Research is everyone's business

A five year strategic plan for:

Nurses

Midwives

Allied health professionals

Healthcare scientists

Clinical psychologists

Clinical research practitioners

Pharmacists

Pharmacy technicians

Research is everyone's business

Finance partner
"I did the costing for the research grant application"

Physiotherapist
"Working with patients helped me come up with the original idea"

Senior midwife
"I made the funding application"

Nurse educator
"I ran a workshop on research skills"

Dietician
"I'm presenting my research at a conference"

HR business partner
"I organised the contract to enable the staff member to take up her fellowship"

Clinical research practitioner
"It's my job to carry out all aspects of research"

Patient
"I helped design the research"

Midwife
"I'm changing my practice as a result of this research"

Speech and language therapist
"I'm treating patients more effectively because of the research we have done"

Staff nurse
"I informed a patient about a research study"

Foreword

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust is a key partner in the Imperial College Academic Health Science Centre (AHSC), whose vision is to improve the quality of life of patients and populations by taking new research discoveries and translating them into new therapies as quickly as possible. The AHSC is focused on research and education as the key drivers to better patient care.

The Trust's research strategic plan for healthcare professionals sets out our ambition to become a UK leader for research quality, capability and capacity across all healthcare professions.

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust already has a world-class reputation for research, and at any one time there are around 1200 research studies that are actively recruiting patients at the Trust. However, the majority of health research undertaken at Imperial is currently led by doctors.

We have a growing number of healthcare professionals outside of medicine, who are developing, delivering and leading high quality research aligned to patient and health service priorities. These healthcare professionals also support and deliver much of the research that is medically led.

This strategic plan aims to build on our existing strengths and develop a research culture across the Trust which enables, values and celebrates the impact that research has on patient care. People at all levels and roles can be involved in enabling and carrying out research, therefore this strategic plan is aimed at all staff, whether they are working in clinical, managerial, educational or research roles. It aims to support and build research awareness, research involvement, research activity and research leadership across the Trust.

Dr Caroline Alexander
Chair of the Clinical Academic Research Committee for Healthcare Professionals and lead clinical academic for therapies

Prof Mary Wells
Chair of the Nursing and Midwifery Research Committee and lead nurse for research

Our baseline:

Establishment of a Clinical Academic Research Committee (CARC)

Establishment of a Nursing and Midwifery Research Committee

Creation of an e-learning resource on critical appraisal, available through Moodle

Delivery of a range of research skills workshops and courses

A successful annual North West London Research symposium

Establishment of Imperial Healthcare Charity/Biomedical Research Centre pre and post-doctoral fellowships

Support for applications to NIHR at pre-doctoral, doctoral, post-doctoral, clinical lectureship and senior clinical lectureship levels

Development of Clinical Academic Training Office (CATO) research events

Production of case studies of research active healthcare professionals on CATO website

The appointment of a lead clinical academic for therapies and lead nurse for research in 2017

Launch of the AHSC PhD mentoring scheme through CATO in 2018

Establishment of a Healthcare Professional Academic Group within Imperial College in 2018

In 2017, 67 healthcare professionals outside of medicine employed in the Trust were qualified to doctoral level, of which 49 were clinical psychologists or healthcare scientists. Of the 67, only 14 were employed as clinical academics, with the majority in healthcare science. There were 13 healthcare professionals studying for PhDs, of whom 4 were on NIHR doctoral fellowships.

Line manager

"I discussed research opportunities in my team's PDRs"

Senior nurse

"My QI project led to a research project"

Advanced clinical practitioner

"I'm leading a funded research study which will make a real difference to practice"

Introduction

This document outlines our research capability and capacity and a five year research strategy for the following professionals: nurses and midwives, allied health professionals (AHPs)[1], healthcare scientists[2], clinical psychologists, clinical research practitioners[3], pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. We have named this workforce 'healthcare professionals'.

This is intended to support the Trust's vision and objectives to 'educate and engage skilled and diverse people committed to continual learning and improvements' and to 'generate world leading research that is translated rapidly into exceptional clinical care.' It complements the Trust-wide multi-professional education strategy, quality strategy, nursing and midwifery education strategy and the overall research strategy of the Academic Health Sciences Centre (AHSC) and the Imperial Biomedical Research Centre (BRC).

Our vision is to increase research capacity and capability and to enhance the quality and relevance of research outputs, in order to improve patient care, advance knowledge and understanding at a national and international level and ensure that Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust is seen as a leading NHS Trust for research and clinical academic careers across the healthcare professions. The Imperial College AHSC has recently issued a statement of commitment to clinical academic careers, which underpins this strategy.

Research is core to the NHS principles of maintaining the highest standards of excellence and professionalism 'through its commitment to innovation and to the promotion, conduct and use of research to improve the current and future health and care of the population' (NHS Constitution 2015). Research activity 'improves the quality of patient care, experience and outcome, and increases the effective use of available resource.' (Association of UK University Hospitals (AUKUH), 2016). It has a direct impact on the quality and safety of patient care and is recognised as central to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Standards and CQC Key Lines of Enquiry.

Clinical academic[4] career structures are well established in medicine and dentistry but across the other healthcare professions, only 0.1% of the workforce are clinical academics (AUKUH 2016). The majority are sited in universities rather than being integrated into clinical departments. This separation of research and practice restricts the nature and scope of research, limits the development of research capacity and capability amongst clinical staff, compromises the relevance and applicability of research for patients and clinicians and reduces the potential impact of research on patient care, experience and outcomes.

The vast majority of patient care in the NHS is provided by healthcare professionals outside of medicine, but the majority of clinical research is led by doctors. AUKUH's long term goal is that 1 per cent of healthcare professionals are working within a clinical academic role by 2030, equating to 53 Trust healthcare professional staff. This strategic plan sets out how we will achieve that goal and provide leadership in the development of meaningful clinical academic careers across this workforce, with the aim of improving patient care. It addresses the expectations of the CQC for safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led services. In addition, it supports the values of the AHSC and its purpose of utilising 'excellence in research… to transform health outcomes' across the Trust.

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1. These are art therapists, chiropodists & podiatrists, dietitians, drama therapists, music therapists, occupational therapists, orthoptists, operating department practitioners, osteopaths, prosthetists & orthotists, paramedics, physiotherapists, diagnostic radiographers, therapeutic radiographers, speech and language therapists. **2.** These include healthcare scientists in the four main areas: Life sciences; blood science, cellular science, infection and immunity, molecular & genetic sciences, informatics; Physiological sciences – audiology, cardiac physiology, gastro-intestinal physiology, respiratory and sleep sciences, neuroscience; Physical sciences – medical physics and radiological science; Clinical engineering. **3.** Clinical Research Practitioners work in research delivery roles that involve direct contact with patients and activities in clinical environments, but they are not registered healthcare professionals. **4.** Clinical academics are defined by the AUKUH (2016) as 'clinically active healthcare researchers'

Our aims are to:

Be recognised as one of the leading NHS Trusts in the UK for research quality, capability and capacity in the healthcare professions.

Ensure that the research potential and research activity of healthcare professionals is recognised, valued and supported at all levels of the organisation.

Build sustainable links across the AHSC to foster interdisciplinary and multi-professional research collaborations.

Ensure a sustainable research culture at the Trust, which enables all healthcare professionals to be research aware.

Ensure that at least one per cent of all NHS clinically based healthcare professionals are working within a clinical academic role by 2030. This equates to at least 53 staff at the Trust.

Ensure that healthcare professionals are central to research activity across the AHSC.

We plan to achieve these aims through the following:

1 Developing research awareness

2 Leadership and career structures

3 Enabling and facilitating research networks and collaborations

4 Identifying, developing and supporting healthcare professional staff to be research active

This will facilitate all healthcare professional staff to be involved in research in different ways

| Understanding and applying research in practice | Participating in research | Delivering research | Becoming an independent researcher | Leading research |

Research aware ←————————————————→ Research active

Strategic implementation plan

The Strategic implementation plan will be supported by members of the AHSC Education Committee, Clinical Academic Training Office (CATO), Clinical Academic Research Committee (CARC), Nursing and Midwifery Research Committee and operational managers across all divisions.

Pharmacist

"I'm doing a PhD"

Newly qualified nurse

"I'm learning about how to do research"

Administrator

"I organise and support meetings to discuss research ideas"

Radiographer

"I'm developing and testing ways to use artificial intelligence to speed up scanning"

Divisional research manager

"I support all of the research going on in our division"

Occupational therapist

"I supervised a student's research project"

Healthcare scientist

"Through my research I came up with a new way of analysing samples"

1 **Developing research awareness**	Target date		
	2019	**2021**	**2023**
Increase the visibility of research and clinical academic careers within the Trust's corporate induction, to ensure that it conveys the breadth and depth of research activity across the Trust and communicates the AHSC's commitment to supporting research development and clinical academic careers.	X		
Develop and maintain a signposting resource on the intranet to facilitate awareness and understanding of the research process and promote opportunities for research involvement, linking with existing AHSC and CATO resources.	X		
Increase the visibility of the Imperial College Library Service and facilitate increased exposure to relevant literature and critical appraisal skills training. This will be supported by the Critical Appraisal Skills e-learning course delivered through Moodle, and through workshops provided by the Imperial College library service, which are open to Trust staff.	X		
Develop a robust communication strategy to ensure that research training and development opportunities are disseminated to all staff across the Trust.		X	
Promote awareness of the role and contribution of research delivery staff[5] across the Trust.	X		
Promote and facilitate placements with research delivery teams for students and new staff.	X		
Promote opportunities for clinical staff to work alongside research active colleagues e.g. through taster sessions .		X	
Prepare and make available research awareness resources, including presentations that can be delivered to students on placement and newly qualified staff (e.g. those on preceptorship courses).	X		
Promote opportunities for research practice and activity to be highlighted and discussed at Trust-wide events, such as Schwartz rounds, clinical updates and as standing items at appropriate committees.	X		
Encourage staff to disseminate news items from their teams that illustrate research activity e.g. new projects, grants, publications, fellowships, posters and oral presentations at conferences, using multiple methods of communication e.g. professional social media and through the Trust and AHSC communication channels.	X		

5. Research delivery staff include research nurses, research midwives and clinical research practitioners who are responsible for delivering clinical research within the NHS, including studies on the NIHR portfolio and commercially funded research. They co-ordinate all aspects of research, identifying and recruiting participants, ensuring safe and effective implementation of research protocols, collecting and managing research data, contributing to research outputs etc

Work with the Trust and AHSC communication teams to ensure that research activity among the healthcare professions is visible on the intranet and in Trust and AHSC publications.		X	
Provide opportunities to share information about current research studies with all staff, to promote research-informed practice and implementation of research findings.		X	
Promote and facilitate opportunities for dissemination and communication of research conducted by health professionals to clinical staff, patients and the public, through multiple media and regular campaigns e.g. 'NIHR I am research'.		X	
Establish research advocates across the Trust to promote engagement in research and facilitate dissemination.		X	

2 Leadership and career structures

	Target date		
	2019	**2021**	**2023**
Ensure representation from the healthcare professions on key AHSC, Trust, BRC and national committees and groups relevant to research and clinical academic careers e.g. AUKUH.	**X**		
Disseminate information about and encourage participation in peer-reviewing, research panels, scientific committees for conferences and other national and international leadership opportunities.		**X**	
Provide appropriate mentorship and facilitate development of leadership skills at all levels using NHS, Trust and College networks and opportunities such as the NHS Leadership Academy.	**X**		
Ensure continued strategic support for lead clinical academic and research roles within the Trust.	**X**		
Facilitate joint working between senior clinicians, managers and researchers to identify shared research priorities, ensure shared ownership of research initiatives and to promote joint leadership decisions for research and clinical academic career development.		**X**	
Identify and support role models in all Healthcare professions and ensure that they are engaged in leading research across the Trust.		**X**	
Liaise closely with educational leads across the Trust to ensure that research is integrated into educational initiatives.		**X**	
Increase the number of clinical academics in the organisation at all levels of seniority including Professor.			**X**
Work with human resources leads and operational managers at the Trust and Imperial College to facilitate honorary contracts, joint appointments, clear lines of professional accountability and ways of working between the Trust and Imperial College.		**X**	
Collaborate with managers and leaders to identify mechanisms to support the creation of substantive posts that combine clinical and academic roles and provide a coherent career structure for clinical academics within the Trust, which recognises and values the importance and need for research and academic qualifications at different levels.			**X**
Collaborate with Nursing, AHP and scientist leads within the Trust, divisional research managers, the NW London Clinical Research Network and AHSC partners to develop and maintain clear career structures for research delivery staff.			**X**

Identify new opportunities for innovative career options that combine clinical practice, research and quality improvement e.g. internships, chief nurse fellowships.		X	
Engage actively with national groups who are developing research apprenticeships and champion Health Education England doctoral apprenticeship opportunities.	X		
Support and equip leaders with the knowledge and skills to assimilate relevant research evidence on new or improved ways of organising or providing care.	X		
Illustrate how research activity at the Trust links to the CQC's standards relating to the safety and quality of patient care, and provide support to staff to ensure research activities can be demonstrated to be performing well against the CQC's standards for research.		X	

3 **Enabling and facilitating research networks and collaborations**	Target date		
	2019	**2021**	**2023**
Deliver clinical academic careers events, researcher development events and mentoring events, which will bring potential researchers, research nurses and practitioners, clinical academics and academics together across multi-professional groups.	X		
Run regular research nurse/practitioner forums to encourage collaboration, shared learning and development across the Trust.	X		
Facilitate networking of existing research students, clinicians and researchers through informal and formal groups and the use of the intranet, internet, social media and newsletters (supported by the communications team and CATO).		X	
Introduce and link clinicians and researchers with shared interests, to encourage joint working and strengthen research grant teams.		X	
Strengthen links with existing Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) groups across the Trust, College, CLAHRC and Imperial College Healthcare Partners.	X		
Promote networking opportunities for clinical staff to work with patients and the public in the development of research questions and proposals.		X	
Liaise with the BRC theme leads to promote multi-professional research supported within the BRC.	X		
Ensure some of our training is open to national and international participation in order to improve our external standing and exposure.	X		
Link with research groups and centres across the AHSC to appropriate clinical networks and committees to foster collaboration and ensure that healthcare professionals can influence the development of research ideas and their implementation.	X		

4 Identify, develop and support staff to be research active	Target date		
	2019	2021	2023
Deliver a programme of research training within the Trust, supported by the structures of the AHSC and CATO.	X		
Support and run clinical academic career development events.	X		
Provide writing tips and useful links on the intranet.	X		
Ensure that clear instructions are available on the intranet to explain the process of obtaining costs, sponsorship and ethical approval, with links to Imperial College processes as appropriate.		X	
Signpost staff to resources and support for the development of research ideas and research grants e.g. research design service.	X		
Identify and disseminate research funding opportunities to all staff, working with the joint research office and research delivery managers to ensure that staff can access information about grants and fellowships.	X		
Increase and disseminate opportunities for fellowships that foster the initial development of academic careers and/or act to bridge between external grants.	X		
Identify clinical staff with potential to apply for fellowships at pre-doctoral, doctoral, clinical lecturer, senior clinical lecturer and professorial level, encouraging and supporting them in discussions with managers and senior clinicians.	X		
Provide advice, support and training to enable staff to prepare fellowships, grants and publications.	X		
Offer opportunities for grant writing and peer review groups.		X	
Capture and retain information to be able to identify clinicians interested, engaged or leading research, in order to target support effectively.		X	
Encourage all research active staff to obtain an ORCID ID and to register with Research Gate so that publication profiles can be easily updated and publications can be captured and collated for clinical staff across the Trust.	X		
Facilitate joint working between research leads, clinical staff and managers to identify clinical problems and priorities that could be developed into research grant applications.		X	
Establish pathways through which Quality Improvement, audit projects and service evaluations can be used to inform research proposals.		X	

Train mentors and actively identify and match appropriate staff to mentors who can help them develop clinical academic careers.	X		
Work with managers, research and education teams and human resources to identify possible sources of funding and support for the dissemination of research findings.	X		
Work with managers and human resources staff to incorporate research into job plans and programmed activity to optimise protected time for research.			X
Ensure that research is included in the Personal Development Review proforma so that discussions between clinical staff and line managers encompass research awareness, research skills training and role development.	X		
Provide advice for managers to promote ways for their staff to take time out of clinical practice to pursue a clinical academic career.		X	
Work with human resources to protect employment terms and conditions for clinical staff while they are on fellowships.	X		
Link and introduce healthcare professionals to appropriate supervisors and collaborators across multi-disciplinary professional groups.	X		

References

Imperial College Academic Health Science Centre
http://www.ahsc.org.uk

Clinical Academic Training Office
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/medicine/study/clinical-academic-training-office/non-medical-opportunities/

ORCID
https://orcid.org

Research Gate
https://www.researchgate.net

Biomedical Research Centre (BRC)
https://imperialbrc.nihr.ac.uk

Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care North West London (CLAHRC)
http://clahrc-northwestlondon.nihr.ac.uk

North West London Clinical Research Network (CRN)
https://www.nihr.ac.uk/nihr-in-your-area/north-west-london

Imperial College Health Partners
https://imperialcollegehealthpartners.com

Association of UK University Hospitals (direct link to document)
https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2325/aukuh-transforming-healthcare.pdf
main website http://aukuh.org.uk

Health Education England Clinical Academic Careers
https://www.nihr.ac.uk/funding-and-support/funding-for-training-and-career-development/training-programmes/nihr-hee-ica-programme/

Imperial College Library
https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/nhs

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust Research
https://www.imperial.nhs.uk/research

Imperial Healthcare Charity
https://www.imperialcharity.org.uk

Healthcare Professional Academic Group (HPAG)
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/department-surgery-cancer/research/surgery/healthcare-professional-academic-group

www.imperial.nhs.uk

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