

NHS

The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt  
Orthopaedic Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Research Strategy

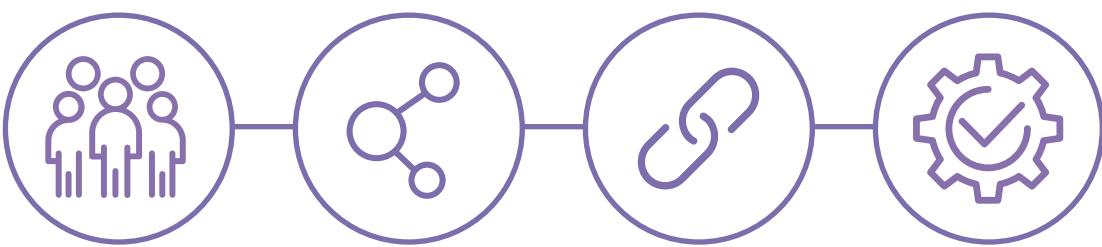
## 2025-29

→ *Improving Lives through  
excellent and innovative care*



[www.rjah.nhs.uk](http://www.rjah.nhs.uk)

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*The Research Strategy is a key element in the delivery of the Trust's aspiration to improve lives through excellent and innovative care.*



# Purpose

The Research Strategy, supports Theme 5 of the Trust Strategy, to deliver research as an important core clinical activity whilst **improving lives through excellent and innovative care.**

**T**he research strategy supports delivery of key objectives across the Trust while maintaining patient participation in research.

**It also complements other Trust strategies such as:**

- Nursing and AHP Strategy
- Education and Training Strategy
- Library and Knowledge Service Strategy
- 5 Year People Plan
- Communications Strategy
- NHS Long term plan

## Caring for Staff

- Developing and supporting a culture of enquiry within the workforce.
- Enhancing the skills of the workforce.
- Attracting and retaining a high-quality workforce.
- Working collaboratively with internal and external partners to develop and support research within the Trust.
- Working to develop and support non-medical clinicians to participate in research as Chief & Principal Investigators.

## Caring for Finances

- Engaging with industry to make the Trust the musculoskeletal partner of choice.
- Working with Keele CTU partners to develop a Surgical Trials satellite of Keele's Clinical Trials Unit.
- Expanding our commercial Research Portfolio to support financial stability.

## Specialist Services

- Supporting the development and promotion of the Trust's specialist services.

## Integrated MSK Care

- Supporting vertically integrated musculoskeletal care through research from Primary Care through to Specialist Acute services.



## Research Strategic Objectives

### Caring for Patients

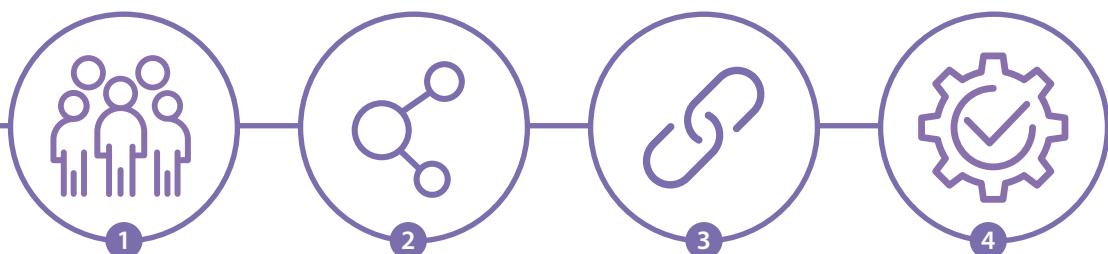
- Ensuring that where possible, patients are offered the opportunity to participate in clinical research whilst ensuring inclusivity in our approach towards minority groups.
- Improving treatment for musculoskeletal and neuromuscular conditions through innovation and rapid implementation of evidence-based practice.
- Continuously improving the quality of care for patients.
- Involving patients in the planning and management of our research.
- Ensuring robust research governance and support for safe, high-quality research.

**Work collaboratively with internal and external partners to develop and support research within the Trust**

## To realise these objectives, the Trust will:

- Use research to support the Trust's;
  - Quest to continuously improve patient care
  - Education, training, and operational performance
- Value strong academic partnerships with formal working arrangements.
- Capitalise on value added through research and innovation partnerships, including those with The Orthopaedic Institute Ltd, National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), Research Councils, medical charities, other academic institutions, Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) and industry.
- Ensure that new staff understand their role in research.
- Ensure that consultant appointment job descriptions emphasise the expectation that consultants are research active.
- Ensure that consultant person specifications include a requirement for evidence of a substantive commitment to research.

These objectives can be divided into 4 enabling programmes, under which sit key initiatives:



### ① Developing our workforce

Working as part of the Innovation Team, we will develop the Trust's workforce to enhance the research culture and environment to grow the research and innovation business by fostering an improved understanding of the value of research and innovation. We will work to embed a philosophy of continuous enquiry and improvement in all staff groups. We will work with other System Partners in the development of our workforce. We will support the Trust's aim of a minimum of 6% of the consultant workforce having substantive contracts of employment within a university with a medical school.

### ② Building on our world class infrastructure and facilities

To support the regenerative medicine facility to capitalise on cell therapy and manufacturing opportunities which will arise as a result of that. We will use our clinical and non-clinical infrastructure to support research studies and to develop new opportunities for clinical research.

### ③ Strengthen our existing and develop new partnerships

By building on current and developing new relationships, we can grow our research, which has benefits to patients, staff, the finances of the Trust and the wider medical community, through successful grant applications and publications in medical or scientific journals. We will continue to develop our national and international collaborative research activities to grow research within our different specialisms and we will strengthen collaborations through partnerships with other providers. We will work towards a partnership Surgical Trials Satellite Unit harnessing the resources of Keele's Clinical Trials Unit and the Trust's Research Office to deliver expanded opportunities in new areas of research to the benefit of both partners.

### ④ Developing our systems

We will ensure that the Trust has a robust governance process leading to the delivery of high-quality research.

# Key Research Strategy Performance Indicators

These will be achieved via the 4 yr. Delivery Plan (appendix 1) and Annual Delivery Action Plan.



- Increase the number of patients participating in research as a percentage of total patient episodes by 0.1% each yr.\*
- Increase the number of patients being offered participation in research as a percentage of total patient episodes by 0.1% each yr.\*
- Increase the number of studies developed to full grant application in the Trust by 5% each yr.
- Increase the number of collaborative grant applications in the Trust by 5% each yr.
- Increase the number of peer reviewed publications by 5% each yr.
- Increase the number of non-medical Principle Investigators in the Trust by 1 each yr.
- All senior clinical Job Descriptions and consultant work plans to have an expectation of research activity embedded within it.
- All consultant Person Specifications will include a requirement for evidence of a substantive commitment to research that is not solely based on research publications.
- Adherence with National Institute of Health Research West Midlands Regional Research Delivery Network metrics (alter on an annual basis).

\* For FY 2023/24, the number of patients approached and offered the opportunity to participate in research accounted for 2.5% of total patient episodes. Recruitment to research opportunities accounted for 2.3% of total patient episodes.

**Increase the number of studies developed to full grant application in the Trust by 5% each yr**

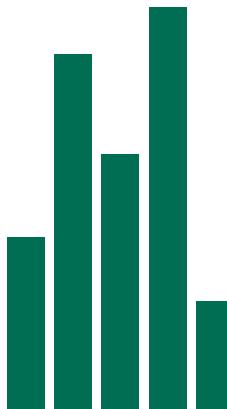
# Delivery

Delivery of the research strategy will be implemented through the Research Strategy 4 yr. Delivery Plan (Appendix 1) which will be supported by a **detailed Annual Delivery Action Plan** including ownership and specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound objectives. The Annual Delivery Action Plan will be reviewed and approved by the Research Meeting.



# Monitoring

Research performance will be documented on an annual basis in the **Annual Research Report**. The Research Meeting reports to the Trust's Digital, Education, Research, Innovation & Commercialisation Committee monthly, ensuring overview with respect to performance and safety by means of a Chair's Report.



# Delivering the Research Strategy

The Research Strategy is a key element in the delivery of the Trust's aspiration to **improve lives through excellent and innovative care.**

**I**n line with the Research Strategic Objectives and the four Enabling Programmes described, the Research Strategy will be delivered through a set of initiatives under each programme. Each initiative has a target date and will be supported by a detailed Annual Delivery Action Plan with SMART objectives and clear ownership.

## The initiatives:

Developing our workforce	Target date
Work with the People Services Business Partner and the Director of People Services to inform the People Plan to ensure research is a key element in job descriptions and consultant work plans	<b>31 March 2027</b>
Work with the People Services Business Partner and the Director of People Services to inform the People Plan to ensure all consultant person specifications include a requirement for evidence of a substantive commitment to research	<b>31 March 2028</b>
Identify, develop and support new PIs and CIs across all areas of the Trust	<b>31 March 2027</b>
Encourage and support nurses and Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) into the role of non-medic Principal Investigator (PI).	<b>31 March 2029</b>
Develop a research culture which supports a wider breadth of staff to lead and develop research within their area	<b>31 March 2027</b>
Develop a culture of enquiry and receptiveness to evidence and strengthen the impact of research in every day clinical practice	<b>31 March 2028</b>
Work with new academic clinicians in regenerative medicine and population orthopaedics to capitalise on the facilities and opportunities as well as growing own possibilities	<b>31 March 2029</b>
Explore opportunities for our clinical and non-clinical infrastructure to support opportunities for clinical research	<b>31 March 2029</b>
Develop a programme of opportunities to develop research skills in staff. This will include the training offered by the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR)	<b>31 March 2028</b>

Strengthen existing and develop new relationships	Target date
Establish a partnership agreement in conjunction with Keele University's Clinical Trials Unit and the Trust's Research Office to deliver expanded opportunities	<b>31 March 2029</b>
Build on existing relationships with external organisations with a view to expanding collaborative working opportunities e.g. HEIs, charities and industry, while developing new opportunities	<b>31 March 2028</b>
Establish relationships with external bodies e.g. GPs, community groups and charities to promote research engagement amongst seldom heard groups	<b>31 March 2029</b>

<b>Strengthen existing and develop new relationships</b>	<b>Target date</b>
Develop new and strengthen existing partnerships to grow our national and international collaborative research activities	<b>31 March 2029</b>
Work with SSHERPa to ensure our research meets the needs of the local population and that evidence drives change.	<b>31 March 2027</b>
Improve the visibility of research within the Trust and externally through various communication methods	<b>31 March 2027</b>
Expand our home-grown study portfolio	<b>31 March 2027</b>
Expansion of collaborative research led by RJAH	<b>31 March 2028</b>
Maintain engagement with West Midlands Regional Research Delivery Network (WM RRDN) to enhance the planning and management of research	<b>31 March 2027</b>

<b>Develop systems</b>	<b>Target date</b>
Ensure that any long running post-market surveillance studies are either closed out or funded	<b>31 March 2027</b>
Work with our academic partners and medical schools to build research capacity and capability and instil a research culture in the future clinical leaders and to offer work placements for students	<b>31 March 2029</b>
Continue to work with the finance department to develop appropriate forecasting tools, ensuring risks to the Trust budget are highlighted early and managed appropriately	<b>31 March 2027</b>
Monitor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) through the Research Meeting and report to the Digital, Education, Research, Innovation & Commercialisation Committee.	<b>31 March 2029</b>

