

UHNM Research and Innovation Update:

Five Things Friday

Welcome to our 'Five Things Friday' update!

On the last Friday of every month, we'll share a quick snapshot of what's happening in Research & Innovation (R&I) at University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UHNM). These updates are designed to help you better understand the wide range of support our R&I department offers.



1. Home-Grown Research and Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE)

Our experienced team can support you in developing high-quality proposals and securing local, national, or international funding.

We'll support you through every stage of your study, from design to delivery and ensure patients and the public are meaningfully involved through our dedicated PPIE team. We also offer tailored communication support to help your research find the right audiences.

Get involved: PPIE drop-in sessions return for 2026

Staff across UHNM are being invited to join a series of PPIE (Public and Patient Involvement and Engagement) drop-in sessions running throughout 2026.

Hosted by the CRDC PPIE team, the informal MS Teams sessions are open to anyone involved in research, innovation, quality improvement or engagement – and offer practical support on how to involve patients and the public in your work.

Colleagues will be able to hear real examples of PPIE in action at UHNM, share their own experiences and get advice on how to build involvement into projects from the outset through to delivery and dissemination. There will also be time for open discussion and questions.

Sessions take place from 12–1pm on 15 June, 21 September and 30 November. MS Teams links will be shared ahead of each session.

For more information, contact louise.barlow@uhnm.nhs.uk.



2. Research Delivery

Our hands-on research delivery team works directly in clinics and services across UHNM to support study recruitment, ensuring our patients have access to world-leading research opportunities.

“I wouldn’t be here today without this”: UHNM research patient celebrates NHS approval of pioneering myeloma treatment

A patient treated at UHNM has welcomed NHS approval of a new blood cancer treatment after taking part in a research trial at Royal Stoke that helped put him into remission.

Paul Duckers, 73, from near Stafford, was diagnosed with incurable multiple myeloma in 2021 after developing severe night sweats. Despite chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant, his cancer returned within 18 months.

In October 2022, Paul joined a UHNM clinical trial exploring a treatment known as BPD. He said: “When you’re told your cancer has come back, it’s devastating. When the doctors explained there was a trial available, I didn’t hesitate.”

Paul went into remission after his first dose and remains in remission more than three years later.

He said: “Up until the trial, nothing had worked. I’ve had extra time with my family and I’m incredibly grateful.”

BPD uses a ‘Trojan Horse’ approach to target myeloma cells and stimulate the immune system.

The disease affects more than 33,000 people in the UK.



3. The North Midlands Commercial Research Delivery Centre (CRDC)

UHNM is home to a dedicated Commercial Research Delivery Centre (CRDC), working with industry partners to deliver high-quality commercial studies.

This centre strengthens our reputation as a research-active Trust and brings cutting-edge treatments to our patients faster.

For further information please contact our team via research@uhnm.nhs.uk

CRDC to hold inaugural cross-sector partners meeting

The North Midlands Commercial Research Delivery Centre (CRDC) will bring partners together for its first Cross-Sector Partners Board meeting on 31 March, marking an important step in strengthening collaboration across the local research system.

The quarterly forum will bring together clinical, community, academic and public health partners to review performance, shape priorities and support the strategic development of research across the region.

A key focus will be improving inclusion in research, ensuring more patients have the opportunity to take part in studies that reflect the needs of local communities. Partners will also work together to prioritise new commercial research opportunities, aligning investment with local health challenges to bring more innovative treatments closer to patients.

The meeting will also support the development of research delivery in community settings, helping more patients access studies closer to home, while building workforce capacity and supporting innovation across the system.



4. Innovation

From concept to implementation, our Innovation Manager helps staff bring ideas to life, supporting evaluation, adoption, and spread of innovations that improve patient care and operational efficiency.

Please contact our team via innovation@uhnm.nhs.uk for further support.

New NHS IP rules clear the path from idea to patient care

Updated NHS intellectual property guidance is set to make it quicker and easier for UHNM staff to turn bright ideas into real-world benefits for patients.

The new national framework, the first major update in more than two decades, cuts through red tape, simplifies legal processes and makes it clearer how innovations can be developed and shared with partners. In practice, it means research, technologies and service improvements developed at UHNM have a faster, more straightforward route to adoption.

For staff, it opens up more opportunities to take ideas beyond the bedside or lab and into everyday care, with stronger support for working with industry and external partners.

Crucially, any income generated from NHS innovations will be reinvested back into frontline services and future research, helping UHNM continue to deliver high-quality care and cutting-edge treatments.

The changes also strengthen the NHS's position as a global leader in health innovation, creating more opportunities for UHNM teams to make a wider impact.

To find out more, email <mailto:innovation@uhnm.nhs.uk>





5. Governance, Research Funding and More

Our expert support teams set-up the study, keep your research safe, compliant, and on track, handling governance, costing, contracts, and everything in between.

Please contact us via research@uhnms.nhs.uk.

UHNMS R&I leaders share insight at national research summit

UHNMS was represented on the national stage as Professor Kamaraj Karunanithi and Sarah Jones-Faulkner attended the UKRD Summit 2026 earlier this month.

Bringing together more than 140 leaders from health and social care research teams across the UK, the two-day event focused on sharing best practice, exploring future developments and strengthening collaboration across the sector. Professor Karunanithi also led a breakout session, showcasing UHNMS's work and contributing to national discussions.

A key theme was improving access to research, with speakers highlighting that participation should become the norm rather than the exception. Workshops and panels explored how organisations can overcome shared challenges, with a strong message from national leaders around the need to be bold and embrace change.

Sessions covered digital and AI trials, research culture, workforce development and sustainability, alongside insights from patients and national updates. The summit provided valuable opportunities to connect, learn and bring ideas back to support research and innovation at UHNMS.