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NHS England research plan



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Introduction

NHS England has a legal duty to promote research and the use of research evidence in the NHS. We do this so that the NHS supports and harnesses the best research and innovations to improve patient outcomes, transform services and ensure value for money. Patients benefit from access to clinical trials including cutting edge treatments and the NHS benefits from new medicines, technologies and processes.

This plan is the first step in our work to set out NHS England's strategic approach to research including the research and innovation architecture and how this links with work ongoing across Government, such as the Industrial Strategy. The purpose of this 1 year plan is to clearly articulate our current areas of focus and commitments including how we will continue to engage with stakeholders and work with our partners. The plan conveys our continuing activity in the research landscape which will align closely to our activities across the entire research and innovation pipeline.

Promoting equality and addressing health inequalities are at the heart of NHS England's values. Throughout the development of the processes cited in this document, we have:

- Given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic (as cited under the Equality Act 2010) and those who do not share it;
- Given regard to the need to reduce inequalities between patients in access to, and outcomes from, healthcare services and in securing that services are provided in an integrated way where this might reduce health inequalities

Activities arising from the research plan will also be subjected to the same due regard.

Our commitment to support research is reflected in all that we do:

<p>Our Mandate commitment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Department of Health requires us to promote and support participation by NHS organisations, patients and carers in research funded both by commercial and non-commercial organisations, so that the NHS supports and harnesses the best research and innovations and becomes the research partner of choice.
<p>Five Year Forward View</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will improve the NHS' ability to undertake research and apply innovation• Research is vital in providing the evidence we need to transform services and improve outcomes e.g. in developing new care models, redesigning urgent and emergency care, strengthening general practice and transforming mental health and cancer services.
<p>Business Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• By using evidence to help shape services for patients, we can tackle variations in care, help identify the causes of disease, improve the treatment of patients, increase organisational efficiency, and help attract inward investment to the UK.• We will deliver the NHS contribution the 100,000 Genomes project.

Our contribution as a system leader and strategic partner

We will focus our effort where we can make the biggest difference for patients and the NHS. Our focus is on three areas:



Supporting NHS transformation, and operational performance, by ensuring that research commissioned addresses the future needs of patients and local NHS systems.

Supporting commissioners, CSUs, AHSNs, and national programmes to facilitate research in the NHS.

Using a range of mechanisms to share good practice, including networks and guidance.

a) Driving the direction of research

Greater use of evidence results in better decisions, but evidence is not always available and local systems, including STPs, need support to identify the gaps, fill these gaps and use knowledge effectively to replicate success and spread innovation.

NHS England will support the NHS by working with partners to define what research is needed to address future needs and why. We will co design a new systematic means of better articulating the research needs of local NHS systems to NIHR, AHSNs and other research funders including charities.

Our longer term aim is to build strong partnerships to generate proposals and ensure delivery of the necessary evidence that will deliver improved patient outcomes and transformation.

b) Contribute to creating an environment that fosters research

We have a role to encourage, endorse and promote research and evaluation. We will continue to work with partners to put in place the foundations that encourage and promote research and evaluation, including supporting the recruitment of patients into trials.

STPs and local commissioners must be able to make informed decisions to improve health outcomes for their population. Evidence shows us that research active organisations are safer and improve quality of care. We will encourage alignment of the system research assets, including NIHR CLAHRCs, AHSNs and HEE.

c) Support use of evidence in decision making and research into practice

Whilst the NHS has an excellent track record of invention, it is poor at spreading knowledge and translating research into practice.

We will support the use of evidence in decision making by continuing to build on partnership working to realise the benefits of a collaborative approach. We will work in support of partners such as AHSNs, NIHR CLAHRCs and HEE to enable the sharing of existing evidence and translation of evidence into practice.



Our partnerships

- We do not conduct clinical research directly and we are not a research funding body. However as a system leader we seek to exert appropriate influence throughout the research landscape, articulating research needs to support NHS transformation and sustainability.
- Partner organisations listed below have more explicit, defined and specific roles with regard to research and we recognise that there are areas where they are better placed to lead. Through building our partnerships we aim to generate greater clarity of shared purpose.
- We will engage with all our stakeholders to deliver this plan inviting comment and feedback. We will share information on opportunities to be involved in our work.

✓ The Department of Health (DH); championing innovation and improvement through the support, funding and use of research.

✓ Academic Health Science Networks: spreading innovation at pace and scale, improving health and generating economic growth.

✓ The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA); working to embed use of the Clinical Practice Research Datalink.



Our partnerships (cont'd)

- ✓ National Institute for Health Research (NIHR); providing integrated support for a broad spectrum of research through funding, infrastructure and supporting those carrying out research including CLAHRCs and Clinical Research Networks.
- ✓ The Health Research Authority (HRA); protecting and promoting the interests of patients and the public in health research and streamlining the regulation of research.
- ✓ Research Councils; supporting scientific research relevant to the health of the nation.
- ✓ The commissioning system; STPS, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), our own direct commissioning functions, NHS Clinical Commissioners and Local Authorities as users of evidence in decision making.
- ✓ National Institute for Health Care Excellence (NICE); improving health and social care through evidence based guidance.
- ✓ Research funding charities including AMRC; funding and supporting research.
- ✓ Patient groups: including National Voices and NIHR INVOLVE.
- ✓ The Office for Life Sciences: champions research, innovation and the use of technology to transform health and care service.
- ✓ Arm's length bodies including NHS Improvement, Health Education England and Public Health England.

Examples of our progress in the last 18 months



a) Influencing the direction of research

- Establishment of our Research Needs Panel to agree and prioritise joint research needs to support implementation of the Five Year Forward View.
- Delivery of a communications programme and series of events with the NHS Confederation to co-ordinate advice to the system on how to access EU funding, including Horizon 2020 programmes.

b) Creating an NHS environment that fosters research

- Published guidance for commissioners on the interpretation and application of excess treatment costs.
- Designated a second wave of Genomic Medicine Centres and awarded a total of £10 million in capital funding to the first and second waves. We worked with HM Treasury to award £10 million capital investment to support informatics and data infrastructure.
- Increased the quality of analytical insight into operational performance and direct commissioning within NHS England.

c) Supporting use of evidence in decision making & research into practice

- Designed and developed of a regional hub in partnership with Yorkshire and Humber AHSN and NIHR CLAHRC Y&H to produce evidence synthesis and interpretation to aid CCG decision making.
- Designed and produced a research and use of evidence self assessment tool for CCGs working with the Innovation Agency (North West Coast AHSN) and NIHR CLAHRC North West Coast.
- Produced an approach to evaluation of the implementation of the Five Year Forward View by building a coalition of expertise within AHSNs, NIHR CLAHRCs, Health Service Research Networks and Improvement Networks.
- Development of access to evidence synthesis, interpretation and decision making master classes for New Care Models and those teams delivering NHS England business plan priorities.

Our commitments:



Producing relevant research for the NHS

We will:

By October 2017 -

- Complete the design of and implement an improved approach for effective identification of research needs both within the transformational programmes of NHS England and more widely across the STP geographies in co-production with stakeholders including AHSNs.
- Work in partnership with stakeholders, including NIHR and DH to generate proposal topics and agree the priorities to address both the pressing clinical and operational needs of the NHS.
- Work with the MHRA to increase uptake of the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD) amongst GPs in England. This includes working across NHS England's National and Regional teams and with key partners such as the Royal College of GPs to promote the benefits of CPRD.
- Work in partnership with DH and the Health Research Authority to create a more fertile environment for clinical trials by enhancing the Health Research Authority, harmonising approval and recruitment processes, and streamlining bureaucracy including through the use of digital tools.

Our commitments:

Supporting research production

In November 2015 NHS England published guidance for researchers and commissioners on the interpretation and application of Excess Treatment Costs (ETCs).

We know that agreement of payments of ETCs continues to be a barrier to timely execution of research. As per our mandate commitment, we will therefore evaluate, with DH, the use and impact of the NHS England ETC guidance to better understand the issues facing researchers and national and local commissioners in relation to ETCs, and agree what further actions are required.

We will work in collaboration with partners to support the implementation of appropriate national and local processes to minimise problems. This will include, but not be limited to, developing, delivering and promoting training and education resources on ETCs for NHS commissioners and providers.

Our commitments:



Creating a genomic medicine service to enhance understanding of diseases, and developing products for earlier detection & treatment

Through the 100,000 Genomes Project the NHS is leading the world in sequencing at scale and pace the genomes of people with rare diseases and cancer as part of routine clinical practice, for the benefit of the individuals, and scientific discovery. The project is moving from proof of concept to implementation in 3 years and aligned with two major system priorities (UK rare disease strategy and cancer programme). The project is providing a model for transformational change in the NHS via the 13 NHS Genomic Medicine Centres as well as delivering science and partnerships with industry.

Building on the project's foundation, over the next year NHS England will continue to work with Genomics England and NHS Digital to develop the approach for embedding genomic medicine into the NHS to continue to demonstrate the nation's competitive advantage in enhancing understanding of diseases, and developing products for earlier detection and treatment.

We will do this by:

- Expanding the NHS's genomics capability, collecting 50,000 samples in 2017/18, rising to 90,000 in 2018/19. By the end of the 2018 calendar year, 100,000 whole human genomes will have been sequenced. By the end of 2018/19, we will also have developed a genomic medicine service for England, underpinned by a new consolidated genomic laboratory infrastructure and facilitated by informatics, data and analytical platforms to enable the sequencing data we generate to improve clinical practice.

Our commitments:



Creating a genomic medicine service to enhance understanding of diseases, and developing products for earlier detection & treatment (cont'd)

- Introducing a comprehensive genomic testing strategy for the NHS – initially for rare, and inherited disease and cancer, that encompasses the entire testing repertoire from whole genome sequencing to tests for single genes, molecular markers and other functional genomic tests that are important to fully determine the patients predicted response to treatment by Q3 2017/18.
- Supporting more patients to take part in clinical trials for cancer and rare disease patients to enter the NIHR portfolio and other studies.

Our commitments:

Patients and the Public

Throughout the year we will:

- Support the work of INVOLVE and NIHR to promote patient and public participation in research including support for the recommendations of “Going the Extra Mile” with a particular focus on diversity and inclusion and local and regional delivery.
- Encourage commissioners to identify and articulate evidence needs and research needs around patient insight for continual feedback to support the NHS England Patient Insight and Feedback ambitions.
- Contribute to design of NHS Choices website and the UK Clinical Trials Gateway (UKCTG) as a linked service to improve public access to research opportunities and recruitment as part of care and treatment, working with NIHR and research charities through AMRC.

Our commitments:



Alignment of research assets to support delivery and increasing capacity and capability in the use of evidence and knowledge exchange

Academic Health Science Networks and 'test beds' will take collective responsibility for driving national adoption of proven innovations, in line with the Accelerated Access Review.

More generally, under the banner of the government's Industrial Strategy, the life sciences sector deal will bring government and the NHS together with industry and charities to create new jobs and economic growth across the UK as well as aiming to improve care for NHS patients. The NHS is a key contributor and a committed partner to providing an environment where technologies can be developed and tested, and used to transform services to improve outcomes and reduce cost. This opportunity sits alongside further strengthening of the science base and clinical trials capability and the creation of an environment which enables small biotech and medtech companies to thrive and grow, and enhancement of our medicines manufacturing capabilities.

As medicine transforms over the next 20 years, the cutting-edge technology in our Universities combined with the NHS presents unique conditions to create new industries, companies and jobs based in the UK and transform the way innovation is delivered to patients, offering an attractive place to research and test new treatments in partnership with innovators. Potential areas include artificial intelligence, the application of genomics to medicine, the development of a range of diagnostic tools, and therapies for conditions that will enable more healthy aging.

Our commitments:



Alignment of research assets to support delivery and increasing capacity and capability in the use of evidence and knowledge exchange (cont'd)

We will continue to build on the partnership work undertaken to support the use of evidence in decision making working in a supporting role with:

- NICE, NIHR CLAHRC Yorkshire & Humber and the Innovation Agency (North West AHSN) to identify and develop appropriate hosting of evidence and tools to support STPs and local systems in their decision making.
- NIHR CLAHRCs, AHSNs, NHS Library and Knowledge Services and local health economies in development of communities of practice to build capability and enable the translation of evidence into practice including evaluation.
- HEE in support of the NHS Library and Knowledge Services in England policy, ensuring best evidence underpins research and that researchers freely access library and knowledge services including training in advanced search and information handling skills.

Summary

- This plan reflects our work this year to support and promote research activity and the use of research evidence in the NHS.
- We will monitor our progress against our delivery plans and through our mandate commitments as well as by inviting feedback from partners and stakeholders.
- Our commitments, as described here, are not the limit of future activity. Through our work to develop our research strategy we will respond to the opportunities presented in the government's Industrial Strategy and via implementation of the Accelerated Access Review.

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