

# Research Annual Report Newsletter 2021/22



After a challenging couple of years through the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021/22 has resulted in many achievements including the research department restarting its usual business. However, the department continued to contribute enormously to COVID-19 research, as well as vaccine research, and supported the COVID-19 Medicine's Delivery Unit administering COVID-19 treatments to patients deemed extremely clinically vulnerable. These efforts meant new ways of working across disciplines. New ways of working were also required due to staff changes. Of note, the department sadly lost one of its long-standing Lead Research Nurses to cancer – Simon was a central 'cog' in the 'wheel' of research and he is and will continue to be sorely missed.

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# Achievements to celebrate

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## Research performance

Dorset County Hospital has recruited its highest ever number of research participants, ranking 5th in the country amongst small acute Trusts. The Trust also delivered the highest percentage of studies to recruitment time to target for at least the last five years. The [Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 Therapy \(RECOVERY\)](#) trial resulted in treatments that significantly reduced deaths - Dorset County Hospital recruited the highest percentage of possible patients (218 as of 31/03/2022). The [SARS-CoV2 immunity and reinfection evaluation \(SIREN\)](#) study revealed “more information about the effectiveness of vaccines in preventing infection” (130 staff members at Dorset County Hospital). The [Clinical Characterisation Protocol](#) informed the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies - Dorset County Hospital recruited every eligible participant rather than the one in ten target (902 patients).



## Academic

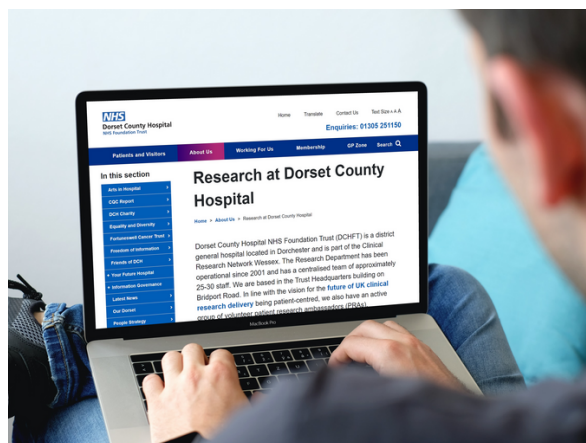
The hospital has similarly been successful in its academic performance. Another National Institute for Health Research Connect grant has been obtained leading to half a dozen Chief Investigators at the Trust. The number of publications affiliated to Dorset County Hospital and therefore raising the profile of research at the hospital increased from 46 in 2020/21 to at least 52: [dchft.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/DCH-Publications-April-2021-March-2022.pdf](https://dchft.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/DCH-Publications-April-2021-March-2022.pdf). In particular, a paper describing the reflections and learnings from the Patient Research Ambassador initiative was published: [doi.org/10.14324/RFA.05.2.16](https://doi.org/10.14324/RFA.05.2.16). Of importance to supporting early career researchers, the number of clinical academic awards/fellowships increased to six – internships from the Applied Research Collaboration Wessex (one in oral health, another in hand therapy, one on pubic rami fractures, and the final one in dementia) along with extensions to the two Clinical Research Fellowships in eye research and kidney research. Related, a successful six-week student placement was hosted in hand rehabilitation. Similarly, PhD studentships continue to be successful, with four currently – one on the social networks of the hospital at home service, two in midwifery, and one recently started on the sex lives of cancer patients. A member of staff also continues to largely self-fund her PhD studies.

## Finance

Income from the Clinical Research Network Wessex was higher than in recent years due to the additional funding available for the managed recovery initiative, sequencing the studies to restart after pausing due to the pandemic. Similarly, the invoiced income was higher than in the previous two years, largely due to contributions to the COVID-19 Vaccine Hub in Bournemouth. Grant funding also increased, largely due to internship funding, some of which is to carry over to 2022/23. Whilst the Trust continues to receive Research Capability Funding of £20,000 for recruiting at least 500 research participants to non-commercial studies through the National Institute for Health Research's Clinical Research Network, costs increased largely due to recruiting to posts that had been vacant in previous years. This meant that the Trust had to continue to contribute to the costs of the research department.

## Promotion and publicity

The website was redesigned and the number of Twitter followers continued to grow to 1400. A number of virtual engagement events were also conducted to raise awareness of research such as to Chairs of Patient Participation Groups etc.



## Looking ahead to 2022/23

Moving forward, there will be an increased focus on income generation through setting up a West Dorset community research hub(s). Indeed, this is one of the six priorities put forward in the research strategy refresh for 2022-25 co-produced with staff (including through the staff networks) and the department's volunteer Patient Research Ambassadors. The other priorities can be seen overleaf along with the department's mission, vision, and objectives, and the four pillars to achieve them.

**We look forward to building on the successes of 2021/22 and working with you all, including closer with our system partners. Thank you for continuing to support research at Dorset County Hospital - let's ensure that as many people as possible have access to research!**

### Vision

**Quality** and **relevant** research to deliver outstanding care for people in ways which **matter to them**

### Mission

Working with our research and health and social care partners, will be at the heart of improving the wellbeing of our communities

### Objectives

1. To deliver **outstanding** relevant research
2. To **integrate** research into services at the Trust
3. To **collaborate** with patients, staff, and research partners
4. To **enable** staff to engage in research
5. To be a **sustainable** department

People

Income

Engagement

Governance

### Priorities

1. Develop departmental **workforce plan**
2. **Service development** increasing focus on **income generation**
3. **Integrate** research into services and **embed** research into the culture
4. Embed **patient and public involvement** as well as **equality, diversity, and inclusion**
5. Increase **digital** and **green** ways of working
6. Measure **impact** of research

# Research Strategy

## Refresh 2022-25

