A Night Full of Stars

The Neurosciences Research Team continued its winning streak in November, receiving its second award in three months.

The latest award was presented at the Trust’s ‘A Night Full of Stars’ ceremony at the Kings Hall in Stoke on Friday, 18th November. The Team was successful in winning the University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UHNM) ‘Research Impact Award’, in recognition for its hard work to establish a joint working team with North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust (NSCHT).

This most recent success follows on from the Team’s previous victory in September at the Clinical Research Network West Midlands Research Awards, and clearly demonstrates the importance of joint working in research.

The joint team has been working to bridge the gap between research in primary care and local mental health services. As a result of this collaboration, UHNM will soon open its first ever neurodegenerative research studies, looking at diseases such as dementia.

Martin Booth, Research Coordinator, holds a newly established role between the two NHS Trusts. He said: “I would like to say a massive thank you to UHNM for being so warm and welcoming to the team at NSCHT in this exciting joint working venture.

“The coming months will see the first commercial clinical trials in Alzheimer’s disease opening in North Staffordshire, and this is very exciting for both Trusts.”

Pictured left: the Neurosciences Research Team collects its award alongside Kerri Mason, Researcher at North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust, and Dr Darren Clement, R&D Manager at UHNM.

Training: PPIE

UHNM, in conjunction with the NIHR CRN PPIE Team, will be holding a ‘Building Research Partnerships Training’ session on Monday, 23rd January, in Seminar Room DTCIM156: Royal Stoke, Main Building, Lower Ground Floor 1.

This training will look at patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) in research, and how it can enhance research here at UHNM.

The two-hour session will take place between 1.30pm and 3.30pm. For more information, please contact Emma Johnson, R&D Training Officer, via Emma.Johnson@uhn.nhs.uk

NIHR Learn Zone

The NIHR has a new ‘Learn Zone’ supporting patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) in research. This ‘learn zone’ is for all those interested in PPIE in research, and is now available on the NIHR website, here: http://www.nihr.ac.uk/patients-and-public/learn-about-research/learn-zone/
The winners of the first ever UHNM Research Firelighter Awards have this month been revealed, following a Dragon’s Den style event at the beginning of December.

These awards, funded by the North Staffordshire Medical Institute (NSMI), gave staff at the Trust the chance to win up to £10,000 funding for their research ideas.

The awards received a large number of applicants with research ideas, and these were then shortlisted. The remaining seven applicants then presented their ideas to the ‘Dragons’ at the Grand Rounds on Friday, 9th December. Representatives from UHNM and NSMI then chose three winners.

Dr Arun Kurup, Consultant Gastroenterologist at the Trust, won a grant of £10,000. This will fund his research looking at the possibility of using a small capsule that is swallowed and takes a video as it travels through the bowel, as an alternative to colonoscopies.

Dr Jacqueline Mclennan, Consultant in Emergency Medicine at the Trust, won a Firelighter grant of just under £5,900. This grant will be used to assess the feasibility of using a clamp to stop spontaneous nose bleeds, as opposed to manual pressure.

Mr Stuart Harrisson, Consultant Neurosurgeon at the Trust, won a £10,000 Firelighter grant. Mr Harrisson’s research will be used to test a new sensor to measure potential biomarkers, to see if these biomarkers can be reliably used to detect and monitor brain injuries.

Prof Shaughn O’Brien, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at the Trust, and Chairman of NSMI, said: “It was a great opportunity to be able to develop this venture in conjunction with Dr Farmer and the R&D Department at UHNM. The North Staffordshire Medical Institute has provided funds for many years. Last year, two bequests enabled us to award two £250,000 grants to local researchers, in addition to the usual £80,000 pump priming grants. This year, a separate donation enabled the Institute to provide the funding for the new Firelighter Awards. This was a stimulating and exciting alternative to the weekly Grand Round event. The scoring for all seven shortlisted candidates was very close and the quality of the proposed research was very high.

“If similar funds are identified next year I will be recommending to the Institute Council that we repeat the event.”

Enhancing Tomorrow’s Healthcare...

Rebranding of the R&D Department will commence shortly. For this, please could all staff begin to think about what materials you use which currently feature the ‘Research Needs You’ logo, as this will need to be replaced. The new designs will need to feature on any materials used outside of this department. This includes external materials to companies, patients, etc. along with internal documents used around the Trust.

Please could all staff begin to collate any such documents, as these will need to be emailed to Alannah Copeland, Marketing and Communications Officer, for updating (date for this will be cascaded shortly).

Patient Testimonials

Patient testimonials are an extremely useful tool in terms of marketing the department to external organisations and to possible research patients. Therefore, it is requested that, when in contact with research patients, the question be asked as to whether they would be willing to provide a short testimonial.

Testimonials do not have to be something which are difficult for our patients, and can be as small the patient wishes. These will include information such as the patients experience of taking part in research at UHNM, etc.

If a patient wishes to write a testimonial for the department, please make them aware of the Marketing and Communications Officer role. The patient should then be asked for permission to pass on their details to the Marketing and Communications Officer, who would then contact them in the following days.

The Generic Research Team has already been able to provide four willing patients within the past few weeks, and each patient has been contacted regarding this. Thank you to the team for this great effort.
UHNMBariatric Research Recognised

Mr Chandra Cheruvu, Consultant Bariatric Surgeon, and Mr Alistair Sharples, Registrar, at University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust, have co-authored a nationwide study looking at the economic, social and psychological benefits of bariatric surgery.

The study, titled ‘Systematic Review of Meta-Analysis of Occupational Outcomes after Bariatric Surgery’, which has been published in ‘Obesity Surgery’ and covered by ‘Bariatric News’ (available in over 80 countries), is a systematic review to assess the impact of bariatric surgery on occupational outcomes.

The results of the study show how bariatric surgery can improve occupational outcomes by reducing levels of unemployment and absenteeism. The study also includes analysis of how surgery may have wider economic, social and psychological benefits above and beyond immediate health benefits.

For example, in studies that compared unemployed, obese patients undergoing bariatric surgery with unemployed, obese, non-surgical patients – surgical patients were 3.24 times more likely to return to work than the non-surgical counterparts.

Mr Chandra Cheruvu, pictured below, said: “The study explores and analyses a topic that has been discussed for many years by clinicians. I feel very strongly about finding solutions as to how we can continue to help our patients following their surgery, and the results of our research show that bariatric surgery is already having a real, positive effect on people’s lives.

“I’m very proud that our work has been recognised in the prestigious ‘Obesity Surgery’ journal, however it’s important that the industry works together to keep identifying new ways in which we can help patients, on a variety of levels, following their surgery.”

Along with this prestigious publication, Mr Cheruvu also assisted in the publication of two other papers and 10 national and international presentations in 2016. He has also just had four other papers accepted into a national annual meeting, which will take place in 2017.

48-hour Recruitment

Staff within the Trust have been praised for their assistance in a recent Acute research study. The study, ‘Intraoperative Hypotension in the Elderly’ (iHypE), took part over a two-day period in November 2016, and looked at patients who suffered from low blood pressure during surgery.

Over the 48 hours, the Acute Research Team recruited 65 patients in total. The team was led by Dr Pramod Nalwaya, Consultant Anaesthetist, who acted as Principal Investigator, along with Dr Naveed Javed, Anaesthetics Specialist Registrar, who acted as Trainee Lead.

Special thanks have been extended to the Post Anaesthetic Care Units (PACU) at both UHNM sites, led by Michelle Fell and Sheila Cooper at Royal Stoke, and Sarah Barber and Joanne Mallett at County Hospital. The PACU Teams assisted the research staff with recruitment by contacting them as soon as a possible patient was identified, meaning that the Acute Research Team was able to recruit every possible patient within the timeframe.

Dr Darren Clement, R&D Manager at the Trust, said: “Many thanks to the PACU Team for its support of this study. This is a great example of cross-speciality and cross-research team working.”
In The Spotlight...Women’s and Children's Research

Here in the Women’s and Children’s Research Team we would like to take this opportunity to talk about all of the recruitment help we have had from within our own department. The past few months have seen Research staff making extra effort to drive recruitment to our research studies, and without this commitment we would not have achieved such good results. Therefore, listed below are all of those who have assisted us, to whom we would like to say a huge thank you.

Our team managed to recruit all of the patients to the Pneumacare Bronchiolitis study in just one season, rather than two. For this trial, we would like to thank the following:

- Charlie, son of Kate Ford, former Clinical Studies Officer.
- Isabella, daughter of Ruth Salt, Senior Research Nurse.
- Georgia, daughter of Rachel Pringle, Senior Research Nurse.
- Charlie, grandson of Eric Roe, Senior Research Nurse.
- Isaac and Tilly, children of Angela Rooney, Research Sister.

The LCI-Search study was supported by Dr Francis Gilchrist, Consultant Paediatrician, and Ang Ho, Respiratory Consultant, who brought in Lily, Feng, Scarlett, Rosie and Milly, a combination of their own children and even children of their friends.

Staff kindly brought their children in to test a machine to allow for accreditation in the Vertex 123 Cystic Fibrosis trial. These participants included:

- Sam, son of Ruth Jones, Senior Research Nurse.
- Ollie, son of Rachel Pringle, Senior Research Nurse.
- Charlie, grandson of Eric Roe, Senior Research Nurse.
- Lily and Sophie, daughters of Dr Francis Gilchrist, Consultant Paediatrician.
- Pearl, daughter, and Elodie-Rose, niece, of Donna Brayford, Senior Research Midwife.
- Aliza, niece, and Sulaiman, nephew, of Nicky Pattison, Senior Clinical Support Administrator.

We also want to thank Angela Rooney’s daughter, Tilly, for her fantastic performance in the R&D Twitter launch video, acting as a child patient.

We are extremely grateful to all of our R&D colleagues for their hard work and especially to those listed above, who have gone above and beyond to help with recruitment.

Reaping the Benefits...

Earlier in the year the R&D Funding Team begun recording all study finances internally via the department’s clinical management system, EDGE. This was implemented to reduce time taken for study income to be received into the Trust and to give the department improved transparency around the study finances.

The Funding Team hit a landmark 50 studies with finances set up on EDGE in October, with that figure now at 57 studies. Currently, these 57 studies have generated a total of £474,000 worth of income now recorded on EDGE. £241,000 of these studies fees has already been paid to the Trust by various study sponsors, with the remaining £233,000 due for payment.

Once the £474,000 has been received in full, R&D will have saved around £40,000 in overheads by managing the study finances in-house. These savings will continue to grow year on year as more new studies are set up and additional study income is received.

Publicise and promote your research work with the R&D Communications Officer
Email: research@uhn.nhs.uk
Dear All

What a year 2016 turned out to be. We have had some really fantastic successes and achievements, coupled with some real challenges. All in all, it has been a bit of a roller coaster ride - exciting but kind of terrifying at the same time. Our delivery of NIHR portfolio studies, despite the challenges we have faced around our workforce, has been fantastic and we continue to over-deliver against our network target. This success, coupled with a good performance delivering the other network high level objectives, such as time to target, meant we were awarded the ‘Best Performing Trust’ award by the Clinical Research Network West Midlands. This is a real testament to all the hard work and dedication of the R&D team over the last year. In addition, the joint working between our Neurosciences Research Team and the North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust for their collaborative working around delivering dementia research was recognised by the Network and again by the Trust at the Staff Awards. Further recognition for our overall success came in the form of the Acute Research team being awarded the Nursing Times Award for Clinical Research Nursing.

On the academic side we continue to perform well and have seen a 37% increase in grant income on the pro rata value compared to the same period last year with around £3.9M of new bids having been submitted up to the end of quarter 2 for 2016/17. We have had a number of research grant successes this year including an NIHR Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB) award in Emergency Medicine (£350k) led by Dr Mark Poulson. A letter of recognition was received by the Chief Executive in October 2016, showing appreciation for the contribution being made by our Trust to the 100,000 Genomes Project, on behalf of the West Midlands Genomic Medicine Centre. Well done to the many members of R&D staff who were highlighted in this letter. The Annual Health Research Conference took place on Wednesday, 12th October 2016. This jointly showcased UHNM research as well as partnership work from Keele and Staffordshire Universities. It also acted as the launch for the new Keele University Institute for Applied Clinical Sciences (iACS) and included guest speakers form the Health Foundation and the National Institute for Health Research Healthcare Technology Co-operative. It was great to see our work and the impact it is having on our patients being showcased and shared with some of our key partners and stakeholders.

One area I’m particularly keen to look to develop and grow is around how we engage with local businesses and the commercial sector in relation to medical devices and new technologies and therapies for the benefit of our patients. Working in partnership with Keele University, we have been successful in securing a c.£1M grant from the European Regional Development Fund to support business engagement activities and events with local small to medium size enterprises (SME’s). This will allow us to look at how we can improve the care of patients and address real clinical challenges and needs that our services face on a day to day basis. This will launch in the New Year, so watch this space for future updates.

I’d also like to recognise this month some of the great fundraising we have done over the last year and it was great to be part of ‘Elf Day’ (not sure Jill and I want the pictures to go public mind!). It was great to see everyone get in to the spirit of the event. Thanks to the Neurosciences team for organising this. The efforts of the team and the generosity of you all raised £155 for the Alzheimer’s Society - a great cause. Thanks everyone, it was Elftastic!

All that said, there does remain a number of challenges around finance and we continue to review our key targets and income and expenditure in order to ensure there is a sustainable growth in our activity as we move into the New Year. Our financial position is improving month on month as we continue to keep a tight control on our expenditure, whilst all working hard to increase the income we receive from our main funding streams and in particular on the commercial clinical trials side, where we can see a really strong pipeline of studies coming through.

To end, I would just like to say a big thank you to you all for your continued hard work, support and dedication to ensure our patients get access to the latest treatments and therapies. You all do a great job and for that I want to thank everyone involved in R&D here at UHNM.

I hope you have all had a very Merry Christmas and have a Happy New Year
Darren
Recognition Corner

The Team of the Month award for November goes to the entire iHypE study team. Great team work was demonstrated for this study across a number of research delivery teams and the clinical team as well. Well done to all involved.

The Employee of the Month award for November goes to Gill Lockett, Research Administrator in the Women’s and Children’s Research Team. This has been awarded for Gill’s extremely hard-working attitude, and her willingness to help all other colleagues from all teams. Gill has taken on many different roles over the past 12 months and is now settled once again, without ever having shown a negative attitude towards what was an ever-changing workload.

Don’t forget, nominations can now be made for December’s winners to: Darren.Clement@uhnm.nhs.uk

Team of the Month
iHypE Study Team

Employee of the month
Gill Lockett
Research Administrator

Happy Holidays…
As producer of the R&D Newsletter, I would like to wish everyone a very happy New Year, and I hope that those who celebrate Christmas had a wonderful day! Best wishes for 2017, Alannah.

Submit stories and news to
Alannah.Copeland@uhnm.nhs.uk

Produced by the R&D Communications Officer, research@uhnm.nhs.uk