



**National Institute for
Health Research**

BEST RESEARCH FOR BEST HEALTH

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 5.10

NIHR OFFICE FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE (NOCRI)

*Best Research for Best Health*¹ set out a 5-year Research and Development Strategy for the NHS in England. This Implementation Plan provides more details on one of the key components of that strategy: the NIHR Office for Clinical Research Infrastructure. This document will be regularly updated. The latest version should be used.

Version: 2

Issue date: January 2010

Planned revision & re-issue date: July 2010

Aim

By creating NOCRI, we aim to:

- Create greater coherence and functional integration of the clinical research infrastructure which NIHR funds and hence maximise its impact.
- Facilitate more rapid, informed and productive interactions with investigators who are interested in working with the NIHR-funded infrastructure.
- Strengthen enduring relationships between the NIHR, NHS, NHS/university partnerships and the biotech, medtech and pharma industries.
- Ensure that the NIHR infrastructure is responsive to the needs of users.
- Promote and enhance the nation's reputation as a world-class centre for applied clinical research.

Purpose

To maximise the contribution of the NIHR-funded clinical research infrastructure to:

- Health research and patient benefit.
- The nation's international competitiveness as a location for applied clinical research.

¹ *Best Research for Best Health: A New National Health Research Strategy*. The NHS contribution to health research in England. Department of Health. 2006.

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4127127

Scope

NOCRI will cover all clinical research infrastructure receiving NIHR funding which currently comprises:

- NIHR Biomedical Research Centres.
- NIHR Biomedical Research Units.
- NIHR Clinical Research Facilities.
- NIHR supported Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Facilities.
- CRII Clinical Research Facilities.
- CR-UK/NIHR Experimental Cancer Medicine Centres (ECMCs).
- NIHR Clinical Research Network.
- Pilot Healthcare Technology Cooperatives.
- Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care.

NOCRI will work closely with the Department of Health R&D Directorate, Directors of NIHR-funded infrastructure and their staff, industry, co-funders of the infrastructure and research funders in order to achieve its objectives. The establishment of NOCRI does not supersede the policy role of the Department of Health nor the current operational management roles of the NIHR Central Commissioning Facility, the NIHR Clinical Research Network Co-ordinating Centre or Topic Specific Clinical Research Network Co-ordinating Centres, the ECMC Secretariat hosted by Cancer Research UK or the Wellcome Trust for its CRFs.

The Director of NOCRI will be supported by an advisory group of senior external stakeholders, including the MRC and other research funders.

Functions of NOCRI

- To facilitate collaborations between NIHR-funded infrastructure and funders of research, including industry.
- To facilitate cross-NIHR funded facility co-operation on:
 - scientific, technical or process challenges, supporting alignment with funders' joint work in these areas;
 - activities in a given therapeutic or technology area, supporting alignment with funders' joint work in these areas;
 - areas of common interest e.g. interface and linkage with NIHR IS Programme, metrics generation and reporting;
 - development of model Agreements to support contracting.
- Identification of opportunities to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of the NIHR infrastructure.
- Identification of opportunities to improve the quality, speed and co-ordination of clinical research studies and supporting the spread of best practice, including liaison with the NIHR Research Design Service and Clinical Trials Units.
- Collation of metrics and case studies and development of multimedia materials to support effective marketing of the infrastructure.

- To facilitate cross-NIHR funded facility co-operation within any UK “Supercluster” developed in response to the Office for Life Sciences (OLS) Blueprint.
- Close collaboration with the MRC and other funders of clinical research.
- Interactions with non-NIHR infrastructure supporting clinical research e.g. Academic Health Science Centres, commercial, charity and MRC facilities.
- A major focus will be to enhance collaboration between NIHR-funded infrastructure and industry. This will be addressed by providing a “one-stop-shop” source of up-to-date and comprehensive information, expertise and assistance for companies, including CROs and national or regional healthcare business support organisations, seeking to access NIHR-funded infrastructure and investigators, and for UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) staff working to attract clinical research into the UK. This includes but is not limited to:
 - knowledge of capacity and capability in specific areas e.g. therapeutic area, methodology, tech platforms;
 - providing navigation and acting as a facilitator in making introductions until appropriate contacts have been made and keeping track of progress using an account management approach;
 - maintenance and enhancement of the Experimental Medicine (EM) website funded by the NIHR under the UKCRC umbrella.
- Working effectively with industry-facing and business development staff working in NIHR-funded infrastructure, and for other research funders and UKTI, to:
 - build a more strategic approach to relations with, and marketing to, individual companies, creating enduring engagement which will maximise the chances of extending the range of EM studies placed in the UK and pull through studies from EM into later phase;
 - supporting “handover” from one part of the infrastructure to another;
 - develop and maintain effective relations with industry trade associations.
- To assist investigators working within NIHR-funded facilities who are seeking industrial partners for collaborative research.

Implementation Timetable

September 2009	Publish plan
October 2009	Advertise posts
December 2009	Establish office
January 2010	Selection process for Managing Director completed. Other staff in post.

Department of Health Lead

Dr Louise Wood

Head of NHS Research Infrastructure and Industry R&D Relations

Email: R&D@dh.gsi.gov.uk