

Local Specialty Research Lead

Role Description

Local Specialty Research Leads (LSRLs) play a key leadership role in the on-going development and performance of the Local Clinical Research Networks, providing research leadership, advice and accountability for activities and research delivery relevant to their specialty.

LSRLs act as the regional lead for their research specialty, engaging with health and care professionals across the region, and identifying and acting on ways to build upon local strengths, research interests and priorities. LSRLs also work closely with a local Research Delivery Manager to provide professional expertise and perspectives on the delivery of studies and the continued development of local research infrastructure.

Working as part of a national network, LSRLs provide the vital link between the local, geographically based networks (LCRNs) and national networks of specialty-specific expertise. This includes contributing to national strategies and initiatives within the research specialty.

The LSRL role is supported by a named Research Delivery Manager and a Portfolio Facilitator, and forms part of a community of Local Specialty Research Leads, led by a local Divisional Research Lead. LSRLs also benefit from support from the National Specialty Group, which is made up of equivalent post-holders in other regions.

Time commitment:

0.5PAs per week or 0.05wte

Tenure:

Until 31 March 2024

Employed by:

Your current employing organisation with reimbursement of time and travel expenses enabled through the CRN.

Remuneration:

Pro-rata based on existing salary with your current employer.

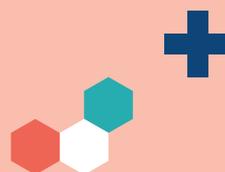
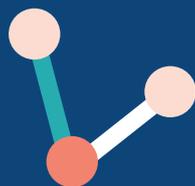
Accountable to:

Divisional Research Lead

How to apply

Please submit a cover letter and CV outlining how you meet the role specification to:
westengland@nihr.ac.uk

Your application will require support from your current employer. Before applying, we encourage you to have a prior discussion with your service manager to determine if they can accommodate time in your workload or Job Plan and that they are willing to put in place the necessary arrangements to allow you to take on this role.



About the Clinical Research Network

National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)

Our mission is to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research.

Funded by the Department of Health and Social Care, the NIHR is a large, multi-faceted and nationally distributed organisation. Together, the NIHR people, programmes, centres of excellence, and systems represent the most integrated health research system in the world.

Clinical Research Network (CRN)

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

The CRN is comprised of 15 Local Clinical Research Networks and 31 Specialties who coordinate and support the delivery of high-quality research both by geography and therapy area. National leadership and coordination is provided through the CRN Coordinating Centre.

The CRN enables high-quality health and care research in England by meeting the costs of additional staff, facilities, equipment and support services so that research is not subsidised with funding provided for health and care treatments and service. The CRN also provides a range of resources and activities designed to support health and care organisations, staff, patients and service users to be research active. These include specialist training, information systems to manage and report research, patient and public involvement opportunities and engagement initiatives, and communications expertise.

Delivering studies 'to plan' - meaning within the planned timescale and with the right number of participants to make the results meaningful - is of critical importance, which is why the CRN provides the Study Support Service. This helps researchers and the life sciences industry plan, set up and deliver high-quality research in both the NHS and across the wider health and social care environment.

2021/22 in the CRN West of England:

84,691

participants taking part in health and care research

598

studies

271

research-active sites

800+

research staff funded or part-funded



CRN West of England

The CRN West of England (CRN WE) is hosted by University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW), and coordinates and supports health and care research across the West of England: Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset; Bath and North East Somerset; northern Wiltshire and Swindon; and Gloucestershire. We facilitate commercial and non-commercial research across a broad range of settings, including acute, community and mental health NHS trusts, GP practices, local authorities, care homes, hospices, and schools.

Our Local Specialty Research Leads cover thirty-one specialties:

- Ageing
- Anaesthesia, Perioperative Medicine and Pain Management
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Children and Young People
- Critical Care
- Dementias and Neurodegeneration
- Dermatology
- Diabetes
- Ear, Nose and Throat
- Gastroenterology
- Genomics and Rare Diseases
- Haematology
- Health Services Research
- Infection
- Kidney and Urinary Tract Disorders
- Liver
- Mental Health
- Metabolic and Endocrine Disorders
- Musculoskeletal Disorders
- Neurological Disorders
- Ophthalmology
- Oral and Dental Health
- Primary Care
- Public Health and Prevention
- Reproductive Health
- Respiratory Disorders
- Social Care
- Stroke
- Surgery
- Trauma and Emergency Care

Main duties and responsibilities

Local Specialty Research Leads are expected to engage with the local research community, LCRN leadership and national specialty leadership to advise on and fulfil local and national specialty objectives, and to support the LCRN in its pursuit of its core objectives, with particular reference to the annual High Level Objectives.

Working with the local research community

Engage with local research communities within the relevant specialty to:

- Support the timely and effective delivery of all studies on the CRN Portfolio. This will include identifying and sharing best practice, supporting problem-solving, and facilitating communities of practice where appropriate.
- Proactively promote engagement with and awareness of research within the specialty, providing advice, support, encouragement and mentorship to health and care professionals who express an interest in becoming involved in research.
- Work with and support NHS and/or relevant health and social care organisations (e.g. local authorities, care providers) to maximise their involvement in CRN Portfolio studies, with particular reference to industry studies.
- Work with local investigators, delivery teams, and NHS and health and social care organisations to agree and report on the objectives and targets for the specialty in order to contribute to LCRN performance over the annual planning cycle.

Working with local leadership

Provide specialty leadership, advice and accountability to the LCRN Senior Leadership Team and Research Delivery Manager, including:

- Agreeing and reporting on the objectives and targets for the specialty in order to contribute to LCRN performance over the annual planning cycle.
- Identifying local strengths, capacity and capability to ensure that the continued development of the local portfolio maximises people-focussed research opportunities for patients and members of the public across all sectors of the LCRN population.
- Providing a strategic overview of the local infrastructure required to support the research specialty with an emphasis on identifying and addressing local blocks to successful delivery, referring issues to national specialty leadership as appropriate.
- Maintaining regular and timely communication with the supporting Research Delivery Manager and the Divisional Research Lead.
- Supporting the development of new ways of working that will increase the integration of health research and patient and/or service user care, and improve the quality, speed and coordination of research.
- Helping to develop local research capacity for the specialty through actively seeking new opportunities for contributing to national multicentre studies and identifying local opportunities to expand expertise/experience

across the West of England, including identifying and acting on opportunities to engage with new sites, and under-served populations and under-represented health and care professions

- Working with the Research Delivery Manager to undertake local feasibility assessments and reviews for commercial studies, including identifying potential sites/investigators that could conduct the study, assessing the available research resources including skills, facilities and equipment and providing robust recruitment goals.
- Advising on the identification, development and delivery of CRN initiatives, including topics relevant to workforce development, public and community engagement, and equity, diversity and inclusion.

Collaborate across organisational and regional boundaries, including:

- Developing effective partnerships with local NIHR infrastructure and system research organisations, such as the Academic Health Science Network and NIHR Applied Research Collaboration.
- Working closely with neighbouring LCRNs to remove artificial barriers to participation in NIHR CRN Portfolio studies.

Working with national leadership

Provide local intelligence to the national NIHR CRN Specialty Leadership, including:

- pressures/issues relating to the delivery of the portfolio;
- examples of good practice and positive impact in their locality;
- locally-led studies that are open to recruitment at new sites;

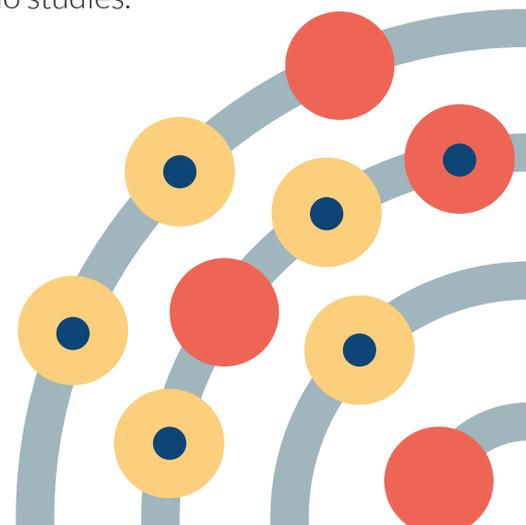
- emerging specialty needs;
- under-represented patient and participant populations.

Be an active member of the National Specialty Group, including:

- attending national meetings.
- contributing to national initiatives led by the national Specialty Group.
- where appropriate to the specialty, taking a national leadership role for part of the specialty's national portfolio or for some specific studies.
- contributing to national CRN initiatives, in particular developing and sharing best practice.
- engaging with NIHR Faculty including Senior Investigators.

General responsibilities

- Champion and promote NIHR CRN activity and the aims, objectives and successes of the NIHR throughout the West of England and represent the CRN at local, regional and national meetings.
- Keep up to date with changes to national and local health and care arrangements in order to advise the LCRN on new potential opportunities and/or challenges to the delivery of CRN Portfolio studies.



Person specification

Local Specialty Research Leads must be facilitative, able to work flexibly and effectively in a developing organisation, and to motivate and support others to deliver measurable results that make the NIHR CRN vision a reality.

It is essential that candidates demonstrate their achievements, ability and expertise against the following criteria:

- A motivational leader with well-developed interpersonal skills and the ability to work with stakeholders at all levels.
- An effective facilitator who is able to bring colleagues together to work in a collegiate way for the overall benefit of the local community in which they work.
- Excellent communication and presentational skills with the enthusiasm to act as a “champion” for health and care research.
- The influencing skills to achieve results through other people.
- Strongly committed to bringing benefits to patients and the public through the delivery of excellent people-focussed health and care research within the NHS and/or other health and care settings.
- Experience of undertaking research in the NHS and/or other health and care settings.
- Ability to contribute constructively in meetings and appreciate both national and local aspects with a willingness to lead initiatives at both these levels
- A commitment to inclusion and to the pursuit

of equity of access to research for local populations and health and care organisations .

For more established research specialties, it is expected, but not mandated, that the LSRL will:

- Have experience as an investigator leading a multi-centre health and care research study.
- Be actively participating in the recruitment to at least one NIHR Portfolio research study.

The LSRL role is flexible in its time commitment and excellent specialty leadership relies on timely and reliable communication between LSRL and Research Delivery Manager. There will be a number of regular commitments, such as meetings with the supporting Research Delivery Manager, National Specialty Group Meetings and any events and fora with regional research communities.



It is important that our leadership represents the diversity of regions, communities, professions and specialisms that we serve. The NIHR is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in terms of the people who lead, deliver and are involved in our research.

If you are curious about this role - even if you don't meet all of the criteria - we'd love to hear from you and would welcome an informal discussion about your interest and ideas.

Email us at westengland@nihr.ac.uk and we will connect you with an appropriate member of our team.

Benefits of being a Local Specialty Research Lead

- The opportunity to shape the direction of research delivery within your specialty at a regional and national level.
- Networking opportunities with research leaders across England.
- Networking opportunities with regional research leaders, collaborating across organisations, specialties and settings.
- Making a meaningful difference in bringing research opportunities to the public, ensuring equity of access and reaching under-served populations.
- Playing a collegial role in supporting the work and development of health and care professionals, including students, trainees and those new to research.
- The opportunity to develop an in-depth understanding of the NIHR research delivery infrastructure.
- Acting as a high-profile ambassador for an organisation with a world-leading reputation for innovation and achievement in the field and health and care research delivery.



Dr Matt Houghton
*LSRL for Primary Care and
Division 5 Research Lead*

As Local Specialty Research Lead, I have the opportunity to influence research and research resources across our local area as well as nationally with colleagues across the other fourteen regions.

This role requires recognition of different research delivery methods that practices use, as well as the many pressures that practices have experienced during the pandemic and continue to be under. Research in Primary Care does not happen overnight and requires continued practice focus and enthusiasm for team development. I have learnt a lot from other practices and been inspired by the energy of practice research teams.

The Local Specialty Research Lead is a fantastic opportunity to drive research forward across the region. It has been particularly fulfilling to develop more early career researchers, including new Principal Investigators (PIs) and Associate PIs.

The ability to be involved in increasing the multi-professional access to free PI training, seeing the impact of our objective to increase adolescents taking part in clinical trials and addressing equity in access to research has been a huge privilege. Working with the team at the West of England CRN is another highlight, particularly their can-do and collaborative culture.



Dr Helen Winter
*LSRL for Cancer Research and
Division 1 Research Lead*

NIHR CRN West of England

*Hosted by University Hospitals Bristol
and Weston NHS Foundation Trust*

w: www.nihr.ac.uk/westengland

e: westengland@nihr.ac.uk

t: [@CRNWestEngland](https://twitter.com/CRNWestEngland)