

Clinical Research Network West of England 2023 Awards



Running order

6:45pm

Opening address

Dr Kyla Thomas and Ifan Jones, Clinical Director and Chief Operating Officer, CRN West of England

People-centred research

Presented by Claire Thompson, Director of Improvement and Partnerships, Great Western Hospitals

Lead network study of the year

Presented by Prof Phil Evans, Deputy Medical Director, CRN National Coordinating Centre

Partnership with industry

Presented by Dr Kate Jones, Director of Research Delivery, CRN National Coordinating Centre

Rising star award (sites and individuals)

Presented by Deborah Lee, Chief Executive Officer, Gloucestershire Hospitals

7:30pm

Break and hot buffet

Continuous improvement

Presented by Prof Stuart Walker, Chief Medical Officer, University Hospitals Bristol and Weston

Supporting and developing colleagues

Presented by Dr Stephen McGlynn, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, CRN West of England

Specialty Lead of the year

Presented by Ifan Jones, Chief Operating Officer, CRN West of England

Embedding research in health and care

Presented by Prof Ruth Endacott, Director of Nursing and Midwifery, NIHR

Collaboration in research

Presented by Dr Kyla Thomas, Clinical Director, CRN West of England

9:00pm

Close





EDGE RESEARCH MANAGEMENT IN REAL TIME

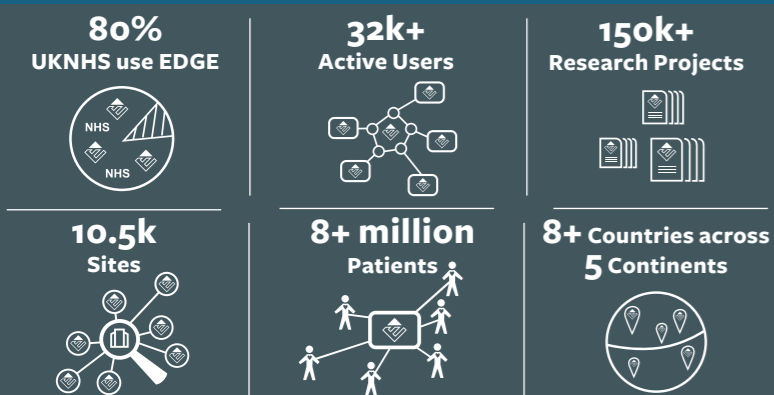
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KEY FEATURES & FUNCTIONS

- **Cloud-based, real-time** data management
- **Global availability** through a secure Microsoft AZURE environment
- **Modern technologies** focused on user experience
- **Personalised** user dashboard
- **Secure** participant management & recruitment
- **Unlimited** bespoke form & field creation
- Workflow builder for **custom** workload assignment
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- **Collaborative** calendar functionality
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Welcome

Welcome to the Clinical Research Network West of England (CRN WE) Research Awards 2023, a night filled with celebration and recognition of the outstanding contributions made by research delivery staff across the region.

We are thrilled that you are able to join us for this wonderful occasion. It has been a privilege and an absolute delight for us to read through all the nominations we received; it's one of highlights of the CRN year! Each nomination is a testament to the passion, innovation, and unwavering commitment of our research community, and it has been heartening to learn more about the extraordinary work being done across the West of England.

At the CRN WE, we are dedicated to improving access to research for everyone. The shortlisted nominees are great examples of people and teams who are working to make positive impact, contributions and changes to research, both in the region and at a national level. They are working to make research more accessible for members of the public, taking research into new settings or engaging with under-served groups. They are also supporting the development and wellbeing of their research delivery colleagues, or helping clinical colleagues to get involved in research. All this helps us achieve our mission of improving the health and wealth of the nation through research delivery. These successes would not have been possible without the unwavering professionalism and dedication of those within our network.

This year marks a significant milestone for us as we gather for our very first face-to-face awards ceremony. A huge thank you to everyone who took the time to show gratitude for their colleagues by submitting a nomination. It's really important that we share positive feedback and recognise the achievements of others. A heartfelt thank you also goes out to our dedicated team who have put in tremendous effort to organise this event. We hope you all thoroughly enjoy the evening as we come together to celebrate all your fantastic contributions to research.

Kyla, Ifan and Stephen
CRN WE Senior Leadership Team

People-centred research

People are at the heart of research; without them, the discoveries that we make would simply not be possible.

This award recognises those individuals and teams who are making outstanding contributions to include and engage patients and the public in the delivery of research or to improve the experience of taking part in research.

Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children: Engagement Team and Clinical Team University of Bristol



“We were very keen to find out what would motivate our most disengaged participants to attend a clinic and remain engaged with the study.”

The Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) Team have shown exceptional efforts in fostering inclusion and engagement within their three-generation study. Their dedication to creating a welcoming environment is evident through initiatives like ‘family’ and ‘men only’ days, accommodating neurodiverse participants with ‘quiet’ days, and remote clinics for overseas participants.

Their innovative approach of gathering insights through focus groups in disadvantaged communities, like Barton Hill, Knowle West, and Weston-super-Mare, highlights their commitment to understanding and addressing participant needs. Their commitment to equity is exemplified by the actions they have taken following the feedback received in these groups. The team has run a satellite clinic in Barton Hill, with plans to run more, and now offer access to Citizens Advice to participants attending the clinic in Clifton. The ALSPAC Team’s comprehensive approach to inclusion, community engagement, and diverse outreach strategies truly exemplifies their outstanding contributions to people-centred research.

Dr Jonathan Aning Uro-Oncology Research Lead Bristol Urological Institute, North Bristol Trust



“His drive to offer research across the entire cancer pathway puts patients first and engages staff across the trust from a range of departments.”

Jonathan has shown exceptional contributions that exemplify patient engagement and inclusion. His pivotal role as a clinical investigator is underscored by his leadership in crucial trials like the PROTEUS study. Beyond this, his efforts to bridge gaps and enhance patient experiences shine through initiatives such as community events targeting ethnic minority groups. By speaking at local gatherings, he not only raises awareness about prostate cancer among black men but also fosters a sense of trust and inclusion within these communities.

His dedication to mentorship and collaboration has not only expanded research engagement but also promoted diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Vaccine and Testing Team University Hospitals Bristol and Weston

“The vaccine and testing team are bringing research into the community, giving people the opportunity to ask questions and find out more.”



Over the past 3 years, the University Hospitals Bristol and Weston (UHBW) Vaccine and Testing Team has put a strong focus on engaging with the public and promoting awareness about their work. Their public engagement efforts include school events, fresher fairs, and participation in “pint of science” events, a festival that brings researchers to local pubs and public spaces. They have developed unique ways of engaging people with research, such as creating fun games, evidencing their dedication to making research accessible and relevant to people’s lives. Their work has resulted in students pursuing work experience placements with research teams, inspiring the next generation.

The PPIE group they have set up ensures that participant feedback and insights shape the design of their vaccine trials. Their enthusiasm is evident in the work they do to encourage more people to take part in vaccine research and remain engaged once they have.

Lead network study

Having a great research idea is only the first step, a key challenge comes when leading a team and study to deliver on that research idea, often at scale and across multiple sites across the CRN's national network.

This award recognises Chief Investigators and study teams for a portfolio-adopted study arising from the West of England that has made a significant contribution to research.

CHIEF-PD and Dr Emily Henderson



“The trial’s results will mark a new horizon in strategies that prevent falls and enable people with neurodegenerative conditions to live well in later life.”

The CHIEF-PD team, led by Dr Emily Henderson, delivered the biggest UK academic drug trial in Parkinson’s disease (PD) at a time of unprecedented pressures on clinical services for older people. The study addresses a great unmet need in PD, targeting falls, and enrolled 600 participants across an impressive 39 centres in the UK.

Despite the major challenges to clinical research posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, CHIEF-PD still managed to recruit this particularly vulnerable group of patients, who are often frail, under-served by clinical research and have multiple long-term conditions. They achieved this by trialling novel approaches to research delivery, such as providing hybrid visits, remote consent, and exploring new ways to bring research to people, such as drugs being delivered to participants rather than them having to collect medication. The personal commitment and supportive approach of the Chief Investigator has been instrumental to the creation, set-up and achievements of the study. The outcome of the study will influence daily practice in Parkinson’s and, if positive, stands to improve quality of life for the high proportion of Parkinson’s patients at risk of falls.

ATHENA and Prof Matt Ridd



“The ATHENA trial stands out as an example of adaptability and effective communication.”

ATHENA is a study being run in Primary Care sites to investigate a potential treatment for shingles. Despite initial recruitment challenges and a changing healthcare landscape influenced by the pandemic, Prof Matt Ridd and the ATHENA team demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the trial’s success. By leveraging their extensive expertise and collaborating closely with the CRN West of England, the trial’s team managed to pivot and engage a diverse range of GP practices. ATHENA now has 336 participating sites in 13 CRN networks.

Recognising that patients’ diverse needs required various communication methods, the team ensured that information was presented comprehensively and in multiple formats, including videos, making it more accessible to a wide range of participants. This facilitated site recruitment and demonstrated the dedication to inclusion and accessibility. This nomination is a testament to the collective effort of the ATHENA team and Prof Ridd’s leadership in steering the study towards its impressive achievements.

Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children

With over 30 years of dedication, the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) has consistently excelled in gathering comprehensive data from three generations of participants through diverse means, including face-to-face clinics, remote data collection, and targeted sub-studies. Collecting such a large amount of data, including 25,000 portfolio recruited participants each year, enables ALSPAC to provide the international research community with a rich resource for the study of the environmental and genetic factors that affect a person’s health and development.

The study also played an important role in helping us to understand more about COVID-19. By comparing the study’s pre-pandemic data to new data, researchers were able to learn more about the virus, asymptomatic infections and the long-term immune response. The study’s success extends to innovative methods, like using text message advertising via participants’ GPs to expand recruitment avenues. The ALSPAC Clinic Team has generated a substantial impact both regionally and to the wider research community.



“Children of the 90s is a highly successful portfolio study that has a positive impact on the international research community.”

Partnership with Industry

By partnering with industry, we are able to provide our patients with earlier access to cutting-edge treatments, offering hope and opportunity. Commercial research also provides significant economic benefits for the NHS. Research is seen as critical to global recovery in the wake of the pandemic, most recently highlighted in the O'Shaughnessy review of commercial clinical trials in the UK

This award recognises those at site level who have gone above and beyond in delivering commercial studies and supporting effective partnerships with industry.

Women's and Children's Divisional Research Unit University Hospitals Bristol and Weston



The Women's and Children's team's drive to shape protocols to ensure they are both deliverable and patient focused has broadened the range of opportunities available to patients in the division. The team's collaboration with industry currently means there are 14 commercial trials open to recruitment across 7 different clinical specialities. This is important as industry studies often allow the team to deliver innovative treatments that aren't otherwise available for children across the South West.

In the last year, their successful collaboration has allowed the first ATIMP (Advanced Therapy Investigational Medicinal Products) study in Bristol Royal Hospital for Children (BRHC) to open. There were initial challenges to practically deliver the study in the NHS with a non-UK partner, but the team's creative thinking and diligent hard work to get the study running has meant that patients have benefited from the opportunity to participate.

“ The team's dedication to working in partnership with industry has seen them think creatively to ensure research opportunities are available to women and children. ”

Helen Saldanha BHOC CTU Performance and Operations Manager, University Hospitals Bristol and Weston



“ She represents an excellent example of how an individual can work effectively with industry sponsors to enable cutting-edge treatments to be offered to patients as a NHS treatment choice. ”

Leading on the delivery of advanced studies in haematology at the Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre (BHOC) Clinical Trials Unit (CTU), Helen has demonstrated tireless dedication to developing strong partnerships with commercial trial sponsors. Helen uses her experience in Industry to build collaborative relationships, navigating the detail of protocols with strong, proactive lines of communication across the team.

Her approach to study management and professional communication style was particularly valuable during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the CTU was heavily impacted by case-load backlogs and limited capacity across the team. While acting as an ambassador for both the CTU and UHBW, Helen has offered guidance, support, and collaboration, and her leadership has driven an ethos of improving quality for the benefit of patients.

Dr David Cottrell and Bristol & Avon Multiple Sclerosis Centre Team North Bristol Trust

“ The team have a long history of working effectively with the pharmaceutical industry to engage patients in clinical trials for the treatment of multiple sclerosis as a NHS treatment choice. ”

Over the last 15 years, the team has been running commercial clinical trials with pharmaceutical companies, with some of them lasting over 10 years. Their ability to establish and maintain these partnerships has not only advanced the field of multiple sclerosis (MS) research but has also contributed to the development of new therapies, some of which have been incorporated into NICE guidelines.

The team's proactive fundraising efforts, including co-founding a charity, Bristol and Avon Multiple Sclerosis Centre (BrAMS), and securing substantial grants from pharmaceutical companies, have played a pivotal role in funding infrastructure and specialised staff such as physiotherapists, psychologists, MS nurses, and specialty doctors. This ability to secure vital resources showcases their commitment to supporting commercial studies and their dedication to enhancing the capabilities of their research centre, a testament to their excellence in partnership with the industry.

Rising star: teams and sites

This category recognises teams and sites who are breaking new ground, starting from more infant foundations, and going on to develop their local capacity and capability in ways that demonstrate early success.

We had originally grouped individuals, teams and sites together in one category, but have chosen to split the award to recognise the diversity of nominations that we received!

Phoenix Health Group Cirencester



In the 5 years that Phoenix Health Group has been research active they have developed to ensure research is embedded as part of the culture of the practice. This focus has been led by Helen and Naomi, who felt not delivering research was a missed opportunity for both the practice and the patients. Now the wider practice team, including physiotherapists, paramedics and reception staff, often gets involved in delivering studies and supporting patients. This impact is especially important given the semi-rural location of the practice, meaning patients don't have to travel to big cities to take part in research.

Since the start of their journey, the practice has increased from one to two sites, delivering more and more studies. The practice has also recently delivered their first commercial study which has given them confidence to do more. Phoenix Health Group has continued to grow as they champion research activity in Primary Care.

“ They are an inspiration as to what can be achieved in Gloucestershire Primary Care. ”

Dr Polly Duncan and Dr Ruth Mears Clinical Research Fellows, University of Bristol



Polly and Ruth have shown exceptional leadership and made significant contributions to the AvonCAP GP2 study. As early career academic GPs, they have demonstrated remarkable dedication in designing and overseeing the study. Their collaboration with a diverse team of over 30 professionals and coordination of data collection from multiple sites showcase their impressive organisational skills. Their efforts to support the team has led to over 1,000 research visits being conducted and nearly 80% of all eligible patients being contacted.



Their commitment to inclusion, exemplified by efforts to engage under-served patient groups and ensure the study is accessible, further underscores their dedication to impactful research. Polly and Ruth have overcome a steep learning curve to lead a big study at an early stage of their research careers, but their ability to navigate challenges has led to huge contributions to Primary Care research.

“ Polly and Ruth have overcome challenges to design a study that is accessible and doesn't place a burden on GP practices. ”

Streamside Research Team Thornbury



Streamside's nomination is a testament to their remarkable achievements and contributions over the past year. Led by Ellissia (pictured) and Emma, the research team has demonstrated exceptional effectiveness and autonomy in implementing various research studies. Their pivotal role in being the highest recruiting practice for RAPID-TEST and consistently excelling in recruitment to ATHENA, despite being one of the smallest practices in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, underscores their dedication and impact.

Beyond recruitment, Streamside's influence extends to governance, ensuring GCP training for GPs, and fostering a culture where research becomes ingrained in the practice's identity. Bringing the whole team on board has meant the surgery is able to offer more studies to patients than they could previously. Their innovative methods and whole-team approach have transformed Streamside, making research an integral and seamless part of their operations.

“ It's changing the culture so that research is part of how we do things. ”

Rising star: individual

Our Rising Star award recognises colleagues in the earlier stages of their research career who are already making positive changes and significant contributions to research delivery.

This is one of the most hotly contested of all the award categories and it was inspiring to hear about the difference that our talented colleagues make across the region. We've a bright future ahead!

Katrina Stallard

Clinical Research Practitioner, Weston General Hospital, University Hospitals Bristol and Weston



Even before joining the research team, Katrina played a pivotal role in launching the SIREN study during the COVID-19 pandemic, coordinating appointments and supporting trial participants in her administrative role at Weston General Hospital. Since joining the research team in 2022, Katrina has continued to go above and beyond as a trial coordinator and research nursing assistant. She has not only raised awareness of research within the hospital but has also fostered a sense of collaboration that is truly inspiring.

Her versatility, exemplified by her advocacy for patients and effective team collaboration, defines her as a true rising star. This distinction is further highlighted by her recent appointment as Weston's first Clinical Research Practitioner, solidifying her status as an early-career trailblazer with a promising future ahead.

“ She supports all of us both professionally and informally and I can honestly say that I don't know what we would do without her. ”

Laura McCafferty

Clinical Research Practitioner, Great Western Hospitals



Laura has shown exceptional commitment and growth in her role as a Clinical Research Assistant Practitioner at Great Western Hospitals. Beginning as a Band 3 research assistant, she has progressed through her determination to acquire new skills, resulting in multiple promotions to her current role. Laura has been extremely proactive in pursuit of professional development, including being one of the first in the region to be accepted through the experienced practitioner non-degree CRP registration pathway.

As a role model, she fosters research integration across all levels, offering creative solutions and displaying outstanding participant care through effective communication and adaptability. Laura quickly builds positive relationships, improving accessibility and making it easy for others to get involved in research. Laura's strategic thinking and positive impact on the team make her a true rising star.

“ Laura's ideas often get implemented as best practice as she proves they work. We can all learn a lot from Laura. ”

Louise Staddon

Senior Research Nurse (Respiratory), North Bristol Trust



Louise seamlessly transitioned into the role of team lead for the respiratory research team, demonstrating exceptional leadership during a challenging period of reduced staffing. Louise initially took up this role as a job share with a colleague, which highlights her versatility and commitment to team success. Her caring nature maintained staff morale, resulting in remarkable team achievements.

Over her 5 years in research, Louise's consistent support and generosity of knowledge have made her invaluable. Despite her demanding workload, she treats all team members with equal respect and kindness. Her effective communication clarifies goals and contributions, while her calm approach and problem-solving skills prevail during crises. Louise's dedication to the team's wellbeing and her ability to balance workloads make her an exceptional colleague and leader.

“ When you work with her you know you are being heard, treated fairly and given long-term support in whatever direction is needed. ”



Continuous improvement

We strive for a culture of continuous improvement (CI), seeking to identify and implement changes for the benefit of our participants, our sponsors and everyone involved in research delivery. The world constantly changes around us and it's important that we're able to evolve and adapt.

This award recognises an individual or team who has initiated improvement to a process or way of working, in fulfilment of continuous improvement.

Multi-Specialty Research Team Gloucestershire Hospitals



The Multi-Specialty Research Team (MSRT) have demonstrated exemplary efforts in fostering a culture of quality improvement within their team and department. Over the past year, the MSRT have formalised their continuous improvement process through actively involving all team members, regardless of their roles, creating a space where every member of our team contributes their unique perspective and ideas. They have demonstrated inclusion and the ability to leverage the collective wisdom to identify, prioritise, and address improvement areas.

Their proactive approach, which extends beyond their own team to encompass the entire R&D department, underscores their commitment to sustainable change. The team's utilisation of the Quality Improvement Academy, the completion of training courses, and their focus on embedding continuous improvement principles all contribute to their recognition for this award.

“ Our journey has been fueled by the belief that improvement is a continuous path, and through shared efforts, we're forging a brighter and more efficient future for all. ”

Emergency and Critical Care Research Team North Bristol Trust



“ It's been a new way of working and at each change or challenge, we have adapted and taken it on. ”

The team has shown outstanding adaptability over the last year by expanding to a 7-day service, doubling their team size, and ensuring research accessibility to patients throughout the week. Despite the challenges posed by the diverse clinical settings, they not only integrated the new team members seamlessly but also nurtured their growth into independent contributors.

Their commitment to inclusion and patient care is evident through their collaborative approach, constant communication, and supportive follow-up, making a meaningful impact on both research and patient experience. The team are always looking for ways to improve their service, be it with the Learning Disabilities team or by participating in national and specialty conferences, sharing experiences and learning from peers.

Donna Noonan Head of Research & Innovation, Great Western Hospitals



Upon joining the team at GWH just over a year ago, Donna took the time to thoroughly understand the existing processes and dynamics before implementing changes. She fostered collaboration and accountability at all levels, setting up crucial oversight mechanisms within the hospital and aligning the department's goals regionally. This collaborative strategy not only empowered her team but also ensured that changes were driven by consensus and had the most significant impact.

Donna's commitment to strategic development is further underscored by her creation of a research group to report to the Trust Board. This initiative showcases her recognition of the need for oversight and accountability, fostering a culture of transparency that enables efficient problem-solving and continuous growth.

“ Donna is a great advocate for supporting her team to personally develop and improve, both for the benefit of the service but also for personal growth. ”

Supporting and developing colleagues

The strength of our network is in our community, and it has been inspiring to hear of all the efforts made by colleagues to support their peers in their personal and professional development and in their wellbeing.

This award recognises both those who have delivered formal initiatives in support of workforce development or wellbeing, as well as those individuals who motivate, inspire and support teams as part of their every day.

Monalisa Bora-White

R&D Manager and Lead Research Practitioner,
Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership



Monalisa embodies passion and energy, inspiring those around her to reach their full potential. She takes a proactive and intuitive approach to understanding individual needs and tailoring support which leads to clinical engagement and enhances the team's performance.

Monalisa's advocacy for wellbeing is evident in her dedication to self-care and her efforts to prevent burnout, engaging the team in various activities. She champions a culture of open dialogue through clinical supervision and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Space, enriching the team's cultural competencies. Monalisa's drive to make research available to all means that she goes above and beyond to support research. Monalisa's impact is evident not just in her leadership but in the positive atmosphere and growth she cultivates within the department.

“ Few people come to mind like Monalisa Bora-White, if asked to consider someone that brings passion and energy to their work, and crucially inspires those around them to do the same. ”

Oliver Griffiths

Lead Clinical Research Education Facilitator,
University Hospitals Bristol and Weston



In the past year, Oliver has built an in-house education program for clinical research staff, implementing initiatives that have proven immensely beneficial to the research delivery teams. He developed induction sessions, competency framework workshops, and a CRP pathway, aiding new staff in understanding research processes and fostering collaboration between teams.

Oliver's hands-on approach involves working closely with individual staff members and teams to provide tailored training plans and practical support, contributing to improved recruitment and retention rates. His collaborative spirit extends beyond UHBW, as he shares resources and best practices with other trusts in the region. His efforts have fostered a more inclusive and supportive research culture, leading to a more cohesive and effective research community.

“ Oli has worked tirelessly and with great enthusiasm to build a tailored in-house education programme for our clinical research staff. ”

Rebecca Cousins

Senior Research Nurse (Urology), North Bristol Trust



Managing a team of four staff members, Rebecca has nurtured a culture of growth, empowerment, and open communication. She is deeply committed to her team's wellbeing, offering a safe space for discussions, coaching, and development. Rebecca's unique approach involves individually connecting with her team members, identifying their aspirations, and tailoring opportunities to suit their needs. Through her tireless dedication to fostering collaboration, cross-covering responsibilities, and encouraging open dialogue, she has built a team that excels.

Beyond her team, Rebecca's involvement in the Association for Continence Professionals showcases her commitment to pushing the boundaries of research in areas like gender affirmation surgery and destigmatising incontinence. Rebecca's strategic networking and passion for diverse research reflect her exceptional management style.

“ Becky is by far the most supportive manager I have ever had. She is motivated, with an infectious enthusiasm for research, and dedicates herself entirely to her role. ”

CRN LSRL of the year

The CRN works across 31 specialties, each of which is supported by one or more Local Specialty Research Leads (LSRLs) who offer clinical expertise and input and bring together a community of similarly interested colleagues across the region. This award recognises some of those working within this role.

Dr Amanda Hall, LSRL Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) University Hospitals Bristol and Weston



Outside of specialist centres, there are a limited number of ENT studies available. Amanda has worked to raise the profile of the West of England as an attractive place to carry out ENT research. Her proactive leadership has led to the growth of this portfolio, fostering collaboration and engagement with enthusiastic clinicians.

Amanda's dedication is evident in her successful efforts to secure CRN development funding bids, promoting research capacity in the region. She has facilitated meaningful interactions among research colleagues, through the initiation of regional meetings, demonstrating her commitment to knowledge sharing and a collaborative approach. Amanda's remarkable passion, leadership, and achievements have significantly elevated the profile of ENT and audiology research.

“ Amanda is proactive and shows such passion in the way she reaches out to trainees so that they champion research with their peers. She is paving the way for this area of research! ”

Dr Claire Newton, LSRL Cancer University Hospitals Bristol and Weston

Through her LSRL role, Claire has led on a project to assess the cancer surgery research portfolio in the West of England and evaluate it in comparison to other regions, with the aim of increasing the delivery of studies in this specialty. This commitment to ensuring access to a broad range of cancer studies is also evident in the number of gynecologic oncology trials she has opened and recruited to - leading cancer by example.

She is passionate about supporting others and regularly encourages nurses to work on studies with her. Claire's hard work and dedication demonstrates an unshaking commitment to the delivery of a broad cancer trial portfolio and the highest quality of care.

“ Claire is a tour de force! She is a role model to all - she has a collaborative can-do approach and always works with a sense of humour. ”

Dr Emily Henderson, LSRL Ageing Royal United Hospitals Bath



Since 2017, Emily has led the West of England LCRN Ageing portfolio and community to impressive accomplishments. She has increased the number of studies on the portfolio eight-fold, taking the region from the lowest number of studies to the third highest. She has also led the largest ever UK CTIMP (Clinical Trial of an Investigational Medicinal Product) into Parkinson's, successfully recruiting 600 participants in 39 centres. Her innovative approach to recruitment increased the number of participants from under-served groups, trialling remote consent processes and visits carried out in individual's homes where they were too frail to travel.

Emily is a proactive enabler and supporter of PIs and Associate PIs, supporting them to develop leadership and delivery skills through CHIEF-PD as well as supporting them to recruit to studies.

“ Emily has led on increasing the number of ageing studies being delivered in the West of England, taking the CRN from having the lowest number of studies to being the third highest. ”

Dr Caoimhe Fahy, LSRL Dermatology and Divisional Research Lead, Division 3, Royal United Hospitals Bath



Caoimhe's nomination for this award is fitting due to her proactive role in planning regional dermatology research events, where she excels as a knowledgeable and enthusiastic host, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Her commitment to the Cinapsis project, which aims to add consent to contact about research to teledermatology referral forms, demonstrates her resilience and determination.

Caoimhe's ability to navigate obstacles with unwavering positivity and maintain progress highlights her exceptional problem-solving skills and dedication to healthcare innovation. Her approachability, professionalism, and consistent contributions to CRN work emphasise her role as a proactive leader.

“ Caoimhe is an inspirational leader whose commitment and positivity makes her dependable, approachable and a real pleasure to work with. ”

Embedding research in health and care

Our vision is that research is an integral part of health and care for all, with patients, the public and health and care professionals all able to readily access research opportunities as part of their health and care experience.

This award recognises individuals and teams who are bridging health and care practice and research, enthusing and engaging colleagues to help them be part of research delivery.

Trainee Emergency Research Network



“ This unique recruitment approach resulted in one of the quickest and most successful recruitment periods we have seen in Trauma and Emergency Care. ”

The Trainee Emergency Research Network (TERN) took an innovative and adaptive approach to recruiting to the ACS:ED study, a study which aimed to understand how chest pain of a suspected cardiac origin is investigated in the Emergency Department. Sponsored by North Bristol Trust and supported by Prof Edd Carlton, this study provided a valuable opportunity for early career researchers to engage in research and lead a large multi-site study.

By allowing participating sites to select their own 7-day recruitment window within a 6-week period, the team demonstrated a deep understanding of the challenges posed by the clinical setting. The team engaged with a broad range of staff groups, including nurses, ambulance staff and trainees, providing training sessions and easy-to-use tools to ensure that individuals without extensive research backgrounds could actively contribute to the study. This meant that everybody could deliver the study safely, allowing for good coverage out of hours. This led to over 7,000 participants being recruited from 94 emergency departments.

Dr Sharon Grieve

Research Engagement Lead, Royal United Hospitals Bath



“ She uses this knowledge and her leadership skills to influence change across the organisation and to support peers and colleagues to get involved in research, at many different levels. ”

Sharon has worked hard to promote and generate a culture of research across Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH), engaging both staff members and community partners by creating a local “research network” that is open to all. Members, who are provided with training and development opportunities, have fed back on the difference the support has made to their confidence and ability to get involved in research. Sharon also established the Clinical Research Link programme at the Trust, including the creation of a forum to provide peer support and training opportunities. This programme further supports the integration of research and clinical care. Her dedication to mentoring, nurturing, and empowering her colleagues reflects her genuine passion for advancing research and evidence-based practices.

Sharon’s leadership and commitment have ignited a culture of continuous improvement, evidencing her profound impact on elevating research engagement and fostering collaboration across the RUH community.

Dr Edward Mann

Lead Doctor for Research, Tyntesfield Medical Group



Ed has integrated research into Primary Care through his pioneering approach of user-friendly EMIS prompts and streamlined study links which facilitate effortless patient referrals into trials. By simplifying the process, Ed has empowered all practice staff to actively contribute to research, enabling a wider range of patients to participate. This innovation not only showcases his commitment to inclusion but also demonstrates his strategic vision in leveraging technology for the betterment of healthcare. His consistent participation in clinical meetings has nurtured a research-driven ethos across the practice, culminating in the successful execution of various studies.

Ed’s unwavering dedication, meticulous attention to detail, and collaborative leadership have solidified his role as an essential catalyst in Tyntesfield Medical Group’s accomplishments.

“ A highly dedicated and motivated clinician whose attention to detail ensures that, not only do our patients have access to research studies, they are safely supported and reassured throughout the process. ”



Collaboration in research

Effective and participant-oriented health research relies on collaboration, bringing together people across roles, professions and organisations in pursuit of a shared goal. This award recognises individuals, teams or sites who have come together and made a significant impact, with those involved contributing their combined skill sets to great effect.

This category has been kindly sponsored by EDGE, an award winning global clinical research management system, developed by the Clinical Informatics Research Unit at the University of Southampton.



We've been a proud partner of EDGE for over 10 years, funding access to the platform for our Partner Organisations and allowing them to manage their research data in real-time.

We're very grateful to EDGE for supporting this important award!

Concord Medical Centre Research Team Bristol



The Concord Medical Centre Research team's efforts to be visible and accessible to teams both inside and outside of the practice, and fostering collaboration across clinical settings has resulted in over 1,300 patients being recruited to research last year. The practice has gone to great lengths to integrate external teams seamlessly into their operations. Their collaborative spirit is evident in their partnerships with the University of Bristol, where they provided resources, support, and inductions to ensure successful integration.

Concord Medical Centre's approach extends to under-served populations, with collaborations involving Lovell Place Care Home. By working together, Concord and Lovell Place Care Home aim to improve the quality of healthcare for residents and contribute valuable insights to the broader healthcare community. Concord's engagement with care home staff, residents, and families signifies their dedication to inclusion and holistic healthcare research.



“ We are expanding into Social Care, collaborating with Lovell Place Care Home staff, residents & families, to expand research into this under-served population. ”

Gloucestershire RECREATE Study Team Gloucestershire Hospitals and Gloucestershire Health and Care



“ A shining example of how high quality, patient pathway research can be conducted successfully across an integrated care system. ”

As the Integrated Care System looked to grow their research capacity, particularly involving Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Profession colleagues, the RECREATE trial provided an ideal opportunity for collaboration across the system. Underpinned by a shared desire to support staff and patients to engage in the research process, the two trusts worked collaboratively to ensure that both sites were able to contribute to supporting the trial at the relevant stages of the patient journey. This involved close working across the two organisations' multi-disciplinary teams, R&D departments, and dedicated research and clinical teams.

By embodying an ethos of collaboration and team working, team members were able to gain significant development opportunities with the support of the depth of experience available across both organisations. This purposeful collaborative endeavour led to the recruitment of 37 patients and 15 carers, making Gloucestershire the top recruitment site for two months in a row.

HARMONIE Study West of England Regional Team



The HARMONIE team spans across a wide geography of sites in the West of England, including both Primary and Secondary Care teams working together to deliver. Recognising the breadth of collaboration happening across a significant number of sites, the HARMONIE Regional Coordinator role was developed to facilitate rapid set-up and recruitment, and to enable collaboration across all sites and teams in the region. Underpinning all activity was the team's tireless drive to deliver high quality research whilst offering study participants a safe and positive experience.

The regional team's commitment to collaboration, driven by their shared goals, resilience and creative problem solving, has meant that they were particularly successful in recruitment over a 6 month period, with fantastic performance across both Primary and Secondary Care, setting the West of England apart from other regions.

“ The team worked as one to inspire and motivate one another, with a lovely ambiance and sense of fun whenever we met, so that relationships have been created and can continue into future collaborative research ventures. ”

The CRN West of England

The NIHR Clinical Research Network supports patients, the public and health and care professionals and organisations across England to participate in high-quality research, thereby advancing knowledge and improving care.

In the West of England, we support partner organisations across the three Integrated Care regions of: Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire; Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and north Wiltshire; and Gloucestershire.

We fund or part-fund over 800 staff, distributing around £15.9m of NIHR funding each year. Across 2022/23 this meant that 84,477 participants were able to take part in one of the 643 studies delivered across 193 sites in the West of England.



Our mission:

To improve the health and wealth of the nation through research delivery

Our vision:

Research is an integral part of health and care for all



How we achieve our vision



Delivering people-centred research: We provide opportunities for people to participate in research that meets the needs of our local populations, ensuring equity of access to opportunities across people, geography, speciality and setting.



Supporting and developing our research workforce: We attract, develop and support a research workforce that delivers high-quality health and care research.



Embedding research into health and care: We strive to embed research as an everyday part of health and care practice through engaging and supporting health and care professionals, organisations and the public.



Fostering an effective and sustainable research delivery infrastructure: We foster and grow an effective, sustainable and agile research delivery infrastructure that meets both current and future needs.



Collaborating across the health and care system: We collaborate with a wide range of partners, working across traditional boundaries, to shape a cohesive and internationally competitive research system.

The celebration doesn't stop here!

Our awards are just one of the ways that we can celebrate our hard work.



Share your good news!

Have you done something new? Have you overcome challenges to deliver a particular study? We'd love to hear about it!

As part of a network, we're able to learn from each other when we showcase our innovations and successes. Please contact our Communications Team if you have a story to share about a study or project you've worked on. We're also keen to showcase and champion careers in research, so please also get in touch if you have an interesting story to share about your role or your career journey.



Tell us about your EU and Global Firsts!

If your site has been the first to recruit a participant into a study within either Europe or the world, please let our Industry Team know. You'll receive a certificate to recognise your achievement, and we will share your success across the national network too.



Gift your participants a voice!

We're always on the look out for enthusiastic participants who are willing to share their experience of taking part in research. We're particularly keen to showcase stories of those members of the public who are typically under-served by research; visibility is important in promoting that research is for everyone.

Our Research Champions initiative is a great way for people to meet and connect with others who are passionate about research and work together to raise awareness of the benefits of taking part in a study.

Please connect with our Engagement Team if you know someone who might be interested.

Show your gratitude to your colleagues!

We all love hearing positive words when we've made a difference, especially when we've gone out of our way.

Why not take the time to recognise and say "thank you" to colleagues you work with? Psychological studies show that expressing gratitude can even make us happier too!

You can also look out for initiatives to showcase your own work and your colleagues, such as through local Trust awards and national award schemes. Our Workforce Development Team are always happy to help you draft a (hopefully award-winning!) nomination.

When sharing good feedback with a colleague:



Be specific: Mention what the person did and when they did it - make sure to highlight specific details. It can be helpful to give the feedback sooner rather than later while it's still fresh in their mind - and before you forget!



What was the impact? Tell them about the difference it made. How did it make you or others feel? Did a participant say something nice? Has it changed the way that you work or inspired an idea? Explain why it matters.

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NIHR CRN West of England

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and Weston NHS Foundation Trust*

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