



National Institute for Health Research

NIHR OFFICE FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

Introduction

The vision of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research.

This document sets out how the NIHR Office for Clinical Research Infrastructure (NOCRI) is contributing to this vision.

Overview

The NIHR provides the NHS with the support and infrastructure it needs to conduct first class research. This has established the NHS as an internationally recognised centre of research excellence. Government or its partners in industry and the charity sector may fund this research.

The NIHR funds a broad range of research infrastructure in the NHS. A range of support is important, because different types of research are needed to bridge the gap from scientific invention to products, which the NHS can use. Further information is available in companion briefing documents.

The purpose of NOCRI is to maximise the coordinated working of the Department of Health's investment in clinical research infrastructure and help public, industry and charity research funders navigate this infrastructure, for:

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

Aims

- Champion and support cross-infrastructure working, where this adds significant value
- Strengthen enduring relationships between the NIHR, NHS, NHS/university partnerships and biotechnology, pharmaceutical, medical device and diagnostic companies and contract research organisations
- Promote and enhance the nation's reputation as a world-class centre for applied clinical research, as well as supporting how the NIHR contributes to Growth

- Maximise the impact of the NIHR as a whole, by leading work to shorten the time it takes to develop new therapies and medical technologies (where this falls within the NIHR's scope)

Scope

NOCRI covers all clinical research infrastructure that receives NIHR funding. This currently comprises:

- Biomedical Research Centres
- Biomedical Research Units
- Clinical Research Facilities
- CR-UK/NIHR Experimental Cancer Medicine Centres (ECMCs)
- Diagnostics Evidence Cooperatives
- Healthcare Technology Cooperatives
- Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care
- Patient Safety Translational Research Centres
- Clinical Research Network (where NOCRI work adds value)

In order to meet its objectives, NOCRI works closely with the Department of Health R&D Directorate, as well as the following stakeholders: Directors of NIHR-funded infrastructure and their staff; co-funders of the infrastructure and other research funders; Innovate UK; and the life sciences industries. NOCRI collaborates with the CRN Coordinating Centre, where this adds value, such as in presenting a comprehensive NIHR offer to industry.

Functions of NOCRI

- To facilitate collaborations between NIHR-funded infrastructure and funders of research, including industry, prioritising those of greatest significance to the health and wealth of the nation.
- To enable cross-NIHR funded facility co-operation on:
 - substantial scientific, technical or process challenges, supporting alignment with funders' joint work in these areas
 - significant activities in a given therapeutic or technology area, supporting alignment with funders' joint work in these areas
 - significant areas of common interest, e.g. IS systems, statistical expertise, metrics generation and reporting
 - development of national model agreements to support contracting
- Identification of any major opportunities to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of the NIHR infrastructure.
- Identification of any major opportunities to improve the quality, speed and co-ordination of clinical research studies and supporting the spread of best practice.

- Support the Central Commissioning Facility Infrastructure team in its collation of metrics and case studies, using them to develop appropriate marketing materials that enhance the nation's reputation in life sciences.
- Oversight of operation of the UK CRF Network.
- Collaborate with the MRC and other funders of clinical research, in order to maximise the impact of research funding.
- A major focus is enhancing collaboration between NIHR-funded infrastructure and industry, by:
 - providing “match making” support to companies seeking to work with NIHR infrastructure, using NOCRI's knowledge of the infrastructure in specific areas, e.g. therapeutic area, methodology, technology platforms
 - establishment and promotion of NIHR Translational Research Partnerships (see separate briefing document) .
- Work with the NIHR infrastructure and UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) to:
 - clarify and market the NIHR infrastructure's benefits to industry, thereby supporting UKTI's interactions with individual companies;
 - develop strategic marketing material, targeting the life sciences industry.
- Develop and maintain effective relations with industry trade associations.
- Work with the NIHR Clinical Research Network to:
 - present a co-ordinated NIHR offer to industry;
 - develop NIHR infrastructure case studies, which show how companies have benefitted from working with NIHR infrastructure;
 - combine resources to maximise the chances of extending the range of EM studies placed in the UK and pull through studies from EM into later phase.
- To assist investigators working within NIHR-funded facilities who are seeking industrial partners for collaborative research. To coordinate the development and operation of Translational Research Partnerships and Collaborations.

NOCRI has a comprehensive scope, within which it prioritises its key functions and activities, in response to the aims of the Department of Health. Prioritisation is important to ensure delivery. This maximises the potential benefit to patients and the nation's international competitiveness as a location for applied clinical research.

Further information about NOCRI

Further details about NOCRI are available at <http://www.nocri.nihr.ac.uk/> and on the [NIHR website](#) or email nocri@nihr.ac.uk.

Department of Health Lead

Dr Tony Soteriou

Acting Deputy Director, Research Infrastructure and Growth

Research & Development Directorate

Department of Health

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