

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.

Thinking about developing your own research?

If you are planning a research project, one of the key things to consider is sponsorship. For UHNM staff this role is often undertaken by UHNM, helping to ensure studies are safe, appropriate and well managed.

The best place to start is by discussing your idea with an Academic Development Officer from Research and Innovation (R&I) or the Centre for NMAHP Research and Education Excellence (CeNREE). They can provide advice on study design, sponsorship requirements and the next steps for developing your project.

Projects that have funding in place, or are seeking funding, can be reviewed by UHNM's Research Sponsorship Group (RSG). This supportive panel includes clinicians, academics, support services and R&I/CeNREE colleagues who provide valuable feedback and guidance. The group can offer either Sponsorship in Principle or a Final Sponsorship decision, depending on the stage of your project.

For more information, visit the Research and Innovation Quality Assurance section on the intranet or speak to an Academic Development Officer.



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.

New pharmacy leadership role supports growth in clinical trials at UHNM

We're pleased to welcome Chris Blanks to her new role as clinical trials and innovative medicines lead pharmacist at UHNM.

Chris leads the Trust's clinical pharmacy clinical trials team, supporting research studies involving medicines from initial feasibility through to trial close-down.

Working closely with Research and Innovation colleagues, Chris and her team help assess new studies, support trial set-up and delivery, and work with sponsors throughout the life of a study.

Chris said: "Research is really exciting, it's about developing new treatments and therapies and helping to shape how diseases are managed in the future.

"Pharmacy plays a key role in around half of all research studies at UHNM, ensuring investigational medicines are safely received, stored, manufactured where required and dispensed to patients.

"I'm particularly looking forward to supporting new clinical trials and innovative medicines studies that bring cutting-edge research opportunities to patients across UHNM."



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 PPIE team host first 'CRDC in the Community' co-design workshop

The North Midlands Commercial Research Delivery Centre (CRDC) Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) team hosted their first 'CRDC in the Community' co-design workshop on 17 June at the Wade Conference Centre.

The event was delivered in partnership with colleagues from Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent and brought together members of the community, including patients, families, partners such as VAST and students to share views and help shape the development of CRDC resources.

Attendees were invited to review current patient-facing materials and contribute ideas for new information resources, including leaflets and supporting documents for use within the CRDC.

Feedback from the session will be used to inform future design work, ensuring materials are clear, accessible and reflect the needs and experiences of patients and the wider public involved in commercial research.



University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust

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.

UHNM Annual Showcase 2026 set to celebrate education, innovation, continuous improvement and research

The Innovation Team are leading on the planning of the UHNM Annual Showcase 2026, which will take place on Monday 12 October 2026, 8.30am-4.00pm.

Now in its fifth year, the showcase, 'UHNM Annual Showcase 2026: Advancing Education, Innovation, Continuous Improvement and Research Together', will feature oral and poster presentations across four priority workstreams- Education, Innovation, Continuous Improvement, and Research.

UHNM staff and students are invited to submit abstracts using the provided template to present their work in a supportive, development-focused environment. The event aims to celebrate excellence across UHNM while sharing learning and good practice. Prizes will be awarded in each category.

[Click here](#) for more information and to book.





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@uhnm.nhs.uk.

NIHR Research Delivery Director Visits UHNM

Kate Jones, Director of Research Delivery at the NIHR Research Delivery Network (RDN) Coordinating Centre, recently visited Royal Stoke University Hospital as part of a tour focused on research delivery activity across the region.

Kate was accompanied by the R&I leadership team, visiting key sites including the Clinical Education Centre (CEC) and the Commercial Research Delivery Centre (CRDC). The visit provided an opportunity to see how research is embedded within clinical practice and education, and how teams are supporting the delivery of commercial and non-commercial studies.

Discussions throughout the day highlighted the strength of local collaboration and the ongoing commitment to increasing patient access to research opportunities across UHNM.