

# 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.

UHNM has received government funding to launch a national research trial to improve surgical outcomes for endometriosis patients.

### **Meet Dr Wanda Russell, our new Patient and Public Involvement Lead**

"I previously worked at Keele University's Medical School, where I spent eight years as a frontline adviser in the NIHR Research Support Service and more recently as Academic PPIE Lead in the Impact Accelerator Unit. With a background in managing clinical trials and health services research, I've supported many teams in designing studies and embedding meaningful patient and public involvement (PPIE).

"My academic career began at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, where I spent 13 years working on large-scale tropical disease projects in sub-Saharan Africa. I later completed a doctorate in ophthalmology at the University of Manchester, followed by roles in oncology and trauma research before moving to Keele, which connected me with colleagues at UHNM.

"In my new PPIE role at UHNM, I'll be working to ensure patients and carers are represented and involved at all levels of research and innovation. By building strong partnerships with communities and colleagues, we'll promote high-quality PPIE that supports equality of access to healthcare, strengthens trust, and inspires impactful research. I'm excited to see the benefits of this work for patients and carers and to grow new collaborations across the Trust and beyond."



## 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.**

### **First UK patient recruited for pioneering lung cancer drug trial at UHNM**

University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UHNM) has become the first NHS Trust in the UK to successfully recruit a patient onto a major new international small-cell lung cancer trial.

Teams from UHNM's Oncology and Research and Innovation (R&I) departments are working with sponsor BioNTech SE to investigate whether combining a new immunotherapy drug called BNT327 into standard chemotherapy is more effective than the existing treatment.

It's hoped that the pioneering, phase three randomised trial, ran in partnership with the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), will lead to better patient outcomes in this rare but aggressive form of cancer. [More>](#)



### 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](mailto:research@uhnm.nhs.uk)

#### **The North Midlands CRDC**

In December 2024 it was announced that UHNM will receive £3.1 million in government funding to help accelerate medical research and provide cutting-edge technology and equipment to support the testing of innovative treatments, offering patients greater access to treatments still in trial phases through the establishment of the North Midlands CRDC.

Find out more about the North Midlands CRDC. [More>](#)

#### **Where is the North Midlands CRDC?**

The North Midlands CRDC is located in the Royal Stoke University Hospital's Lyme Building, near to the entrance to Interventional Radiology (IR).





## 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](mailto:innovation@uhnm.nhs.uk) for further support.

### **UHNM hosts first Innovation Summit**

Staff from across University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UHNM) were joined by academics, industry partners and the wider NHS at it's first ever Innovation Summit.

The multi-disciplinary event, organised and hosted by UHNM's Research and Innovation (R&I) department, explored how innovation can transform and improve patient care, both from within UHNM and working with cross-sector partners.

There was also an opportunity to highlight existing innovation pathways at UHNM, and to encourage staff to pursue their ideas with the help of UHNM's R&I team.

Speaking at the event, Chris Bird, deputy director of strategy and innovation at UHNM said: "The depth and breadth of innovation showcased during the summit highlights just how vital innovation is in delivering UHNM's strategy of enhancing patient care, supporting our people, and improving population health.

"UHNM is home to so many innovative and forward-thinking people, with so much already happening across the organisation, and our role is to nurture and connect this work so that it flourishes cohesively."

As well as examples of initiatives developed at UHNM, during the day there also presentations from healthcare partners including Intuitive and Medihive.





## 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@uhn.nhs.uk](mailto:research@uhn.nhs.uk).

### Focus on Quality Assurance

Our Quality Assurance Team ensures that UHNM's research is ethical, high-quality and compliant with regulations like Good Clinical Practice (GCP) by developing policies, conducting audits, and overseeing processes such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and archiving, to protect patients and the integrity of the data collected.

Rob Bowler, quality assurance manager said: “Research exists to benefit everyone by helping us advance patient care. I want to say a heartfelt thank you to anyone who engages with research in any way, it's truly an amazing endeavour. It's a privilege to be involved in research, and we're grateful to the patients who generously give their time to take part.

"I'd also like to thank all my colleagues across UHNM who make research possible, from pathology to imaging, pharmacy to the wards, and to all the doctors, nurses, and administrative staff who support this vital work."