

Impact Report 2020/2021

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Foreword

If the true value of health and care research was ever in doubt, then the past 15 months have demonstrated its transformational impact in no uncertain terms. Research has turned the tide on COVID-19 and it's with great pride I can say that Greater Manchester has played a key part.

Our research community has met the pandemic head-on, amid the most challenging circumstances our health and care services have ever known. Trials were planned and delivered at pace, ensuring our local citizens had opportunities to be part from the outset.

Our teams demonstrated dedication and determination in their response to the COVID-19 challenge. Their roles became increasingly flexible with clinical and administrative functions covering services seven days a week, including many during the evenings and through the night. It is as a direct result of the teams' hard work that we have been able to organise and deliver so many outcome-changing studies.

A total of almost 52,400 people across Greater Manchester, East Cheshire and East Lancashire were part of these coronavirus research trials in 2020/2021. Their unselfish participation,

combined with the hard work of our local research workforce, has had a major impact in an incredibly short space of time.

Research carried out here in Greater Manchester has contributed to landmark breakthroughs in the fight against COVID-19; breakthroughs which now allow millions of people to be safely tested, treated, and protected from the virus.

The urgency of the pandemic has also introduced many health professionals to research, some for the very first time. They have played a part in these ground-breaking studies and witnessed, first-hand, how research changes lives. The general public has been more exposed to research than ever before through daily mainstream news. Awareness has undoubtedly grown and the NIHR is now a household name.

The strides made over the past year present us with real opportunities as we continue to deliver research into the evolving threat of coronavirus but also to restore studies across all other disease areas. With your help, we can ensure Greater Manchester makes the most of these opportunities and continues to provide a choice for our local community.

You will find in this report how you can #BePartOfResearch. Whether it's working in research or taking part in it, there are many ways to get involved and we need your help.

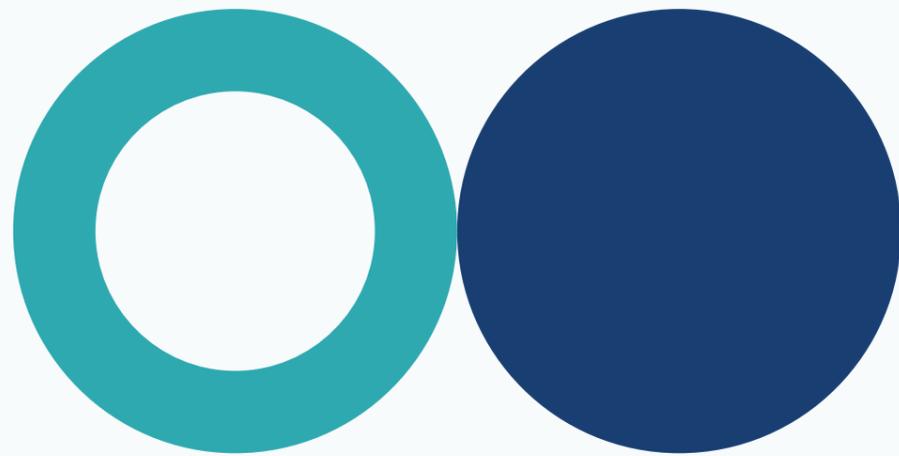
On a personal level, I would like to say how grateful I am for the support I have felt in my first six months as Chief Operating Officer. It has been a pleasure and privilege to lead such a dedicated and talented community and collaborate with so many experts across Greater Manchester. Thank you.



Sarah Fallon
Chief Operating Officer
NIHR Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester

1.

Putting people and communities first



Leading research delivery

The NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) Greater Manchester (GM) has led the way with research delivery, from landmark recruits for Urgent Public Health (UPH) studies to the expertise of our individuals and teams.

In 2020/2021, we:

Invested a total **£20,420,000** in research across Greater Manchester's local care organisations to ensure residents had the best access to research opportunities.

Funded the equivalent of over **530** full-time members of staff. This included over **275** research nurses and midwives, 50 clinical research practitioners, and over **180** coordinators and administrators supporting delivery teams.

Funded **100** sessions of dedicated time to support our Principal Investigators' research.



We received an extra **£575,300** in Urgent Public Health funding to deliver research into COVID-19 which enabled us to:

Recruit almost **52,400** participants and Deliver **44** Urgent Public Health studies with **190** sites contributing to this recruitment.



We received **£752,300** in UK Government Vaccines Taskforce funding. This was successfully allocated across six partner NHS Trusts to:

Deliver five COVID-19 vaccine trials across Greater Manchester so far, with five in set-up at the end of 2020/2021.

Recruit **1,765** volunteers to participate in these trials.

Create a legacy by investing in bespoke equipment and infrastructure, including a mobile pharmacy unit, and workforce training.

Evaluating fast and accurate diagnostic tests for COVID-19

Accurate diagnosis of COVID-19 infection, identification of immunity and monitoring the progress of the infection are crucial in the national and global response to COVID-19. Without it, our ability to control the spread of infection, ensure the early self-isolation of infected patients and early treatment for those most at risk is severely limited.

The life sciences industry has developed a number of new diagnostic tests and to take advantage of their potential clinical benefit, efficient and robust assessment of the tests is essential. Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust sponsored the **Facilitating Accelerated Clinical Validation Of Novel Diagnostics for COVID-19 (FALCON C-19)**

study that plays a crucial part in this assessment by evaluating the accuracy of commercially available tests for diagnosing COVID-19 infection in hospitals.

The evaluations include tests that can be done at the patient's bedside, with results often returned in as little as five minutes. This has helped clinicians turn the tide in the fight against COVID-19 because they can

now identify infected patients proactively – and quickly, and therefore significantly reduce the spread of the disease.

Professor Rick Body, a CRN GM Specialty Lead for Injuries and Emergencies, is Chief Investigator for the study, which has over 4,500 participants from 61 centres. Our network accounted for over 1,000 participants, which is one-in-four of the national recruitment total.

The study now has a desired turnaround time of two to three weeks per test evaluation, enabling patients and the NHS to benefit from the best new testing technologies as soon as safely possible.



“The FALCON study could mean that clinicians can make fast, accurate decisions about a patient’s care – sometimes within minutes. That includes decisions about which wards or areas a patient can receive care in, rather than the standard laboratory tests, which can take 24 hours or more.”

Professor Rick Body



Dedicated celebration highlights Greater Manchester research

CRN GM delivered a week-long digital showcase to highlight the outstanding work and dedication that has been shown by research and support staff across our region during the last year.

The ‘Greater Manchester Research Celebration Week’ was a collaboration with local partner organisations to create more than 20 videos that were watched over 12,000 times.

Other engaging content included an opportunity to congratulate people who have made a valuable contribution through a Note of Thanks, as well as infographics and a blog.

The celebration recognised the tremendous response the CRN GM has made to setting up and delivering COVID-19-related research that is helping to answer some of the most challenging questions posed by the pandemic. The event also celebrated the 750,000 people in Greater Manchester that have taken part in research over the last decade. Our volunteers are helping to change the future of health and care; without their participation it would be impossible to innovate in the prevention, detection and treatment of illnesses.

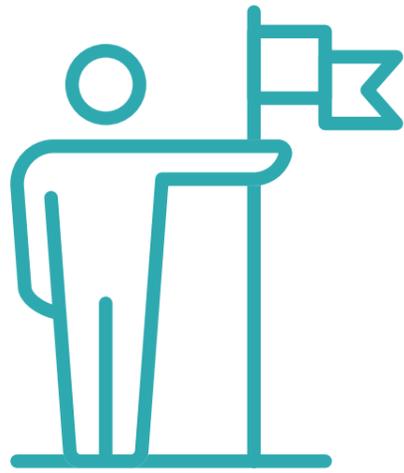
Pictured: R&I delivery team members at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Resuming non-Urgent Public Health research during the COVID-19 pandemic

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic led to unavoidable disruption to the vast majority of all non-COVID research. In order to support the Government’s research response, our focus was placed firmly on the set-up and delivery of COVID-19 research. However, as the year progressed, we were gradually able to resume research activity across our traditional 30 diseases areas.

By the year to April 2021, CRN GM was by far the leading Local Clinical Research Network (LCRN) in the country in terms of the proportion of research studies that were open and recruiting local people. By this time, 36% of studies and sites were open and had recruited participants – with the national average only 20% and the second highest region 27%. The dedication of colleagues across all our sites allowed these research opportunities to be re-opened to communities as part of the high-quality care local people are offered.

Key highlights



Landmark COVID recruits

Our network recruited or treated the first UK participants to six Urgent Public Health studies, and consented the first participant in the world to one of the COVID-19 vaccine trials. CRN GM treated the first patient in the UK as part of the **Otilimab in Severe COVID-19 Related Disease (OSCAR)** trial to understand the impact of the experimental drug Otilimab on severe lung disease related to COVID-19. We also recruited the first UK patients to the Randomised Evaluation of COVID Therapy – Respiratory Support (RECOVERY-RS) study that compares the effectiveness of ventilation methods for COVID-19. CRN GM recruited the first person in the UK to be part of the MERMAIDS ARI study related to COVID-19. The study aimed to discover why some people become much more unwell than others from acute respiratory infections.

GM investigators lead COVID research response

Four Greater Manchester senior researchers fulfilled national lead roles as we played a key part in supporting the early discovery of potential treatments for COVID-19 patients. Professor Andrew Ustianowski, our CRN GM Deputy Clinical Director, was appointed the National Clinical Lead for the UK NIHR COVID Vaccine Research Programme. Professors Rick Body, Paul Dark and Andrew Ustianowski were Chief Investigators for eight COVID-19 studies, leading critical research delivered nationwide to find treatments, diagnostics, and vaccines. Studies have already proven successful and helped save lives, including the discovery that **anti-viral drug remdesevir** can shorten recovery time in hospitalised patients by four days. Professor Kathryn Abel chaired the national group examining the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health, and making recommendations for prevention and recovery.

Professor Andrew Ustianowski



Top recruiters to urgent COVID studies

The CRN Greater Manchester is a top recruiter to studies at national and Partner Organisation levels. For example, in Urgent Public Health research, we were the highest recruiting region to the Hospital Onset COVID-19 Infections (COG-UK HOICI) study with 515 participants. CRN GM was also the highest recruiting region to the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine trial, which will lead to a licensed vaccine for deployment across the UK later this year.



Photographer Joel Goodman

Taking research to the Nightingale Hospital

Senior Nurses in our core delivery team led on research at the NHS Nightingale Hospital North West (pictured above), which was urgently set up during the first wave of the pandemic. Health professionals and army staff from across the UK were seconded to operate this 'field hospital' in a central Manchester conference centre. Our team supported staff of all disciplines to deliver research training and formed the focal point for all research patient follow-up queries, providing cover seven days a week.

Carol Beane and Sam Chilcott from the CRN GM delivery team at the Nightingale Hospital



Making a difference

The Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester has continuously made a significant positive difference to people’s lives by extensively promoting the opportunities for public involvement in research studies, as well as raising awareness of the experiences of participants. We have also successfully engaged underserved communities in research. These activities help involve more people from more communities in research, so that we can develop better care, prevention and treatment for everyone.

Learning from the experience of participants in research

We put research participant experience at the centre of research delivery and, by learning from the experiences of clinical research patients, improve all our studies. So much so that over 97% of our research participants would take part in research again.

The anonymous [Participant in Research Experience Survey \(PRES\)](#) gives as many research participants as possible the opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences, telling us what went well for them and what can be improved. In 2020/2021, over 1,100 participants in Greater Manchester completed the survey, contributing to the overall total of 11,000 responses received nationally across all 15 CRNs.

The survey provides us with a vital insight into the demographics taking part in research in Greater Manchester and helps show where improvements can be made. It is just one way that we demonstrate to research participants that their contribution is valued and can positively impact recruitment to, and retention within, research studies.

A recurring theme in participant comments was that they are proud to be contributing to research that could improve outcomes for future patients:

‘It’s pleasing to know that any efforts I made might help other people in the future and maybe even myself.’

‘Friendly, helpful, very informative and glad I’ve taken part in the research.’

‘Being involved in something that could make a difference to the lives of a lot of people is very satisfying. Comprehensive information, friendly professional staff, really well organised, efficient process.’

The findings of the survey will feed into research studies both locally and nationally to make sure the NIHR is serving the needs of, and helping to improve outcomes for everyone.



Participant in Research Experience Survey key findings:

I would consider taking part in research again:

Strongly agree – 86.6%.
 Agree – 10.8%.
 Disagree – 0.2%.
 Neutral – 2.2%.
 Strongly disagree – 0.3%.

The researchers have valued my taking part in the research:

Strongly agree – 87.4%.
 Agree – 10.7%.
 Disagree – 0.2%.
 Neutral – 1.7%.
 Strongly disagree – 0.1%.

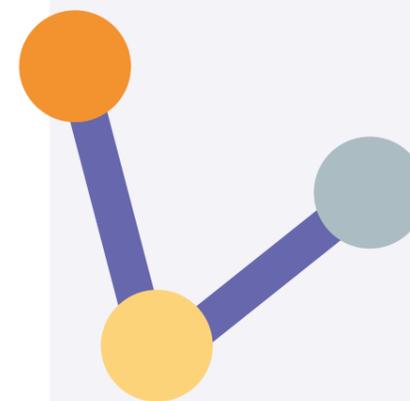
Is this the first research study you have taken part in?

Yes – 87.9%.
 No – 12.1%.

I feel I have been kept updated about the research:

Strongly agree – 66.8%.
 Agree – 17.2%.
 It’s too early to tell – 11%.
 Disagree – 0.6%.
 Neutral – 3.9%.
 Strongly disagree – 0.3%.

PRES 2020/2021. CRN Greater Manchester: 1,140 responses



Taken part in research in Greater Manchester this year? If so, please complete our [latest experience survey](#).



[Click here to watch the video](#)

Being part of research: a patient's story

Systemic sclerosis (scleroderma) is a rare, chronic disease affecting the connective tissues, blood vessels and immune system. The PRedSS study, supported by the CRN GM, aims to discover if the corticosteroid Prednisolone can help relieve the severe pain, itch, and disability in patients.

Kat Dunnicliff of Cheadle Hulme lives with systemic sclerosis and was offered the opportunity to take part in the research.

“Systemic sclerosis is a rare condition where there isn't as much knowledge around medication and treatments. I saw it as a really good opportunity to contribute to research and also, hopefully, get some benefit for me.”

Kat recommends all patients to consider participation in research, regardless of their condition.

“The whole process has been a really positive one for me. I would really encourage people to be open-minded about research opportunities and participate if they think it could be of benefit. I've felt a massive benefit from both a personal and health point of view.”

Greater Manchester's Research Champions

CRN GM recruited over 60 passionate **NIHR Research Champions** to get more people involved in research. They have volunteered their time to help spread the word about health and care research to patients and the public, and especially those groups who are currently less likely to take part in research. They have also played a critical and strategic role in helping research and healthcare staff understand more about the experiences of those who take part in research.

Our Research Champions have also been involved in specific studies and user-testing initiatives, such as:

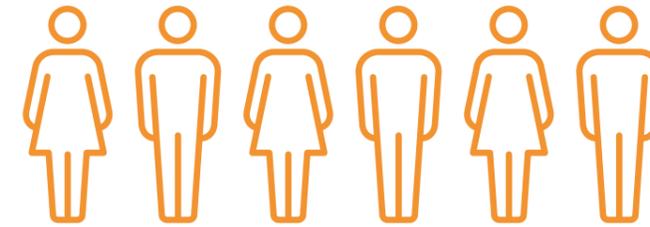
- Working with NHS England on the Breast Cancer 'Tamoxifen Rapid Uptake Programme' to help reduce the number of women developing breast cancer
- Development of a framework for Patient Safety Partners to improve the way the safety of patients is both viewed and managed
- Testing the use of de-personalised patient information to improve the prescribing of antibiotics

Research Champion John said,



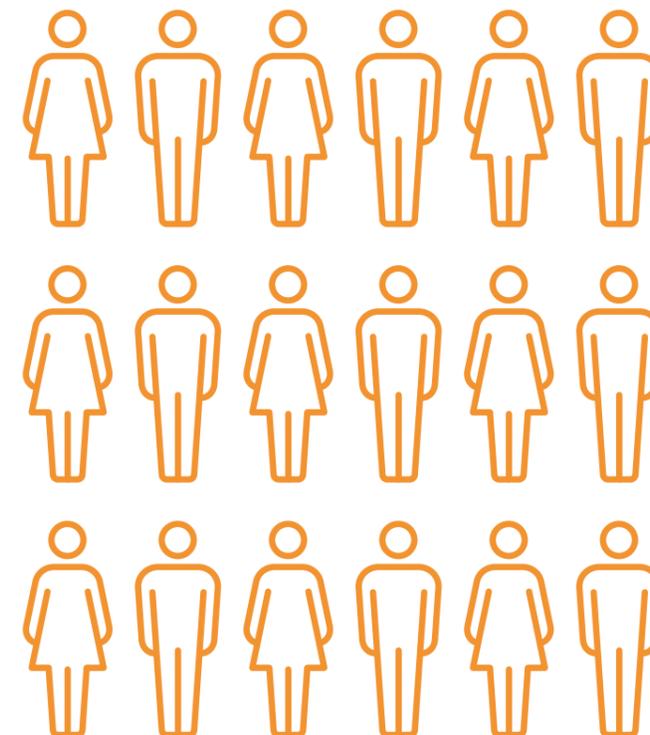
“I became a Research Champion because I wanted to help, and having suffered ill health myself as a multimorbidity patient. I am only here today because of research, without research I wouldn't have a future so anything I can get involved in that will help, I'm happy to volunteer.”

Key highlights



Thousands of GM citizens register for COVID vaccine trials

Over 22,000 people across Greater Manchester signed-up to the NHS **COVID-19 Vaccine Research Registry**. CRN GM led a large-scale public awareness campaign to recruit participants for COVID-19 vaccine trials and secured significant media coverage across all TV, radio, print and online channels. Every local authority area in Greater Manchester has had over 1,000 people sign-up to the vaccine registry, with some areas having over 3,500 volunteers. CRN GM registrants make up approximately 50% of the volunteers in the North West, which is one of the top areas in the country for sign ups to the registry.



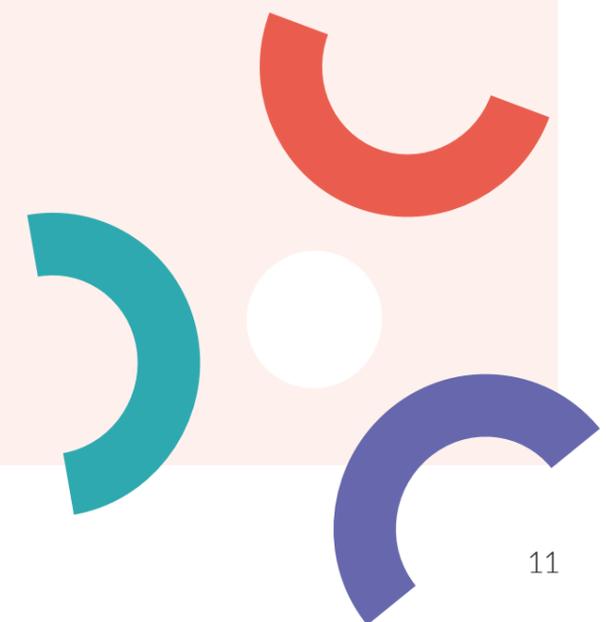
Addressing vaccine hesitancy in communities



Covid and Me - Vaccine stories

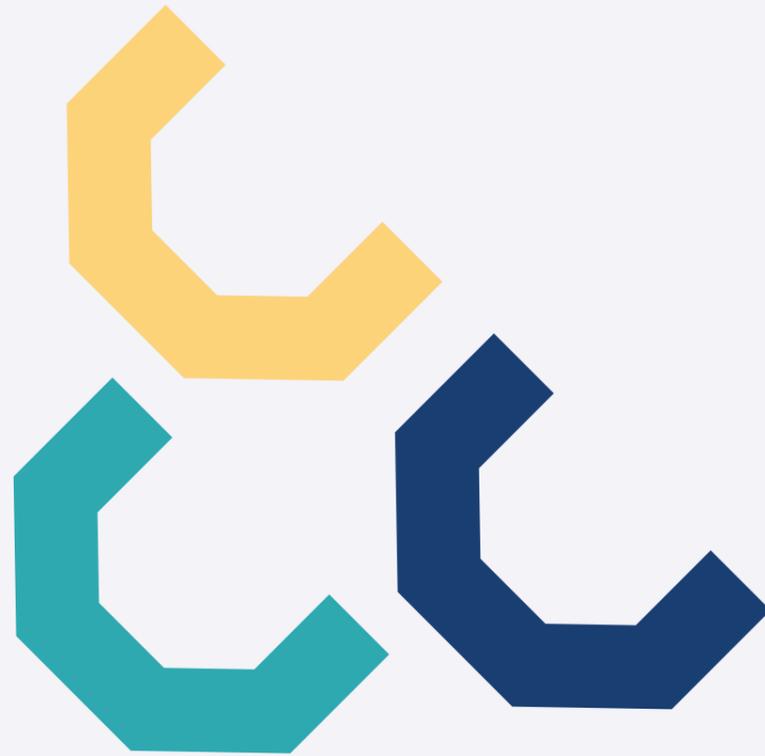


We engaged with underserved communities who have traditionally not taken part in research as much as those who identify as 'White British'. CRN GM now has a higher level of sign-ups from people identifying as 'Minority Ethnic' than the national average. We worked with community leaders and trusted local media, broadcasting adverts in Arabic, Urdu, Bengali and English. Episodes from '**COVID and Me**', the NIHR series of monologues dealing with various cultural hesitations towards research, were also played. Our local researchers answered questions relevant to the audience, helping to dispel social media myths and encouraging sign-ups to the vaccine registry. This engagement will help protect everyone from health threats.



2.

Rising to the COVID-19 challenge



Urgent Public Health response

As the COVID-19 pandemic hit the UK, funding and support for COVID-19 research became our major priority. The NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) Greater Manchester's (GM) focus turned to Urgent Public Health (UPH) research as we made significant and outcome-changing contributions to the nation's rapid research response to COVID-19.



The Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester supported the flagship Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 thERapY (RECOVERY) trial, recruiting over 2,500 patients across 11 hospitals. The study has led to two life-saving treatments against COVID-19 that have been rapidly adopted as part of standard hospital treatment around the world.

In June 2020, the trial identified the low-cost steroid dexamethasone as the **first drug to improve survival rates** in hospitalised coronavirus patients. Dexamethasone is instantly available and reduces death by up to one third in hospitalised patients with severe respiratory complications of COVID-19.

In February 2021, the trial also demonstrated that in patients with significant inflammation and requiring oxygen, treatment with the

anti-inflammatory arthritis drug **tocilizumab reduced the need for invasive ventilation,**

saved lives and shortened hospital stays. Combining treatment with dexamethasone reduces the risk of dying by half in patients requiring invasive mechanical ventilation, and by a third for those requiring simple oxygen.

RECOVERY has also informed us of treatments that were being used but that have been found not to work against COVID-19, such as hydroxychloroquine and some antibiotics.

These discoveries mean that a wide range of patients requiring oxygen will benefit from life-saving treatments that are readily available. Participants in the studies have helped us to understand which medicines worked, so that we could develop evidence-based treatment options for COVID-19 patients. The discoveries transformed our ability to treat the sickest patients and have been used immediately to save lives worldwide.

Ellie Watson, Team Lead Clinical Research Nurse NIHR CRN GM, said,

“When I heard the news that the use of dexamethasone resulted in lower 28-day mortality for those on oxygen or ventilated, it brought a tear to my eye to know that my work recruiting participants to the trial had helped get us towards something that would improve outcomes for our most unwell patients in hospital. It was our first step forward in fighting this virus.”



Tools accurately predict COVID-19 risks of infection and deterioration

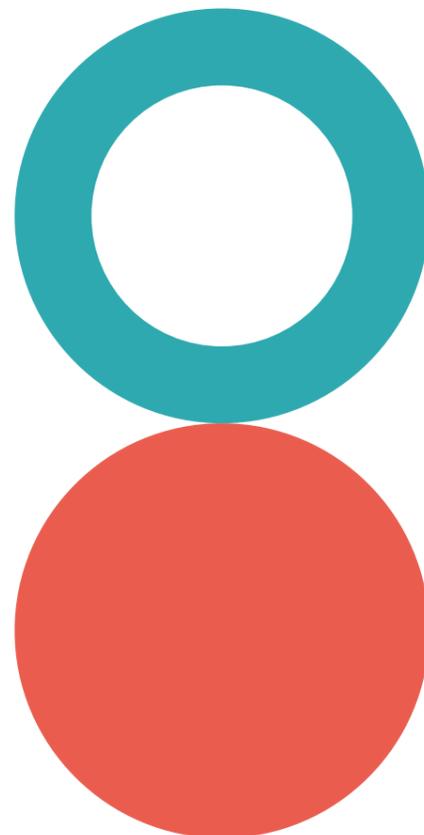
CRN GM was the second highest recruiting region and Lead Local Clinical Research Network (LCRN) for one of the country's highest recruiting Urgent Public Health trials. The ISARIC 4C (Coronavirus Clinical Characterisation Consortium) study was supported by recruitment at 15 of our hospitals, with over 19,650 patients recruited to trials that have resulted in three landmark outcomes.

In August 2020, the study found that **children and teenagers are less likely than adults** to develop severe COVID-19 or die from the disease.

The ISARIC 4C study into COVID-19 mortality found that patients admitted to hospital with COVID-19 can be divided into **four distinct risk groups** using a Mortality Score and offered treatment accordingly. This study was extended to develop the **Deterioration Score** that will provide clinicians with an evidence-based measure to identify those who will need increased hospital support during their admission, even if they have a low risk of death.

With Greater Manchester as lead LCRN, our Research Delivery Manager (RDM) Joanne Collins was the first RDM in the country to steer an Urgent Public Health study. Joanne set a shining example as she helped to coordinate the national response across every region for a study that quickly became one of the country's largest UPH studies, and a critical part of the government's response to COVID-19.

These crucial results will help clinicians determine the most appropriate treatments for patients to improve outcomes, as well as the allocation of hospital resources. They have also helped to inform Government policy on shielding, understanding the spread of COVID-19 and vaccination. Without studies like these, we would not be able to understand who are the most vulnerable people and protect those most at risk from COVID-19.



Evaluating fast and reliable COVID-19 tests

Fast and reliable COVID-19 testing at accessible community venues is at the heart of our ability to control the spread of COVID-19 infection. Led by the CRN GM team, the FALCON-MoonShot project was set up extremely rapidly to evaluate the use of new 30-minute COVID-19 detection devices at testing centres, with the aim of quickening turnaround times of results. The studies are instrumental in helping get pupils back to school, allowing families into care homes, trialling face-to-face events and provide hope for us all to be able to hug loved ones and enjoy leisure activities.

CRN GM's core delivery team led the way by establishing the first of the nation's 14 testing centres in the trial, which is the UK's fastest recruiting COVID-19 testing project, and recruiting over 200 participants – making us comfortably the highest recruiting region to the trial.

The trial resulted in city-wide mass testing evaluations, identifying over 100,000 individuals

with asymptomatic disease. As a result of the study, Government policy was changed very quickly from symptomatic to asymptomatic testing and the trial has significantly expanded testing capacity for the NHS Test and Trace program.

Professor Rick Body, Chief Investigator for the FALCON-MoonShot study said,

“Thanks to an incredible effort by the NIHR CRN Greater Manchester, we were able to deliver this large study at the Etihad

drive-through testing centre extremely rapidly, exceeding all expectations. Our findings can be used immediately to inform our national testing strategy”.



Louise Woodhead, Jo Henry and Miriam Avery from the CRN GM delivery team

Making ground-breaking discoveries with NIHR infrastructure partners

NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) redistributed budget to a diverse and wide range of COVID-19 related studies that were peer reviewed. In a high profile announcement in March 2021, a systematic review led by the BRC and University of Manchester scientists found that **hearing loss and other auditory problems are associated with COVID-19**. Further studies will accurately estimate the number and severity of COVID-19 related hearing disorders in the UK.

CRN GM made an instrumental contribution to the **PHOSP-COVID study** in partnership with the NIHR Manchester Clinical Research Facility (CRF). Manchester CRF were the second-highest recruiting site in England for

the study, which was delivered in a purpose-built unit dedicated to world-class research.

The trial found that the majority of hospitalised COVID-19 patients who survived did not fully recover five months after discharge, and continued to experience negative impacts on their physical and mental health, as well as their ability to work.

Our crucial contribution will help shape the development of trials of new strategies for clinical care. This research is critical to helping us understand the lasting health effects of COVID-19 and future studies are planned to better recognise the challenges of living with long COVID-19.

Key highlights



We delivered **44 Urgent Public Health studies** across **190 sites**; most of the trials didn't exist pre-pandemic. With nearly **52,400 participants** in Urgent Public Health research, CRN GM was one of the highest recruiting Local Clinical Research Networks (LCRN) in England and our sites were frequently in the top five of all recruiting sites across the United Kingdom for different studies.



Global and UK firsts in COVID research

CRN GM was the leader in many UPH research trials, supporting ground-breaking studies of COVID-19. We recruited the first two UK patients to the ACCORD study that tests potential new treatments for COVID-19. In testament to the expertise and experience of our staff, and the patient care delivered daily, one of our network's patients was the first in the UK to receive a convalescent plasma transfer as part of the RECOVERY trial.

Jo Henry, CRN GM Team Lead Research Nurse, holds a bag of donated blood plasma, ahead of administering the transfusion to the first MFT COVID-19 patient to take part in the convalescent plasma arm of the REMAP-CAP trial.

COVID-19 Vaccines Preparation

Establishing safe vaccines to combat COVID-19 has been one of the key medical challenges the world has faced in modern times. The Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester has made crucial contributions to vaccine preparation as researchers continue to work to secure a range of vaccines to help tackle coronavirus.

The world's first Phase 3 trial of the **Novavax vaccine** was conducted in the UK and has now confirmed a 96% efficacy against the original strain of COVID-19, helping to protect individuals in the UK and the rest of the world from the virus.

The highest recruiting region in the UK to the study in the UK, our region played a vital role in the rapid recruitment and enrolment of volunteers to the Phase 3 trial. More than 1,650 Greater Manchester volunteers took part in the study since September 2020, with our participating NHS Trusts carrying out the trial in community settings.

Stephen, 39, from Edgeley, explained his reasons for participating in the study.

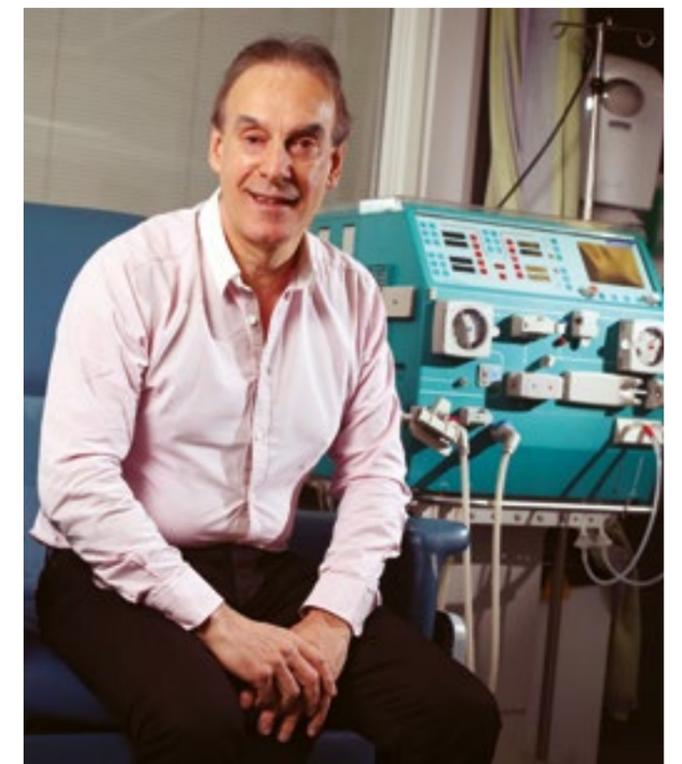
"I've got a few friends and family who have not really left the house since the beginning of the pandemic, so I just thought the sooner we can get back to some variation of normal, the better, and a vaccine could help with that. I was given detailed information at every stage about what the trial involves and why it is taking place."

Dr David Baxter, Principal Investigator for the trial at Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, said,

"We have, in partnership with NHS colleagues from across Greater Manchester, put a great deal of time and effort into carrying out the study and staff should feel very proud of the roles they have played in this significant development. As should the participants who have selflessly volunteered to be part of the study. Without their participation, none of this would have been possible."

Professor Phil Kalra, Principal Investigator for the trial at Northern Care Alliance NHS Group, said,

"Our team has worked incredibly hard to undertake the Novavax trial and we are thrilled to learn of these findings which show such a high degree of effectiveness. We are proud that the Northern Care Alliance, with support from our research colleagues in Greater Manchester, has made a real contribution to this marvellous achievement and we are extremely grateful for the efforts of all our staff and, of course, the volunteers who stepped forward to be part of this vital research."



Professor Phil Kalra



‘One Greater Manchester’ strategy provides rapid study set-up and access for everyone

CRN GM devised a **“One Greater Manchester” vaccine research strategy** in order to maximise the opportunities for Greater Manchester citizens and be ambitious about our local contributions to urgent vaccine preparation. The approach means that:

- Our region was able to undertake multiple different research protocols at the same time while maintaining safe, rapid recruitment
 - All communities in Greater Manchester had access to the national vaccine registry and many were invited to participate in trials delivered in easy-to-reach community settings
 - CRN GM support reduced logistical and administrative additional requirements for Trust staff as much as possible, allowing them to return to their usual activities
- sponsored by international life-sciences companies.

The plan divided Greater Manchester into five geographic sectors, each with community settings. CRN GM helped to set up and carry out the studies, providing support with publicity, venues and staffing, participant recruitment, workforce, training, and governance. We also worked closely with Health Innovation Manchester, who provide project management support.

More than 2,230 local participants have been recruited to vaccine trials so far. The CRN GM are committed to continuing vaccine research until all our residents have a safe and effective vaccine option.

The CRN GM core team oversaw the delivery of this strategy, working closely with NHS Trusts to bring state-of-the-art vaccine research to the region,



Dr Claire Cole received her first dose as part of the Janssen Phase 3 COVID-19 vaccine trial at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

CRN GM consents first person in the world to new phase 3 COVID-19 vaccine study

It is critical that a range of vaccination options are explored to give us the greatest chance of protecting as many people as possible. One of our Trusts was chosen as a site to deliver the vital phase 3 Janssen ENSEMBLE 2 two-dose trial – and Dr Claire Cole, the Head of Research Delivery at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT), was the **first person in the world** to be consented into the study.

Our participating Trust surpassed its volunteer recruitment target within eight weeks and

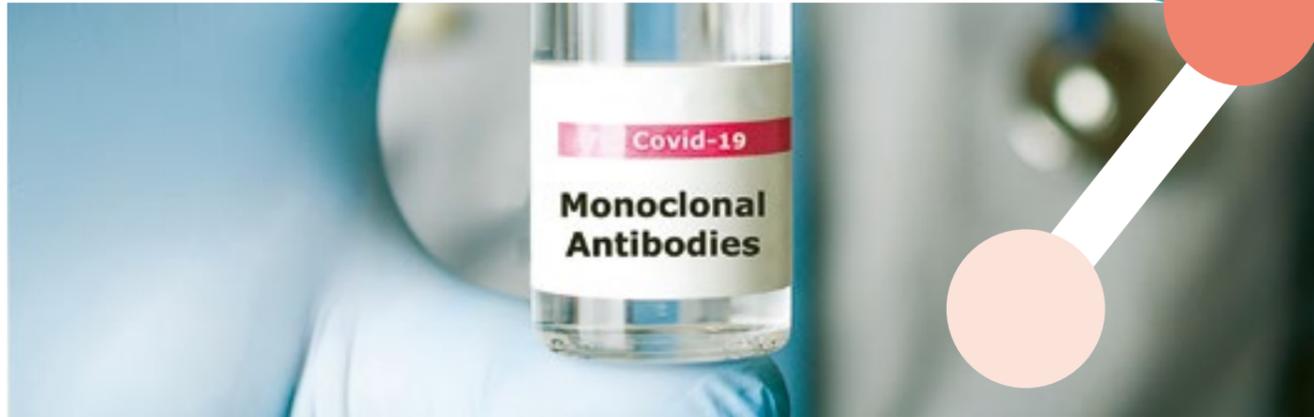
over 400 Greater Manchester residents are now taking part in the study, helping to form part of the solution to the global health crisis.

The trial is testing the safety, effectiveness and durability of a new two-dose vaccine regimen developed by Johnson & Johnson, as researchers seek to discover a range of vaccine options and to understand which vaccines work best for different people.

Dr Cole said,

“I wholeheartedly believe in the importance of taking part in research and was honoured to be the first person in the world to be recruited to the study, as part of this vitally important COVID-19 vaccine trial.

“But I am especially proud of the resilience of our multidisciplinary study team who managed to recruit the required number of participants and start administering second doses within just two months – an incredible achievement considering the current global landscape.”



Finding treatments for people exposed to COVID-19 or with potential inadequate response to vaccination

In people who have been exposed to COVID-19, vaccination does not have time to provide protection from infection. CRN GM is leading the world's first investigation into whether protection can be provided by injecting antibodies that have been shown to neutralise the virus, into the muscle.

The study, known as **STORM CHASER**, is one of two pioneering monoclonal antibody studies being led by CRN GM. The **PROVENT** study aims to find solutions for some of society's most vulnerable to infection, the people who are immunocompromised and cannot be given vaccinations, and those who do not respond well to vaccines.

CRN GM is the lead CRN for these antibody treatment studies and the second highest recruiting region in the country to the STORM CHASER trial. Prof Andrew Ustianowski, CRN GM Deputy Clinical Director, is Chief Investigator for both these studies.

As treatments for COVID-19 patients are being improved and efficacious vaccines developed, these studies will prove vital in filling the gaps with effective interventions for those people

exposed to SARS-CoV2, and people who cannot be or don't respond well to being vaccinated.

Dr Alison Uriel, Principal Investigator for the PROVENT and Storm Chaser trials and CRN GM Specialty Lead for Infection, said:



"Our team has taken great pride in delivering this research as part of the NIHR's commitment to identify vaccines, or vaccine alternatives, for all. Greater Manchester has played a significant role in these sister studies which are looking to provide options for people likely to have a sub-optimal response to a vaccine. We have used innovative methods to recruit participants by taking the research into community settings and utilising targeted social media advertising."

3.

Inspiring trust

Performance pride

The Clinical Research Network (CRN) Greater Manchester (GM) attracts talented research teams and delivers high-quality studies. This is in part due to our world-class infrastructure and the support that we provide, and because of our ability to help the recruitment of participants into trials, including rapid response requirements.

The Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester continues to excel in the provision of practical support to allow high-quality research to take place in NHS, public health and social care settings across Greater Manchester, East Cheshire and East Lancashire.

In 2020/2021, we were the second-highest recruiting Local Clinical Research Network (LCRN) to commercially sponsored studies, with 3,827 recruits across 146 studies. For the sixth year running, CRN GM were also, by some margin, the best performing LCRN for recruitment to time and target on commercially-sponsored studies. In fact, 89% of our sites hit their targets, 13% ahead of the next-highest LCRN.

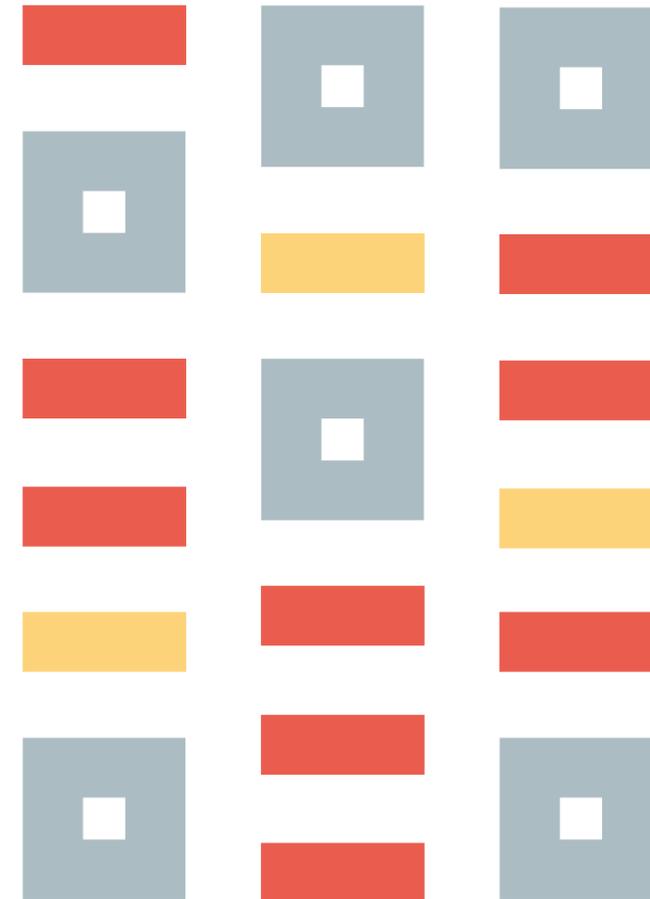
This success means that commercial sponsors can trust us to help place studies in sites that will deliver, with continued support throughout set-up and recruitment. Local people are also offered opportunities to be part of state of the art research studies as soon as possible.

A total of over 80,000 participants across 581 studies were recruited to CRN Portfolio studies across Greater Manchester, East Cheshire and East Lancashire in 2020/2021, with an equivalent of 25.5 people per 1000 population being a part of research in our region. Of our research volunteers, 52,400 (64% of our recruitment total) were part of Urgent Public Health studies for COVID-19, **demonstrating our ability to respond to rapid research requirements.**

Roger Spencer (pictured), Chairman of the CRN GM Partnership Board, said:

Greater Manchester can be very proud of the way it has responded to the COVID-19 challenge and made a significant contribution to research outcomes that are now saving countless lives and helping steer us towards a brighter future.

At a time when our health and care services have been under more pressure than ever before, it was a remarkable effort to set-up and deliver over 40 Urgent Public Health studies and provide opportunities for over 52,400 people to be part of this nationally prioritised research. While the pandemic unavoidably disrupted trials in other disease areas, over 29,000 people have still consented to non-COVID research opportunities as part of their care and it is highly encouraging to see that Greater Manchester has a higher proportion of studies open and recruiting than any other region in the country.



Professor Jane Eddleston, Manchester Academic Health Science Centre chair and Group Joint Medical Director at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, the host Trust for CRN GM, said:

"I'm extremely proud of the way the Greater Manchester research community has responded to the COVID-19 crisis amid some of the most challenging circumstances I've known during my NHS career. Our network has played a significant part in a number of groundbreaking research outcomes that are not only saving lives in the UK, but across the world. Greater Manchester has certainly delivered on its reputation as an excellent region for pioneering research and innovation and we'll be working hard to build on the success of the past year as we continue to deliver research into coronavirus and bring our full portfolio back up to capacity."



Widening participation opportunities in research

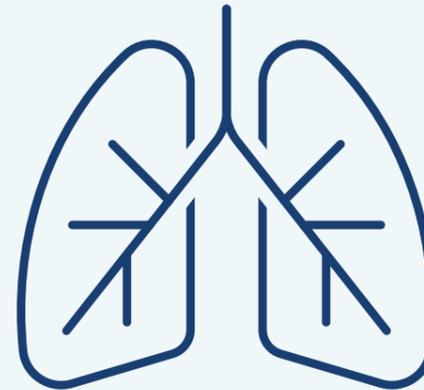
Research for the Future (RftF) is an NHS-supported campaign that is unique to Greater Manchester. The campaign helps people find out about and take part in health and care research and has previously been focused on four disease areas of primary interest.

Opportunities for volunteers have now been widened so that anyone aged 18 years or over and living in England is welcome to register, whether they have a health condition or not.

Involvement extends beyond being involved in a clinical trial and also includes contributing to the design of a study, being part of a discussion group or completing a survey, and helping to test new equipment. People who are interested can easily

register on the [Research for the Future website](#), to be contacted about any health research.

The CRN GM needs as many people as possible to get involved and also to promote Research for the Future to others, so that we can rapidly connect our communities with research and do our very best to increase research opportunities. Your participation will help us to discover new ways to prevent, diagnose and manage illnesses.



New respiratory research group for uncommon condition

Bronchiectasis is a long-term condition where the airways of the lungs become abnormally widened, leading to a build-up of excess mucus that can make the lungs more vulnerable to infection. It is thought to affect around five in every 1,000 adults in the UK.

The Greater Manchester Bronchiectasis Group has been set-up to provide an effective forum to help standardise practices, support education and promote research within Non-Cystic Fibrosis bronchiectasis across Greater Manchester. The group will help us to ensure equitable access to the provision of care and services for all patients across our region, as well as providing an excellent platform for education and research to prosper.

Leading specialist consultants and nurses, physiotherapists, and Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) have joined the group and it is anticipated that the formation of this group will help bring more bronchiectasis studies to Greater Manchester.

New rapid genetic test could prevent antibiotic-related hearing loss in newborns

A study supported by the NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre, in partnership with Manchester-based firm Genedrive and the charity Action on Hearing Loss, could prevent antibiotic-related hearing loss in newborn babies. When newborns are admitted to intensive care they are often treated with the life-saving antibiotic, gentamicin. This can lead to 1 in 500 infants developing irreversible hearing loss due to a genetic predisposition that has previously not been identifiable quickly enough to inform treatment decisions.

Our researchers have begun a **new study** on a world-first 20-minute bedside test that identifies susceptible babies. Administered by a nurse with a bedside machine, the test provides information on an infant's risk of antibiotic-related hearing loss, enabling the prescription of alternative appropriate antibiotics. It is estimated that the new technology will save the hearing of 180 babies in the UK every year, and also save the NHS an estimated £5 million each year in cochlear implantations and other hospital costs.

The genetic test will allow doctors to find the right urgent treatment for each baby without incurring devastating lifelong side effects for the patient and the anguish of a diagnosis of profound deafness for their family.

Resilience, Recovery and Growth

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic led to the diversion of resources to support the Government's research responses. New sites or studies, other than for nationally prioritised COVID-19 studies, were paused and some researchers deployed to the clinical 'front line', leading to a rapid and significant reduction in Clinical Research Network research activity across the country. However, as COVID-19 pressures on the UK health system eased, our research began to resume.

The Clinical Research Network (CRN) Greater Manchester (GM) is the leading Local Clinical Research Network (LCRN) in the country in terms of the proportion of research studies that are open and actively recruiting participants, even though many resources were diverted to COVID-19 related research.

Only 10% of our trials remain paused due to the pandemic, and under 1% were cancelled. This ensured that many of our local communities continued to have research opportunities offered to them as part of their care during the pandemic.

Since May 2020 we have seen a progressive improvement in the number of open studies and study sites as we recover our fully-active portfolio of research. Recruitment to studies has been both complex and challenging but our teams have worked hard to get non-COVID-19 research up and running alongside the recovery of clinical services. This has been achieved in line with the NIHR's Managed Recovery [Framework](#) and includes commercial and non-commercial trials.

In spite of the disruption to research, over 29,000 volunteers (35%) were part of non-COVID-19 research in Greater Manchester in 2020/2021.

Over 1,000 studies have now opened, equivalent to 65% of the total number on our portfolio. We continue to work in collaboration with others across all sectors of health, social care and public health, as we make a significant contribution to the improvement of the nation's health and wealth.



29,000
volunteers



1,000
studies

New service provides flexible research staffing for COVID-19 studies

Finding safe and effective vaccines, treatments and diagnostics for COVID-19 was a high priority for the UK and helped to protect us all more quickly, relieve pressure on the NHS and save lives. Successful research relies on large-scale trials and sometimes it can be difficult to recruit staff to studies.

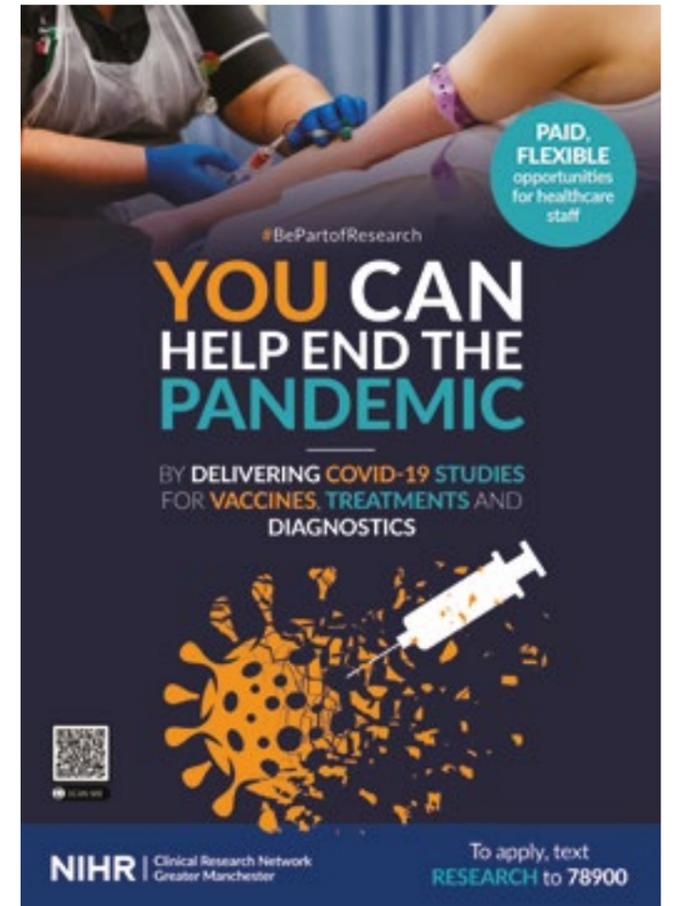
CRN GM collaborated with health organisations across Greater Manchester to set up a new service that can provide research teams with additional, flexible staffing to cope with COVID-19 workforce related pressures.

The [Research Workforce Hub](#) has a new digital application process that makes it easy for Trusts to recruit additional staff by offering short-term employment opportunities in a range of roles.

As part of a pilot, six staff were taken on via this model from the NHS Professionals bank. The scheme was initially focused on helping Trusts carry out COVID-19 studies and is now being expanded to provide support with research delivery across all trials

Liam McMorrow, Lead Nurse for Research & Innovation at Northern Care Alliance NHS Group (NCA), said,

"Thanks to this scheme, we were able to facilitate some short-term staffing into my workforce and the process from start to finish has been seamless. My teams across the NCA have benefitted from this initiative especially during this busy period, which has added valuable resource to support our portfolios."



Key highlights



Leading the way in cancer research opportunities

We continued to provide opportunities for local patients to be part of cancer research, with recruitment into over 190 studies still taking place during 2020/2021. In March 2020, our NHS trusts were forced to pause recruitment into trials but by early May 2020, they were able to re-open safely.

By winter 2020, our flagship cancer trust had re-opened 92% of trials that were started pre-COVID-19. The recruitment of over 4,800 participants into these studies made us the highest enrolling LCRN for cancer research in the country when accounting for population size, and the second highest recruiter overall.



Taking COVID research into care homes

COVID-19 has the most serious effect on older and vulnerable people and providing as much protection for them as possible has been a priority for CRN GM. One of our programmes, ENRICH (Enabling Research in Care Homes), was disrupted during the pandemic.

However, because of our local contacts, we were able to deliver the [Vivaldi study](#). CRN GM collaborated with 10 Greater Manchester care homes and recruited more than 60 residents and staff. The study has demonstrated that a single licensed vaccine dose was effective at preventing up to 62% of COVID-19 infections.



We need your help to find out why some communities are hit harder by COVID



800 people

400 appointments

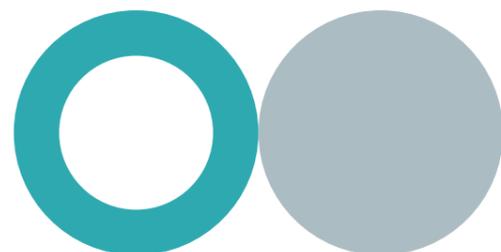
Our Public Health research journey begins

We focused on underserved communities in Greater Manchester and delivered the [Virus Watch study](#) at three sites. Results show that over 80% of people who were uncertain or intending to refuse a COVID-19 vaccine in December 2020 had [changed their mind](#) by February 2021. This was our first landmark Public Health research study, and we recruited over 450 participants whose contribution is helping monitor and stop the spread of COVID-19. The study shows the importance of making repeated offers of a COVID-19 vaccine as many people have changed their mind over the course of a few months.

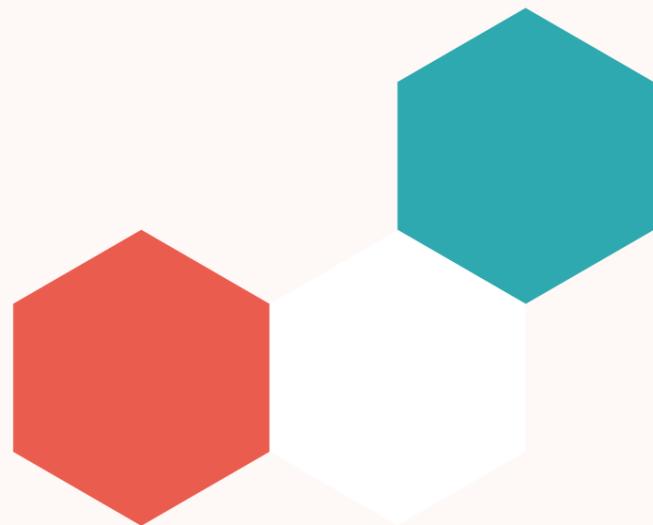
Staff diversify to support COVID fightback

The pandemic led to many open research studies being paused, including the majority of research that we expected to support through our bespoke service [Research for the Future](#) (RftF). The RftF team quickly diversified their service and supported new and rapid response COVID-19 trials.

The Research for the Future team was redeployed to carry out telephone screening of participants and administrative support for the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine trial across two sites. RftF screened approximately 800 people and booked over 400 appointments for those who met the eligibility criteria, providing an excellent participant experience that drew praise from staff and participants alike.



4. Excelling at relationships



Collaborative working

To deliver the best support that we can provide for the benefit of our communities requires all elements of the Greater Manchester health system to work together. The Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester worked hard to develop excellent working relationships and be innovative in our collaboration with partners, to benefit all our residents and improve lives. The results of our ability to work collaboratively across the Greater Manchester health system have been especially evident as we supported research responses right from the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff at Royal Manchester Children's Hospital collaborated with St John Ambulance to play a major part in the **'What's the Story'** project, with support from colleagues at NIHR Manchester Clinical Research Facility (CRF). The project, which studies antibody levels for COVID-19 as well as meningitis and diphtheria, involves young people and was given Urgent Public Health status.

The study was delivered in the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. To avoid the need for volunteers to come to hospitals we



Research nurses Imelda Mayor and Alice Wheeler

collaborated with St John Ambulance and using one of their ambulances, we set-up a pop-up clinic in communities. We had a phenomenal response to our call for trial volunteers and our collaboration with St John Ambulance has also meant that families in hard-to-reach communities have been able to take part and add value to this vital research study.

Helen Blackburn, Hospital R&I Manager, Royal Manchester Children's Hospital, said,

"This is a really good example of how our clinical and non-clinical research teams have come together to work on a project and also demonstrates some of the innovative ways in which we work in R&I. We have built up a really good collaboration with St John Ambulance and were able to utilise their ambulance facility which allowed us to make this research more accessible to our local communities."

Collaborating on world-first phase 3 trial of Novavax vaccine

Clinical Research Network (CRN) Greater Manchester (GM) and NHS staff from Partner organisations across our region collaborated in the delivery of the first phase 3 trial in the world of the **Novavax COVID-19 vaccine**.

This was the first COVID-19 vaccine trial to be undertaken in Greater Manchester and required a lot of cooperation across our health system. Staff from different trusts in Greater Manchester and the CRN GM worked together to deliver the study, which was carried out at community sites.

Wieska Woodyatt, Research and Innovation Manager at Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, said, "Right from the background administration and project management, through to pre-screening, then actual on-site delivery with the labs and

pharmacy, finishing with the data entry back at the office. It's been a true collaboration. This has not just been about the Stockport team, this has been one, wider network effort. It is a true testament to how we can all come together in Greater Manchester to deliver one study – A One Manchester Approach at its absolute best."

Professor Andy Ustianowski, Deputy Clinical Director at NIHR Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester, and NIHR national Specialty Lead for Infection, said,

"This huge research project has been made possible thanks to a 'One Greater Manchester' approach which involved colleagues from across various NHS organisations working together to ensure local communities had the opportunity to be part of this groundbreaking research. We sincerely thank all the staff and participants whose contribution should now benefit so many people."

More than 1,650 Greater Manchester volunteers took part in the study, making our region the highest recruiting region in the country.

Pictured: The Novavax delivery team at Stockport NHS Foundation Trust



The CRN GM core delivery team of nurses, practitioners and administrators has collaborated, to great effect, with R&I teams across Greater Manchester on a range of studies.

"Our team has shared tears, laughter and rejoiced in achievements that contributed to improving treatments and interventions for those that became suppressed to the COVID-19 virus. We supported our medics and, most importantly, we supported our patients and participants. I take extreme pride in managing a team that not only drives excellence in all research across Greater Manchester, but also promotes and underpins research in order to provide cutting-edge treatment options for service users. At no other time in my career have I felt more humble or proud of my team, myself and the NHS."

Sam Chilcott, Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester Nurse Manager.



Taking research opportunities into the community

CRN GM partnered with local community organisations and locations to widen the opportunities for all our residents to take part in research. This included the phase three trial of the COVID-19 vaccine Novavax delivered at Manchester Rugby Club and Oldham Leisure Centre and the PROVENT antibody study also carried out at Oldham Leisure Centre.

These easy-to-reach settings provided convenient car parking, large indoor spaces, a clear and safe participant pathway from one stage to the next, and a comfortable participant experience away from hospital environments. This approach has helped us to be one of the country's leading CRN's for participant recruitment, as well as ensuring our underserved communities have the opportunity to make a crucial contribution to research.

Pictured: Research participant Stuart Lockwood, Chief Executive Officer of Oldham Active, attending his PROVENT trial check-up at Oldham Leisure Centre, which has hosted a number of COVID studies.

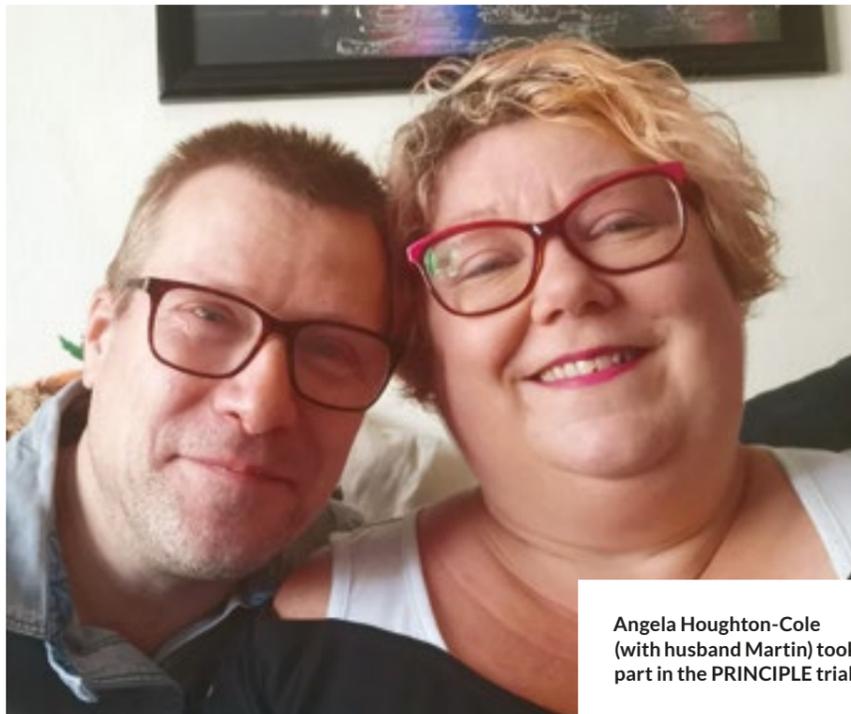


Key highlights

GM hospitals excel in flagship COVID trial

Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester brought together hospital Trusts across our region to share best practice for delivering the flagship COVID-19 RECOVERY treatment trial.

The provision of a regular forum helped our region significantly surpass the national target of recruiting 10% of COVID-19 patient hospital admissions on to the trial. The forum also provided valuable support for trusts that had experienced difficulties with enrolling participants. In February and March 2021, Greater Manchester accounted for the **highest performing trusts in the UK** for COVID-19 patients recruited to the RECOVERY trial. The study has already helped find treatments that improve outcomes for hospitalised patients.



Angela Houghton-Cole (with husband Martin) took part in the PRINCIPLE trial.

GM sites support COVID community treatment discovery

We reached out to organisations across the public, private and third sectors in Greater Manchester in response to the urgent call for volunteers to the **PRINCIPLE trial**. This national priority trial seeks to identify community-based treatments for COVID-19.

A total of 120 primary care sites were registered to recruit volunteers. Partners including the North West Ambulance Service NHS trust played key roles in enrolling participants, and health and care professionals of all types. Organisations such as local Age UK charities helped direct potential participants to the study website. Almost 200 participants in Greater Manchester have contributed to the trial and in a significant milestone, evidence has been found that the widely available drug budesonide is effective as a treatment at home. Angela Houghton-Cole, from East Cheshire, took part in the trial through her local GP practice.

“Ultimately, I felt that if I could contribute towards research that will help us better understand this awful virus and possibly help other people in the future, then it was something I wanted to be a part of.”

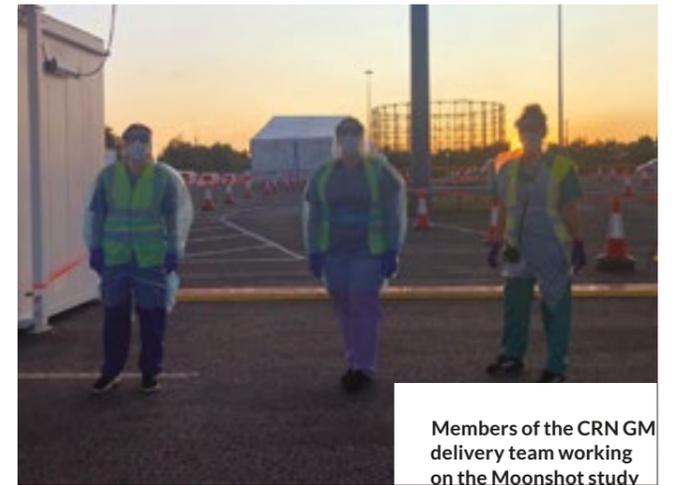
Your Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester

The year 2020/2021 has obviously been dominated by our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, although we also managed to keep more existing trials running than any other Clinical Research Network in England. Our team have continuously demonstrated their passion for research and their resilience throughout this time, being extremely agile and working closely with our wider network of health and care professionals across Greater Manchester.

The Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester’s delivery team – comprising research nurses, practitioners and administrators – supported 20 studies across hospital sites and 9 across community settings such as care homes, schools and primary care during 2020/2021.

To respond to the COVID-19 challenge, their roles became increasingly flexible with staff covering shifts seven days a week and outside of traditional hours.

In an immediate response to support Urgent Public Health trials during the first wave of the pandemic, team members went on indefinite placements across our host trust, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT), until summer 2020. Staff bound for new, non-clinical research roles remained in their clinical posts to support research delivery, while non-clinical staff with a nursing background were placed on standby and undertook refresher training.



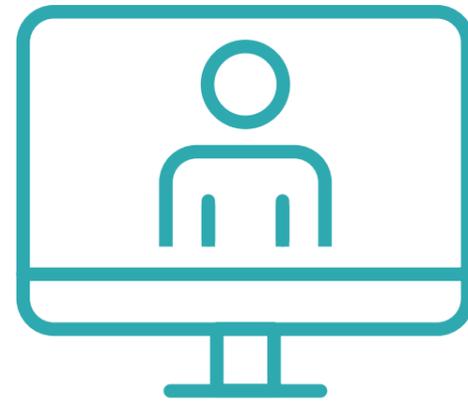
Members of the CRN GM delivery team working on the Moonshot study

As the pandemic progressed, our delivery team began to support research at other hospitals and organisations across Greater Manchester, and played a vital role in planning and undertaking COVID-19 vaccine trials at three sites.

Janette Dunkerley, Lead Nurse for Research and Innovation at MFT, said,

“I am exceptionally proud of how the Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester’s research delivery team have been agile, supportive, adaptive, responsive and flexible to the needs of MFT in supporting us, and all NHS trusts across Greater Manchester, throughout the pandemic. This support has enabled the residents of Greater Manchester to have the opportunity to take part in ground-breaking, innovative research during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Key highlights



Essential training for new and existing research workforces

CRN GM supported the development and introduction of new, national e-learning training programmes for research-naïve clinical teams so that clinical research during the first wave of the pandemic could be supported. We also resumed training for our research workforce with virtual sessions, and safely re-started the most prioritised learning events as face-to-face sessions.

A total of 2,685 certificates were issued to local health professionals. Training included courses on Good Clinical Practice, the essentials of clinical research, gaining informed consent from participants, becoming a lead investigator for a study, and showing clinical trainees how to include research in their practice.

Promoting research opportunities via local media

Through our trusted media relationships, we have secured over 100 pieces of free coverage to promote participation in research and raise the profile of NIHR. This has helped us make a significant contribution to supporting the search for COVID-19 vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics. CRN GM gained 20 pieces of publicity for the PRINCIPLE trial alone, with its focus on the search for treatments in the home for patients with mild COVID-19 symptoms. This included [an interview with Dr Sheila McCorkindale](#), CRN GM Specialty Lead for Primary Care, on BBC North West Tonight.

Our development of a range of [case studies](#) with local participants tells the human story of our research and each one explains why volunteers became involved. These [personal stories](#) demonstrate how research has benefited the health and wellbeing of local people, and have helped attract media attention for NIHR studies, as well as inspiring other people to be part of research.

Automated process for rapid site identification

CRN GM created an innovative, automated research site identification tool that streamlines the process for NHS research teams to register their interest in delivering Urgent Public Health studies. As a result, our Study Support Service has provided trial sponsors with the information they needed faster than other regions. The innovation has paved the way for urgent COVID-19 research in Greater Manchester to be set up and carried out at pace. Other regions are now considering implementing our creative technology solution.

Digital solution for smoother trial set-up

We have helped improve the [interactive Costing Tool \(iCT\)](#) that makes it quicker and easier for commercial sponsors to negotiate budgets and set up trials in the NHS.

200 different commercial organisations sponsored studies in Greater Manchester in 2020/2021. This brought a wide range of state-of-the-art research opportunities to all our residents across multiple disease areas.

5. Investing in our future

What's new for 2021/2022

Our support allows research to take place in NHS, Public Health and Social Care settings. In 2020/2021, we made some fundamental changes to our approaches in response to the urgent COVID-19 challenge. We will build on these experiences and continue to support and invest in the future of research, gathering evidence that leads to new and better care and treatments for patients and the public.

Reaching all communities and increasing the opportunities for research volunteers to access state-of-the-art treatments is one of Clinical Research Network (CRN) Greater Manchester's (GM) priorities.

As a result of our successful funding application to the Vaccine Task Force, in the summer of 2021 we will be launching a new mobile pharmacy that is unique to our region. The 'pharmacy-on-wheels' will be used to take COVID-19 vaccine trials – and other research studies – to easy-to-reach community locations such as community centres and sports halls, rather than participants needing to travel to a hospital or NHS site.

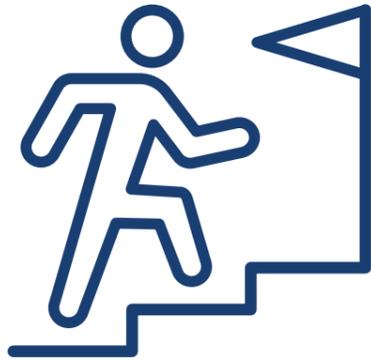
The mobile pharmacy will have built-in facilities to store and dispense trial medications, as well as special features such as advanced freezer technology. This means that even in the community, we will be able to conduct research that requires investigational medicinal products or trial vaccines to be kept at temperatures down to – 70°C

Sarah Fallon, Chief Operating Officer of NIHR Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester, said,

“We are delighted to have secured funding for this new resource which is a key part of our strategy to increase opportunities for people in all parts of our area to be part of clinical research studies.”

“The mobile unit will also optimise our resources in the region and provide us with a ‘one-stop’ facility that can move flexibly between different sites in Greater Manchester. This is a particularly important asset as we continue to deliver urgent public health priority trials to find more COVID-19 vaccines to protect everyone from coronavirus.”

Key highlights



Contract extension

We are delighted that The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has confirmed the extension of Local Clinical Research Network contracts, including Greater Manchester's, until April 2024. We feel privileged to be continuing to support research that improves health outcomes for people in our local communities.

North West-wide training department

Working in collaboration with our colleagues at CRN North West Coast (NWC), we will launch a new-look Workforce, Learning and Development (WLD) team. The WLD functions of CRN GM and NWC will come together to provide a North West-wide service to deliver the training and development needs of the workforce across our combined areas. This will help both organisations align strategically, and our teams will benefit from wider support for workforce initiatives, including the addition of a dedicated Learning Technologist and a Learning Manager.

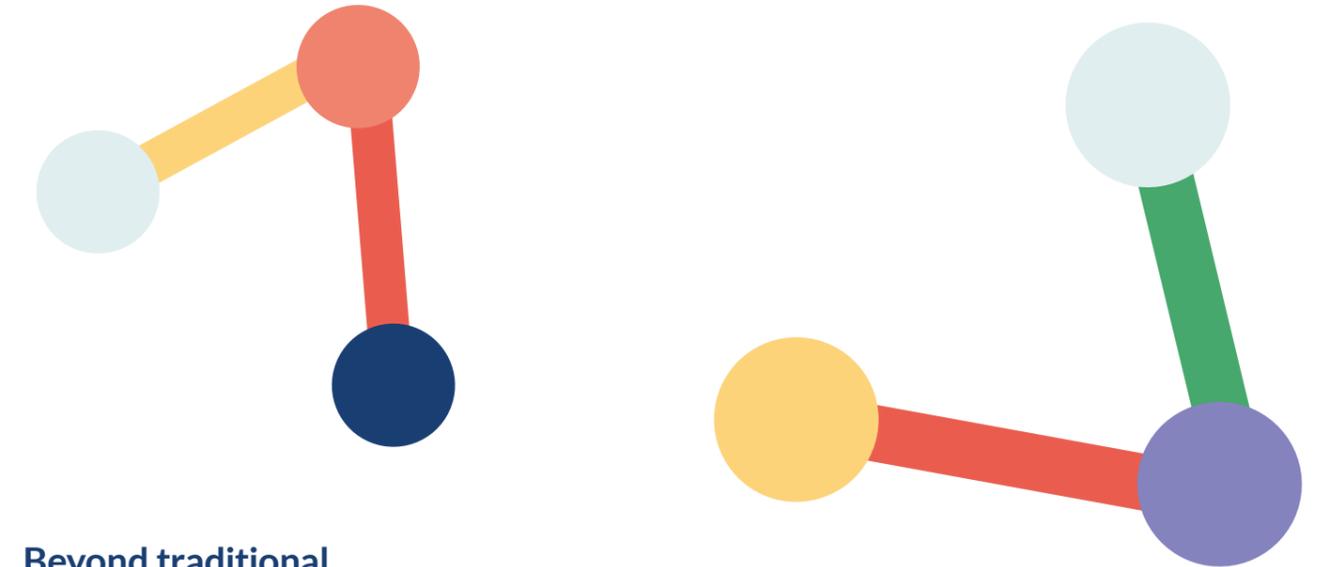
Finding COVID vaccines for everyone

CRN GM's 'One Greater Manchester' COVID-19 vaccine research strategy will continue to deliver studies across the region as we seek to identify vaccines for everyone. Opportunities for vaccine trial participation will be extended, with up-coming trials focusing on children and pregnant women. Trials investigating booster vaccines and third doses are also currently in set-up stages, and will help us gain a better understanding of possible future COVID-19 vaccine schedules. Our Business Development team continue to promote Greater Manchester as a prime location to carry out future vaccine trials.



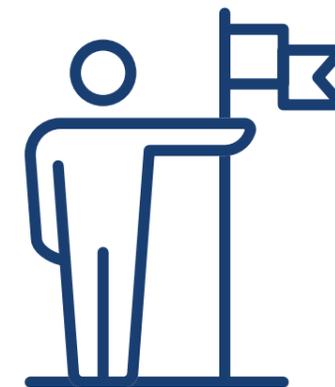
Enhancing our volunteer database

Research teams across Greater Manchester will have easy access to potential volunteers for COVID-19 and other disease studies. Our bespoke Research for the Future (RftF) service will launch a campaign to develop a database of volunteers who have given their consent to be approached about participating in upcoming COVID-19 trials. This will build on an existing database of over 6,500 local volunteers already registered with RftF across its four Help BEAT campaigns for diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease and respiratory disease - plus our brand new Help BEAT Coronavirus campaign.



Beyond traditional research delivery

CRN GM will continue its focus on transforming research delivery and be a supportive community that develops our practices to go beyond traditional research delivery. We will continue to seek ways to reach underserved communities and work with them to offer more inclusive research opportunities for everyone in Greater Manchester.



Here's to you



The CRN Greater Manchester delivery team

Thank you to the Greater Manchester research community

We would like to say 'thank you' to everyone who has been involved in research across Greater Manchester over the past year. As soon as the potential impact of the COVID-19 global public health emergency was realised, the NIHR acted quickly to help set up and carry out a range of urgent research studies into the disease.

Since then, our local NHS Trusts and other health and social care providers have been working hard to ensure as many of our region's patients as possible have had the opportunity to take part in the latest COVID-19 studies. At the same time, they have also been striving to restart as much non-COVID-19 research as possible in a safe manner.

A tremendous amount of progress has been made in the past 12 months, which owes a great deal to the dedication of countless NHS staff members and the thousands of participants who have volunteered for trials in our region. **Thank you.**



Martin Gibson, Clinical Director of NIHR CRN Greater Manchester

How we support studies and how you can get involved in research



Setting up and delivering research in Greater Manchester

For all enquiries about how we can support you to set up and deliver research in NHS, Public Health and Social Care settings in Greater Manchester, email our single point of contact address: researchsupport.crn gm@nihr.ac.uk

You can also find out more:

- Visit our [Industry Route Map](#) of the support available through our Study Support Service
- Read more on our website – <https://local.nihr.ac.uk/lcrn/greater-manchester/>
- Follow us on Twitter [@NIHRCRN_gman](#) and [LinkedIn](#)
- Keep up-to-date with our latest news and developments by [subscribing to our monthly bulletin](#)

Undertaking vaccine research in Greater Manchester

We have the experience, capacity and capability to carry out a range of vaccine trials and have supported some of the nation's most important recent vaccine discoveries. Our Business Development team [share an overview of our expertise in this field.](#)

Supporting researchers

The Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester [help researchers](#) find participants for a wide range of research involvement and engagement opportunities, including grant applications, clinical trials and other Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) opportunities.



Careers in research

Interested in a career in research? Our [Greater Manchester Research Workforce Hub](#) is an ideal way to register your interest in fulfilling a role in research on a short-term basis. It offers flexible, paid opportunities which give prospective research employees an insight into a career in research, allowing you to sample a role and understand what a permanent switch to research could entail.

Get involved in care home research

Any care home interested in supporting research can join the NIHR Enabling Research in Care Homes (ENRICH) Research Ready Care Home Network. Your care home can join the ENRICH network by [signing up today](#).



People like you helped turn the tide against COVID-19. What else could you do?

Lifesaving vaccines, treatments and tests are all only possible because thousands of people volunteered for coronavirus research.

Imagine the difference we could make if more people took part in research into conditions like diabetes, cancer, mental health and heart disease.

Be part of the next health breakthrough.

Search [bepartofresearch.uk](https://www.bepartofresearch.uk)

[f](#) [t](#) [#bepartofresearch](#)



Take part in health research in Greater Manchester

There are many ways in which you can take part in health research in Greater Manchester – regardless of your health. It could be anything from completing surveys and quizzes, to providing feedback and taking part in clinical trials. Just some of the opportunities to contribute to improving everyone’s health include:

Register to hear about research opportunities

If you are aged 18+, regardless of your health background, you can now sign-up to our unique Greater Manchester service, [Research for the Future](#). Registering means we will inform you about research opportunities you may wish to take part in. We offer opportunities to get involved in research across all health conditions as well for as healthy volunteers

Volunteer for “Help BEAT...” campaigns in diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, respiratory disease and coronavirus

Research for the Future also has five areas of particular interest, our [‘Help BEAT’ campaigns](#). Our current campaigns are Help BEAT Diabetes, Help BEAT Heart Disease, Help BEAT Kidney Disease and Help BEAT Respiratory Disease and Coronavirus. We are especially keen to hear from people living with these health conditions as we regularly have research opportunities in these areas

Be Part of Research

[Be Part of Research](#) is a website run by the NIHR and is designed to help people find and contact research studies taking place near them, including studies happening in Greater Manchester

Sign-up to Dementia Research

[Join Dementia Research](#) is an NIHR service that enables you to register your interest and be matched with suitable dementia research studies taking place near you. Our knowledge of dementia currently lags behind that of other major conditions, such as cancer or heart disease, and the number of patients is set to double over the next 30 years. The service is predominantly aimed at people with dementia and their carers, but anyone with and without dementia over the age of 18 can sign-up and you can register on behalf of someone else

Become a Research Champion

We coordinate a group of local [Research Champions](#) and are always looking for more people to join the group. Research Champions are patients, carers, and members of the public who have taken part in a research study before, as well as those who haven’t. Something that they all have in common is that they are passionate about getting more people involved in research so that we can develop better care and treatment for everyone.

