

## Research Strategy– *Supportive Oncology Research*

### *Enhancing patient experience and outcome through research opportunity and innovation for all patients and all staff*

#### Introduction

Developing a research-active culture can bring a host of benefits for patients, clinicians and the NHS, driving innovation, giving rise to better and more cost-effective treatments, and creating opportunities for staff development.



#### National context

The NHS Constitution commits to innovation and to the promotion and conduct of research to improve the current and future health and care of the population.

The Trust is part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) which has a vision "To improve the health and wealth of the nation through research".

NHS policy frameworks and guidelines place a duty on the Trust to protect and exploit innovation / intellectual property for the benefit of patients and the wider health care community.

#### Key contacts for further information

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#### Local perspective

Our vision is *to be amongst the best*

The Trust has four hospital sites. Three of these, the Lister, new QEII and Hertford County provide a large acute secondary care service to a population of 600,000. In addition there is a sub-regional Renal Unit which provides Renal Services to 1.4 million people in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Essex.

The Trust also manages the internationally recognised Mount Vernon Cancer Centre (MVCC) which provides a tertiary service for a population of over 2,000,000.



The Trust has a long history of being research active with particular strengths in Cancer, Renal, Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes.

The research activity at the Trust is a mixture of studies which staff have gained through external funding via grants, studies that are commercially-funded and also participation of studies funded via national and local charities.

The Trust is a member of the **National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)**, fully supports the Health Research Authority and is committed to fully implementing the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research.

**3,008** **Research Participants**  
**in 2017/8**  
(Includes 2,859 NIHR study participants)

## The Trust's Research Strategy 2016-2019

<b>The Trust to be an internationally recognised Centre of Excellence for research and patient outcome</b>		
<b>Research is embedded into the planning and delivery of routine patient care for all patients</b>	<b>Enhancing patient experience and outcome by offering research opportunity and innovation for all patients and all staff</b>	<b>Patients and public to be engaged with, participate in, and benefit from research and innovation</b>
<b>Research is well governed, managed and supported so studies are delivered, as promised</b>	<b>Research is funded via external grant applications, from Industry and with the support of Charities</b>	

### Supportive Oncology Research Team (SORT) Strategy

We are seeking to ensure future sustainability by further developing and expanding on the work undertaken over previous years. The team undertakes research which enhances patient outcomes and experience, prioritising those activities which matter to our patients and meets their needs throughout their cancer journey.

The team will continue to deliver hosted studies, working with other sites across the UK and within Europe; as well as expanding on the current activities by developing new sponsored research projects.

The governance framework for this strategy will follow internal monitoring and reporting via the Research and Development Board, within their quarterly meetings. A business plan highlighting priorities and timescales for delivery will be developed and implemented.

**Aim 1: To engage and support new staff groups across MVCC, enhancing the profile of SORT activities and increasing the number and scope of research projects.**

*Our ambition is to develop and support 3 MVCC staff as local Research Champions by 2021.*

Our initiatives to achieve this are to:

- Deliver presentations to help other staff groups think about research in their areas.
- Undertake engagement events at staff meetings.
- Work more closely with oncology clinicians developing joint projects involving clinical and supportive care interventions.
- Demystify "research" and to help staff see it as part of normal clinical care: to show that quality improvement tools such as audit, evaluation and research are all part of one continuum.
- Support individuals to develop their research ideas, working with NIHR Research Design Service.
- Attend the MVCC governance meetings to network and promote SORT activities.

**Aim 2: To increase studies undertaken within SORT, and also across MVCC where related to patient experience and outcomes.**

*Our ambition is to submit 5 grant applications for funding by December 2020.*

Our initiatives to achieve this are to:

- Work to identify NIHR projects that could be undertaken here at MVCC, recruiting to trials across the country.
- To increase research projects undertaken within SORT, by submitting funding proposals to NIHR portfolio eligible charities, or other charities where NIHR portfolio adoption could be facilitated.
- Engage across the Trust and attend relevant meetings such as the Patient Experience Group, in order to identify and develop new research projects.
- Internally develop the already rich staff resource within the team, whether through formal educational opportunities/qualification, local Trust leadership and other training opportunities.
- Use roles within new research projects as an opportunity for internal coaching development, encouraging our staff to feel confident in delivering their research project management roles, and empowered to develop their own research project ideas.
- Develop a volunteer research network, to enable increased research activity and also to enable expansion of research related service delivery within the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre.

**Aim 3: To develop a structured framework for patient and carer involvement both generically across SORT activities and also for individual projects as they progress into funding proposals.**

*Our ambition is to ensure that all new internally generated research projects will include 1 or more patient representatives to co-design and jointly apply for funding.*

Our initiatives to achieve this are to:

- Undertake regular patient engagement/feedback within existing patient groups to update them on current SORT activities and to aid identification of new project ideas and research prioritisation.
- Develop a process to include patients as co-applicants in the co-design of individual studies.
- Liaise with CRN Eastern to ensure training is provided as necessary to aid our patients/carers in their co-applicant/co-design role.
- Develop a process to involve patients as research ambassadors, to help engage with wider patient support groups to demystify the "research" environment and feedback to the Supportive Oncology Research Team in order to inform future activities and research priorities.