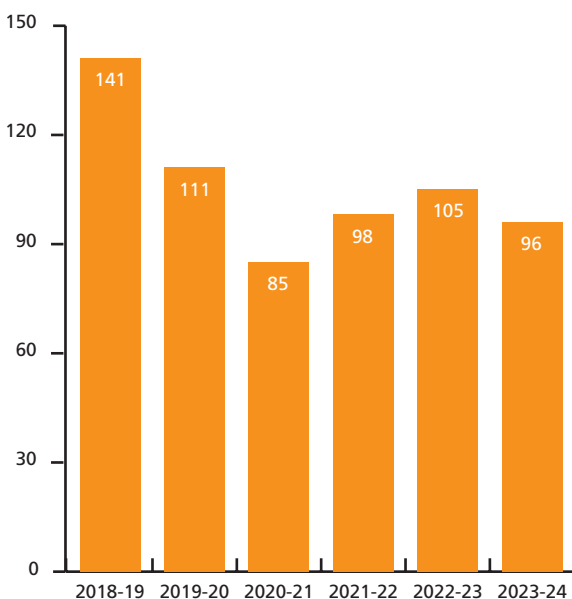
Research Participants



2023/4 Research Participants by top 5 specialties (note 17 specialties are research active)



Research Studies



Research Publications

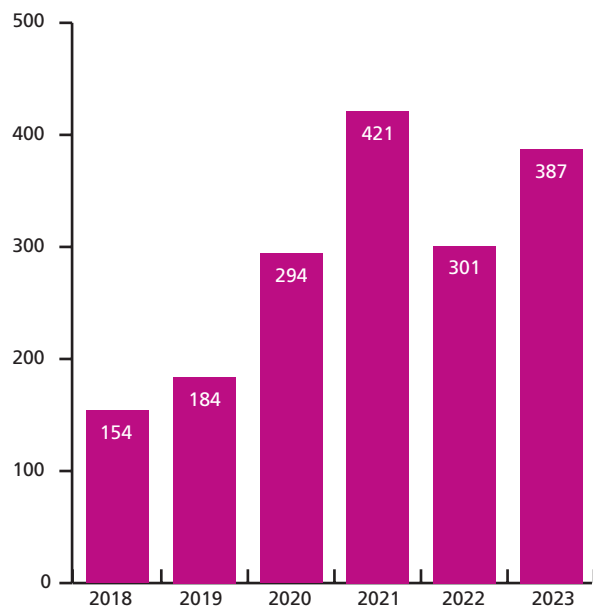


Figure 1 Research activity over the last 6 years with additional details of research activity by clinical area in 2023/4 (note data from 2023/4 incomplete as full data not yet collected)

1.6 Benefitting from a national plan to support research

In 2021, the Department of Health and Social Care produced a plan called *Saving and Improving Lives: The Future of UK Clinical Research Delivery* to promote research. The plan includes a number of national initiatives that that, when adopted by the Trust, will enable us to do more for our patients. These are:

1. **Clinical research embedded in the NHS** – to create a research-positive culture in which all health and care staff feel empowered to support and participate in clinical research as part of their job.
2. **Patient-centred research** to make access to, and participation in, research as easy as possible for everyone across the UK, including rural, diverse and under-served populations.
3. **Streamlined, efficient and innovative research** so the UK is seen as the best place in the world to conduct fast, efficient and cutting-edge clinical research.
4. **Research enabled by data and digital tools** to ensure the UK has the most advanced and data-enabled clinical research environment in the world, which capitalises on our unique data assets to improve the health and care of patients across the UK and beyond.
5. **A sustainable and supported research workforce** which offers rewarding opportunities and exciting careers for all healthcare and research staff of all professional backgrounds.



1.7 National approach and timeline

initiated Oct 2023 - An enhanced National Contract Value Review approach to speed up commercial research contracting and negotiation.

initiated Oct 2023 - Introduction of a new UK research performance indicators.

March 2024 - Actions to be taken as a result of the Health Research Authorities 'hallmarks' of people centred research report.

April 2024 - Establishment of a common approach to contacting patients about research to support data enabled delivery of research.

April 2024 - Publication of NHS England research finance guidance

Spring 2024 - Publication of NHS England multi professional practice-based research capability framework for healthcare professionals

October 2024 - Contract for the new NIHR Research Delivery Network begins

During 2024 - Department of Health and Social Care intend to develop and publish a workforce plan in support of The Future for UK Clinical Research Delivery

As soon as practical - NHS England will develop a set of metrics which help Integrated Care Boards and NHS providers understand their research performance

By March 2025- A total of 1 million people have registered on #BePartofResearch

March 2025 - Subject to successful discovery work by April 2025 local, regional and charity research volunteer registries will have the opportunity to link to #BePartofResearch to form a national networked database of interested volunteers in research.

2. Our strategic goal and objectives

Our strategic goal is “to be recognised and valued us as an organisation where people can take part in, and benefit from, research”. We have developed a number of strategic objectives and

Objectives

1 Research to be aligned to local needs: We will listen to, and act on, the voice of our people to ensure our research is aligned with local needs.

Our success indicators are:

1. People will know that we are a research active organisation, they will contribute to the setting of local research priorities and if our patients take part in a research study then the summary findings of that research will be made available through our website.
2. People will either be offered the opportunity to take part in research if a suitable study is available or given the opportunity to register their intent to be contacted for a future study future.

2 Research for All: We acknowledge there is much to do to make research inclusive for all people and we will put in place actions to make research more accessible.

Our success indicators are:

1. People will be able to see the research we support whilst on our premises through visible posters and electronic displays, by accessing our website and through media campaigns.
2. We will seek and act on feedback relating to the experience of research participants. We will also work with those who are unable to participate to identify and remove barriers so that they are able to participate in research if they wish to do so.

3 Research in partnership: We will foster local and national collaborations to increase the amount, depth and breadth of research opportunities for local participation.

Our success indicators are:

1. People will be able to see on our website how we perform against national research metrics and we will put in place initiatives to increase research opportunities for local participation.
2. People will be able to see who our research partners are and we will increase the number of partner organisations and colleagues working in partnership as well as increase research income. This includes trust being recognised as an exemplar member of the National Institute for Health and Social Care Research.

for each we have identified a number of success indicators. Detailed metrics will be developed during business planning.

4 Research is a service expectation: We will include the opportunity for people to take part in research as an essential design consideration for all our services.

Our success indicators are:

1. Colleagues working to deliver and or design front-line and support services (e.g. radiology, pharmacy, pathology, communications and finance) will include research and research participation as an operational requirement.
2. Research and research participation will be included in the organisation's approach to service delivery, performance management and operational reporting.

5 Research is everybody's business: We will ensure that all our colleagues recognise research as an essential and rewarding part of effective patient care and that there are also opportunities to devise and deliver research.

Our success indicators are:

1. We will implement the national research workforce plan for all colleagues to increase our ability to use and or generate research evidence for the benefit of those we serve.
2. We will support measures to gain external funding for the attainment of post graduate research qualifications and research internships. This will also include the identification of funding so that colleagues have dedicated time for research in their job planning.

6 Trusted use of data for research: We will implement national approaches that have public support to make best use of data, digital systems and AI (Artificial Intelligence) to support research in a way that is trusted.

Our success indicators are:

1. We will review our internal processes so that we can meet all national and local requirements in a way that is proportionate to the risk involved and does not introduce any unnecessary delay to research.
2. We will support national measures to deliver A plan for digital health and social care and the NHS Research Secure Data Environment initiative which is a trusted and secure data and research analysis platform. This will include the capture of research participation on our electronic health record system and the ability to review our records to identify and contact potential research participants.



3. Implementation and oversight

3.1 Overview of the Trust's four year plan

The Trust's 2024/5 initial phase will focus on four key areas:

Building on the current research strengths:

- Cancer, cardiology, renal, maternity, gastroenterology, nursing, and the use of data.
- Internal approach to improvement and quality (e.g. Virginia Mason Institute).
- Our partnership working within our integrated care system (Hertfordshire and West Essex).
- Other industry and academic partners, especially the University of Hertfordshire.

Developing plans to address known areas for improvement:

- Increased research funding.
- New and better use of research space.
- A trust-wide research workforce strategy.
- Embedding research into service delivery and service support departments (radiology, pharmacy, pathology, communications and finance).
- Better use of digital technology and data.

Implementation of government initiatives:

- People-centred research.
- Streamlined, efficient and innovative research.
- Research embedded in the NHS.
- A sustainable and supported research workforce.
- Research enabled by data and digital tools.

Development and implementation of a plan for financial growth:

- To expand our current research offer to patients.

3.3 Oversight

The R&D Board will oversee the development and delivery of the of the first year enabling plan and the subsequent three-year implementation with support from the R&D Steering groups at the Lister and the MVCC. This will include the identification of appropriate metrics and numerical indicator of success.

The Quality and Safety Committee will provide Board-oversight via scrutiny of an annual report from the R&D Board.



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