

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

Research and Development Strategy 2015-2020

1. Purpose

To continue and expand the Trust's applied health research, delivering outcomes which matter to service users and carers.

2. Strategic context

- 2.1. The Trust is committed to an active programme of research and development as part of its Strategic Goal 2 *'to continuously improve the quality and value of our work'*. An active and well-embedded research and development programme delivers outcomes across all of the Trust's strategic goals.
- 2.2. For Strategic Goal 1 *'to provide excellent services'*, access to clinical trials for service users contributes to the effectiveness of their care and improves knowledge and use of clinical evidence by professionals.
- 2.3. In Strategic Goal 3 *'to recruit, develop and retain a skilled, compassionate and motivated workforce'*, involvement in research and the Trust's links with research-led universities create opportunities for individual development and improve our wider education and training.
- 2.4. Research contributes to Strategic Goal 4 *'to have effective partnerships'* by establishing our place as a strong and effective partner in academic collaborations with universities.
- 2.5. In delivering Strategic Goal 5 *'to be recognised as an excellent and well-governed foundation trust'*, robust research governance procedures are essential.

3. Achievements and strengths

- 3.1. The Trust is now a research partner of choice for a number of academic institutions leading large scale clinical research funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, due to our record of delivery in clinical trials. This strategy follows up on the major progress made on the five goals of the Trust's 2010 R&D Strategy.
- 3.2. The Trust has established the MeHRY (Mental Health Research for the Young) collaboration within Durham University's Mental Health Research Group, with joint programmes of research in youth and primary care mental health, which has expanded academic leadership capacity.

- 3.3. There is a growing group of experienced clinician collaborators and investigators. The Trust has made a substantial contribution to the goals of the NIHR Clinical Research Network, reaching a peak of 7th of 56 mental health trusts for NIHR participant recruitment in 2014. We have achieved a doubling of annual research income to £700k.
- 3.4. There is improved research access for service users across all the Trust's current geographies and specialities. Service user and carer involvement in research has grown with the establishment of interest groups and the launch of YouthSpeak, the research involvement group for young people supported by the Durham University Mental Health Research Group.

4. Challenges

- 4.1. The development of the NIHR Clinical Research Network in 2006 created opportunities for the Trust as an organisation with little research track record to grow its activity quickly with substantial network funding.
- 4.2. The environment has now changed. Transition to the Local Clinical Research Networks (LCRN's) in 2014 has led to increasing challenge in terms of value for money and sustainability of a research portfolio which is heavily dependent on studies which are designed and led outside our LCRN area.
- 4.3. Lower participant recruitment has already led to reduced funding from the LCRN in the current year, and this is likely to reduce further even where recruitment is sustained. Moreover, the move of much of the work of NHS R&D permissions from Trust level to the Health Research Authority from 2015 onwards may mean reduced Clinical Research Network funding for the R&D Management and Governance function.
- 4.4. Beyond the Trust's current level of growth, its business model for Trust R&D is not sustainable in the longer term without the achievement of large scale external research grants which are locally led by Trust Chief Investigators, including University academics with honorary clinical status. Such grants will provide a more balanced and predictable income stream, together with the added benefit of NIHR Research Capability Funding in proportion to income, where grants are NIHR funded and Trust hosted. Over the next five years we can expect an increasing demand to demonstrate value for money and efficiency in our delivery of research.

5. Opportunities

- 5.1. The Trust has a growing group of service users and carers with both interest and expertise in research, who are highly motivated and able to make a much greater contribution.

- 5.2. There is continuing and growing potential for the achievement of large scale clinical trial and programme grants in partnership with Durham University and other institutions, including the University of York. Existing and new academic partnerships will focus even more clearly on areas of shared priority and capacity for both Trust and University.
- 5.3. The Trust has substantial presence and close joint working in a range of regional NHS structures including the Clinical Research Network, Academic Health Science Network and Strategic Clinical Networks, which can variously support research delivery, the application to practice and research-led improvement of care.
- 5.4. The Trust's Quality Improvement System presents great opportunity for leading initiatives to improve the process and efficiency of research delivery.
- 5.5. The Trust has established a pharmacy clinical trials function which is fit for purpose to deliver large scale complex drug trials including those in the commercial sector, with consequent access for service users to new treatments and additional capacity-building income.

6. Goals

The five R&D strategic goals below maintain continuity with progress over the last five years, with challenge to deliver at a higher level.

1. **Maintain excellent performance in the governance, management and delivery of research.** To do this we will

- Achieve the NIHR benchmarks for performance in the initiation and delivery of research
- Recruit to time and target for NIHR portfolio studies we lead, and contribute to the timely recruitment of studies we are partners in
- Contribute to the NIHR CRN North East and North Cumbria's achievement of NIHR High Level Objectives, and CRN NENC local strategic objectives
- Improve the efficiency of our research delivery using the Trust's Quality Improvement System, investing savings in expanding research capacity
- Train and support users and carers to participate in the management and delivery of our research
- Seek feedback from service users and carers on their experience as research participants and act to improve in response to this

2. **Move from collaboration to leadership in research.** To do this we will

- Work with academic partners to achieve large-scale applied clinical research grants which are led by Trust Chief Investigators (both

substantively employed clinicians and academics with honorary clinical contracts)

- Review and develop the Trust's existing research partnership with Durham University with a focus on achieving Chief Investigator-led grants.
- Develop new university collaborations in research areas where the Trust and academic partners have a shared priority, capacity and potential for achieving Chief Investigator-led grants.
- Invest in academic posts together with university partners to grow and sustain leadership of large scale research programmes.

3. Ensure that our research drives improvement in care. To do this we will

- Support academic collaborations with a commitment to applying research to service improvement and education within the Trust
- Raise the quality of the Trust's evaluation of its service developments, its implementation of evaluation findings, and the skills of the clinical workforce in this regard
- Continue to seek involvement as a partner organisation in large-scale multicentre clinical trials of new interventions, giving service users access to the latest developments in treatment
- Ensure effective dissemination across the organisation of the results of studies the Trust has participated in, to service users, carers and staff.
- Use research evidence to ensure the care we provide is effective and cost-effective

4. Embed research access and participation in all geographies and specialties of the Trust's services. To do this we will:

- Establish and achieve Trust targets for research participant recruitment in NIHR portfolio non-commercial and commercial studies
- Support the development of staff involvement in research, including the job planning of senior clinician research activity, and the provision of training opportunities across all clinical disciplines, managerial staff and postgraduate clinical trainees.
- Identify and support the development of talent in research, working with academic partners to develop individual research careers via Masters and PhD routes, including the support of external fellowship applications
- work with the Trust's service users and carers to give full access to research training opportunities open to staff, and to involve service users and carers in the design and delivery of research training in the Trust
- Support systems to enable participant access to research in line with the NHS Constitution, for example continued support of Join Dementia Research
- Effectively communicate about research the Trust is involved in, in ways that are easily accessible to users and carers, and available for the general public and potential partners

- Support the growth and development of user and carer research interest groups, which make a contribution at all stages of the research cycle, including the enhancement of research grant quality and research delivery.

5. Substantial growth in research-related income for the Trust, in order to robustly sustain the resources to achieve our goals. Our aim is a doubling of research income to £1.4 million by 2020. To achieve this we will:

- Establish and maintain the infrastructure and corporate systems needed to manage large-scale research grant applications, including joint arrangements where appropriate with NHS and university partners.
- Set annual goals for Trust Chief Investigator-led and Trust-hosted grant applications and income
- Respond rapidly to Expression of Interest opportunities for commercial research
- Work with academic partners on agreed shared goals for multicentre clinical trial and programme-level grants (over £1 million value) which attract direct grant income, associated research network income, excess treatment costs and subsequent research capability funding.
- Ensure service user and carer involvement in every grant application we lead or in which the Trust is a collaborating partner.

7. Scorecard Metrics

The Strategy's implementation plan will be monitored by a range of metrics, both those required by external stakeholders and measures which hold us to account on our progress in achieving the fullest service user and carer involvement in our research. The proposed metrics are:

- Quarterly NIHR performance metrics for the initiation and delivery of NIHR portfolio research, including achieving the first participant recruitment for each study within 70 days and the recruitment of studies to time and target
- Annual NIHR CRN North East and North Cumbria objectives where these have a measured organisational contribution
- Yearly targets for the submission of Chief Investigator led grant applications
- Annual goals for increase of overall Trust external research grant income, including secondary goals for commercial income, and the proportion of external research funding which is Trust-hosted and attracts RCF
- User and carer involvement demonstrable in 100% of studies
- Dissemination of results of studies with Trust involvement demonstrable in 100% of studies within one year of study closure
- User and carer experience of research involvement as measured by a Friends and Family Test or equivalent.