

Title	Research Strategy
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Author and designation	Lesley Maloney, Trust Community Research Facilitator
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Supporting references	Department of Health, 2005 National Research Strategy – Best Research for Best Health. London Department of Health, 2005, 2 nd edition Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care. London Department of Health, 2010 The NHS Constitution. London UK Clinical Research Network, 2014 What do people think about clinical research. Leeds
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NCH&C Research Strategy

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Abbreviations used in this document

AHSN - Academic Health and Science Networks
CCG - Clinical Commissioning Group
CQC - Care Quality Commission
DH - Department of Health
HEE - Health Education East
KPI - Key Performance Indicator
NHS - National Health Service
NIHR - National Institute for Health Research
CRN - Clinical Research Network
NSPCCRO - Norfolk & Suffolk Primary and Community Care Research Office
UEA - University of East Anglia
RCF - Research Capability Funding

1. Introduction

“The NHS aspires to the highest standards of excellence and professionalismthrough its commitment to innovation and to the promotion, conduct and use of research to improve the current and future health and care of the population”. NHS Constitution (2015)

Conducting research into health and the delivery of healthcare services is vitally important to the NHS because the outcomes can be used to influence the quality of services delivered to patients.

The September 2014 survey by the UK Clinical Research Network showed that 89% of people would be willing to take part in clinical research if they were diagnosed with a medical condition or disease, and 95% of people stated it was important for the NHS to carry out clinical research.

This strategy defines the Trust’s commitment to developing patient research as part of the long term NHS vision for improved health care.

2. Aim of strategy

To demonstrate responsibility and commitment to providing evidence-based services by growing research activity and capability within the Trust, and aligning the Trust research strategy with the needs of local people and the research strategies of NHS England, the NIHR, Clinical Research Networks and commissioners of health and care services.

3. Vision

To build research capacity and capability of the Trust, to promote high-quality evidence-based practice, to enhance patient well-being and continue to embed a progressive research culture of innovation and critical thinking within Trust services.

4. Purpose

This document sets out a 5 year Research strategy for Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust. It is supported by our Trust vision, goals and values to provide leading edge community-based services that are of the highest quality and safety, and support people to lead independent lives.

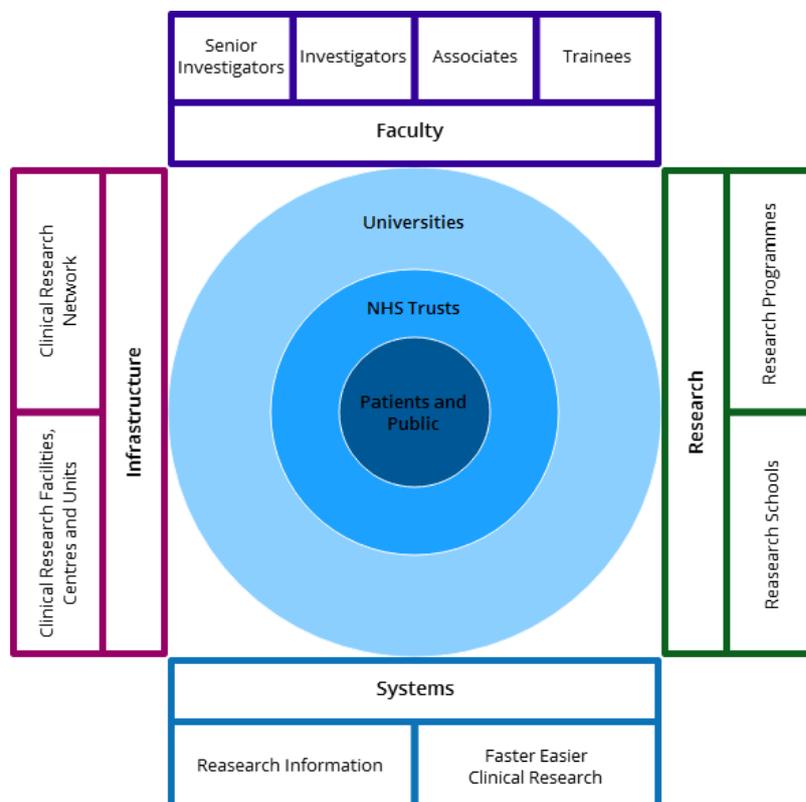
The strategy seeks to ensure high quality research becomes increasingly culturally embedded in all aspects of clinical service delivery, in order to improve healthcare outcomes and contribute knowledge to further improve the provision of evidence-based practice. By widening the opportunity for research participation to our service users and staff alike, we can ensure equity of access

The strategy will support the incorporation of clinical research as part of the core business of the Trust, with regular reporting of research activity to the Trust Research Steering Group and quarterly Key Performance Indicators to the Board

5. National strategic context

- 5.1 The Department of health is committed to evidence-based policy making, relying upon high quality research to inform best practice, in order to deliver improved healthcare outcomes and reduce health inequalities. Research must be embraced as part of core NHS business and not an addendum to clinical service delivery
- 5.2 The establishment of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and the UK Clinical Research Networks by the Department of Health in 2006, represent the driving forces for NHS research. The NIHR has strategic overview and the UKCRN undertakes the operational aspects of NHS research management. The CRN manages the funding which supports sound governance, builds capacity and increases patient recruitment into NIHR Portfolio approved studies.
- 5.3 The NIHR vision is to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research and is the driver for national research initiatives. The Clinical Research Network provides the infrastructure that allows high-quality clinical research to take place in the NHS.

NIHR structure infographic (from NIHR website Feb 2016)



- 5.4 To provide evidence-based services it is necessary to support research into health and care services and support implementation of the findings of research. The Research Innovation Pathway describes the route from research concept to changing patient care (appendix 1).
- 5.5 The NHS in England has a statutory responsibility to promote health and social care research funded by both commercial and non-commercial organisations (NHS Constitution 2013, Health and Social Care Act 2012). The Department of Health mandate to NHS England (Department of Health December 2015) requires them to:

“promote and support participation by NHS organisations and patients in research.... We expect to see NHS England help the NHS to reduce the impact of ill health and disability, ... to enable cost effective, affordable, transformative new treatments to reach patients more quickly.

- 5.6 Currently the 2005 [research governance framework for health and social care](#) and the [governance arrangements for research ethics committees](#), updated in 2012, sets out standards for carrying out research in the NHS. The Framework is under review and a new version is anticipated during 2016.

6. Local strategic context

- 6.1 The Trust is geographically well placed for collaboration with organisations based on the Norwich Research Park; incorporating the University of East Anglia, John Innes centre, Institute of Food Research and Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. A key requirement for building research success is collaboration across all relevant organisations and the Trust is committed to working with other organisations including, NHS Trusts, Clinical Commissioning Groups, charities and other stakeholders to support research ambitions within the area and nationally to cultivate a strong research culture and infrastructure, conducive to high quality research delivery, within the Trust
- 6.2 The Trust recognises innovation; and research is vital in driving innovation and delivering service improvement within our organisation
- 6.3 In line with national initiatives, The Trust must make opportunities to diversify research delivery across all services for growth and sustainability. The local research profile continues to steadily increase, reflecting progress in embedding research into the culture of the organisation.
- 6.4 There are multiple local organisations working to support the development and implementation of the NHS England vision, including but not limited to the Research Design Service, Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLARHC), Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) and Health Enterprise East. It is essential that the Trust is actively involved in all DH and NIHR initiatives locally, ensuring appropriate representation and continued relevance with national context and policy

- 6.5 The Trust is committed to involving service users throughout the research process and actively engage with local patient and public groups and adopt national UKCRN initiatives to involve patients more in research
- 6.6 Locally NIHR CRN Eastern manages the funding which supports sound governance, builds capacity and increases patient recruitment into NIHR Portfolio approved studies and funds staff positions within the Trust to deliver on NIHR metrics. The Trust works across multiple divisions of CRN Eastern and CRN funded staff work across other member organisations to support the delivery of research.
- 6.7 The Trust strongly encourages the formation of research proposals that qualify for adoption on the NIHR Portfolio. By meeting the eligibility criteria for adoption, quality, relevance and importance to the NHS and integrity of the proposal are proven.
- 6.8 Local and national funding and bursary streams are widely publicised to encourage clinicians to develop research ideas.
- 6.9 Supporting a thriving research programme within the Trust requires not only effective partnership working between clinical and corporate Trust areas but also encouraging appropriate research collaborations including academia and industry.
- 6.10 Increasing research outputs requires us to capitalise on existing success, recruiting purposefully in key areas of existing research, whilst acknowledging the importance of identifying and supporting potential areas of growth in research naïve services and populations

7. Research governance

- 7.1 Central to the Trust's ability to grow research is sound research governance.
- 7.2 The Trust is committed to the highest standards of research ethics, research management, safety, confidentiality, data quality, research development and design and research integrity
- 7.3 As part of this commitment NCH&C is fully supportive of the Norfolk and Suffolk Primary and Community Care Research Office (NSPCCRO) Strategy 15-18.
- 7.4 The Trust is committed to embedding the NCH&C Research Office into the Research Leadership of the Trust and being an active participant of the Norfolk and Suffolk Primary and Community Care Steering Group which oversees the direction and performance of the NSPCCRO across Norfolk and Suffolk.
- 7.5 The Trust has a Service Level Agreement with the NSPCCRO which ensures that NCH&C meets all research requirements in particular:

- Systems in place to give patients and staff a safe and positive research experience
- Patient and Public Involvement
- Ensures research has all relevant approvals and permissions in place, and is deemed to be of importance / relevance to NCH&C
- Ensures availability of expert advice and guidance on research matters
- Maintains records of all research within NCH&C
- Development and Design Services
- Annual Reporting and support for Quality Account
- Data reporting to Department of Health
- Risk management support
- Contract liaison
- Incident Management and Adverse Event Management
- Performance Management
- Work collaboratively across organisations to advance the wider research endeavour
- Champion community care via involvement in local and national initiatives and forums
- Ensure delegated research sponsorship responsibilities are clearly defined between Trust and NSPCCRO.
- Access to NSPCCRO Bursary Schemes

7.6 Research Governance on portfolio research for NCH&C is provided through the CRN Eastern agreement with South Norfolk CCG as host for the NSPCCRO. Within this agreement, all NCH&C led studies are adopted onto the NIHR portfolio (student projects excepted) and run to robust governance standards, meet objectives and are delivered within budget.

8. Finance

8.1 Research projects often (but not always) come with funding to support clinical services to undertake the project. In financial terms, this strategy is designed to significantly increase the value of the Trust research programme over the next 5 years

8.2 The Trust is committed to maximising potential for income from research and development projects and using this to build capacity and reputation.

8.3 We will do this by:

- Working to increase RCF funding via grant hosting activities
- Working efficiently across organisations
- Increase income from Industry research
- Investing Industry capacity building funds back into research capacity
- Accessing funding schemes as appropriate
- Ensuring that Research Finances are centrally managed and transparent across services and localities.

- Ensure all studies are delivered within budget
- Targeting Research Capability Funding strategically to support infrastructure for research within the Trust.
- Maintaining clear and transparent records of funding
- Using national study costing templates to ensure appropriate cost recovery for research

9. Strategic ambition and goals

Strategic Ambition: For the Trust to routinely offer all NCH&C service users the opportunity to become involved in research studies relevant to their condition and the opportunity to become involved in other aspects of the research and development process.

97% of the public believe that their local NHS Trust should engage in research, with over 70% wanting to be offered the opportunity to be involved in clinical trials (Ipsos Mori poll, 2011). With this support in mind, the Trust aims to be able to routinely offer all patients accessing services the opportunity to become involved in research studies of relevance to them.

We will work towards this ambition by achieving the following goals:

Goal 1: Ensure patients, carers and the general public are involved in and informed of the Trusts research activity.

The Research & Development team will work with clinical teams and service users to inform them of all research studies which are relevant to their condition, and will develop publications aiming to explain research to everyone. We will also engage with national programmes of NHS Research engagement where we can assess the effectiveness of wider strategies aiming to inform staff and service users about research. We will do this by -

- Increasing the presence of suitable and easily-accessible research information for service users and their health-care providers making full use of currently available Trust media.
- Developing research literature/leaflets aimed to inform service users about research in the Trust.
- Ensuring that clinical staff members have access to specific and comprehensive information about research to promote studies routinely to participants.
- Working with Patient and Public groups to identify areas for collaboration and development
- Working with service users and Patient Research Ambassadors to develop clear pathways for patients wishing to access research studies
- Publicising opportunities for service user involvement in all stages of the research process
- Capturing patient involvement in research experience and using the information to inform future pathways

Goal 2: Ensure that all Trust staff members have a good understanding of research, it's importance within the service and create a vibrant research culture across the Trust.

A key component of successfully developing and delivering high-quality research is the opportunity for staff to embed research skills and knowledge within their personal and career development.

The Trust will set-up a research training programme to be offered to staff from beginner to advanced level, which aims to inform all staff about research culture and teach skills relevant to their personal needs. We also wish to find out about staff training and knowledge needs through embedding research into the appraisal system and inform all new staff members about research initiatives in the Trust at the earliest stage possible.

Through this, we aim to build research into every-day thinking within the Trust, and engender a clinical research environment through knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff. We will do this by -

- Providing comprehensive research training to all staff based on existing skills and experience.
- Building in research knowledge and capability assessments within staff appraisals.
- Building in contribution and support of research in job descriptions of all new staff.
- Research topic raised in staff induction programme
- Encouraging all staff members to have the opportunity to learn about new research initiatives and news.
- Providing access for new staff and students to spend time with the research team as appropriate
- Providing support and information about research-specific career development opportunities
- Developing policies and Standard Operating Procedures to support staff undertaking research within their service, setting standards and minimising risk
- Responding to gaps in research knowledge from staff and sourcing or providing appropriate training
- Involving patients and the public to enrich training programmes as appropriate

Goal 3: Developing Centres of Excellence in Research in specific Trust services.

The Trust has potential to become a leader in research for specific conditions. By bringing together patients, clinicians and academics, we are able to develop our growing reputation in focussed research areas in the next five years, and offer service users research opportunities throughout the whole spectrum of their care by working closely with other providers. We will do this by -

- Build on existing highly research active services
- Identifying clinical areas/conditions of potential research capacity development
- Engaging and empowering our service users to be an essential contributor throughout the research development phase
- Identifying promising clinicians who can be developed as research leaders in their field
- Considering joint clinical/academic applications for nurses and Allied Health Professionals; encouraging closer alignment with our Clinical Research Leaders at UEA
- Involving R&D staff in the design of research programmes for each area.
- Working with Higher Education Institutions to offer academic support to clinicians developing research programmes for specific services.
- Cross-networking with acute Trusts, primary care, charities, public health and academic institutions to promote multi-institutional research across the whole healthcare spectrum in certain conditions.
- Publicising opportunities and research career pathways for staff
- Liaising and collaborating, where appropriate, with other arms length organisations (including CQC and Monitor), to ensure standards are met

Goal 4: Develop specific Trust clinical staff to become Investigators, with their own research profile and grants.

The Trust has many highly-skilled individuals. By harnessing these skills in a research environment, we will be able to develop more high-quality research, attracting clinicians and investigators to the Trust through our enhanced research reputation, and work with more renowned institutions to develop and deliver the high-quality and innovative evidence-based care that our service users expect and deserve. We will do this by -

- Involving more clinical staff in existing NIHR Portfolio studies as collaborators
- Promoting the embedding of research activities in to usual practice
- Promoting research priorities that meet the needs of the local population
- Involving more staff actively in the development of grant applications – acting as co-applicants and lead applicants.
- Identifying staff who should be members of the NIHR Faculty and informing them of opportunities to develop their research career.
- Supporting and providing high-quality Principal Investigator and trial management training for all identified investigators.
- Linking potential collaborators with appropriate local services and academics e.g. UEA, UEA Research Design
- Support and encourage staff where NCH&C has potential to be the lead organisation on grants

Goal 5: Work towards clearly linking Trust research activity with clinical outcomes and developments.

On a national-level, much research is undertaken but the outcomes are not always apparent to staff or the public. We aim to support mobilisation of research evidence into clinical practice so that the benefits of public money invested in research is apparent to all. We will do this by -

- Supporting and helping develop Knowledge Mobilisation strategies within the Trust to help translate research into clinical practice.
- Supporting Research Publications for all research activity conducted in the Trust – regardless of the outcomes of findings.
- Increasing the presence of Trust researchers at national and international conferences.
- Routinely publishing information summaries about all research conducted in the Trust.
- Engaging with the Trust Clinical audit and effectiveness committee
- Engaging with the Academic Health Science Network

Goal 6: Attract more Industry research activity to the Trust.

The government is determined to make the UK the best place in the world for health research, development and innovation through working internationally to develop the NHS as a preferred host for multi-centre research in partnership with Industry. The Trust supports this initiative and aims to support the government's aim by attracting more Industry research into service areas, through providing highly-skilled and experienced investigators who can deliver research to the standard expected. We will do this by -

- Through staff training, develop a pool of highly-skilled capable staff members who can conduct commercial research to a high-standard.
- Setting up of dedicated research facilities within the Trust, which are fully equipped and linked into national and local clinical trial units.
- Collaborating with Clinical Research Networks, developing a commercial marketing strategy to promote the Trust to Industry research organisations.
- Working with Industry at the earliest stage possible to learn from each other about feasibility and needs for successfully conducting research.
- Develop processes for accurate and timely completion of Industry Expressions of Interest
- Ensure processes and systems are in place to support set up and delivery of Industry studies to time and target
- Engage in mutual assurance systems for rapid set up of multi- centred trials
- Identify and address any support system or internal blocks to hosting Industry studies
- Develop business model in respect of financial and resource management to ensure appropriate support and recompense for

research activity specifically in relation to Industry activity; monies generated are distributed in accordance with the agreed Trust Income Distribution Model, ensuring transparency and supporting reinvestment in research active clinical services

Goal 7: Increase the number of Trust-grown grant applications for funding and number of local studies

Research developed by the NHS for the NHS is essential for evidence-based decision making to inform guidance, service development and policies. The Trust is very supportive of its staff members contributing to existing systems of designing and developing research and also contributing as co-applicants in multi-centre applications; which will benefit Trust service users and potentially all service users in the NHS and social care sector. The Trust and its partners have a multitude of resources available to make collaborations successful, and through engaging with staff, partners, public and patient groups, aims to develop the Trust as an active and vibrant leader in community health research. We will do this by -

- accessing training for grant application and methodology development in collaboration with Norfolk and Suffolk Primary and Community Care Research Office (NSPCCRO).
- Ensuring that information about all research funding streams are made available to Trust staff.
- Greater visibility of the NIHR Research Design Service across the Trust.
- Liaison and engagement with academic partners
- Ensuring that public and patient involvement is the centre of research grant development in the Trust.
- Accessing NSPCCRO staff to support clinicians to develop high-quality grant applications.

Goal 8: Maximise research capacity and recruitment to time and target in all areas of the Trust by engaging with services and sponsors.

Not only is it important that we attract and develop more research studies, we also need to ensure that service users are offered the opportunity to be involved in research in a timely manner and that all research studies are delivered successfully. We engage in an active performance monitoring of research studies to ensure that they have been set-up appropriately and are being delivered as expected, and this will broaden into active management of studies which are performing poorly by working with research and clinical teams as needed. We will do this by -

- Ensure realistic recruitment targets and dates are set by undertaking robust feasibility
- Ensuring that all studies are set-up and recruiting participants within a set-time after approval, complementary to NIHR high-level objectives and support sponsors and teams to achieve recruitment targets.

- Actively performance monitoring studies across all areas co-ordinated centrally through research and development, and reported into the NIHR.
- Early identification of poorly-performing studies and discussions with services and network to put in performance-improving measures.
- Ensuring that all research metrics are reported to Trust Board quarterly via the Medical Directors report after review and approval by the research steering group.
- Providing resources to sponsors and clinical teams to ensure timely set-up of studies and engage in quality-lead/audit

10. Duties, accountability and responsibility

10.1 **The Medical Director** is the Board member with responsibility for Research.

10.2 **The Research Department** will:

- Manage the implementation of the strategy
- monitor and oversee all research activity in the Trust ensuring that robust research governance is in place,
- ensure that Trust research policies are in line with national policies and strategies;
- report progress to Trust board and the Trust Research steering Group

10.3 **All services** and support departments have due regard to the strategy, act in accordance with it and give consideration and timely responses to research opportunities that arise

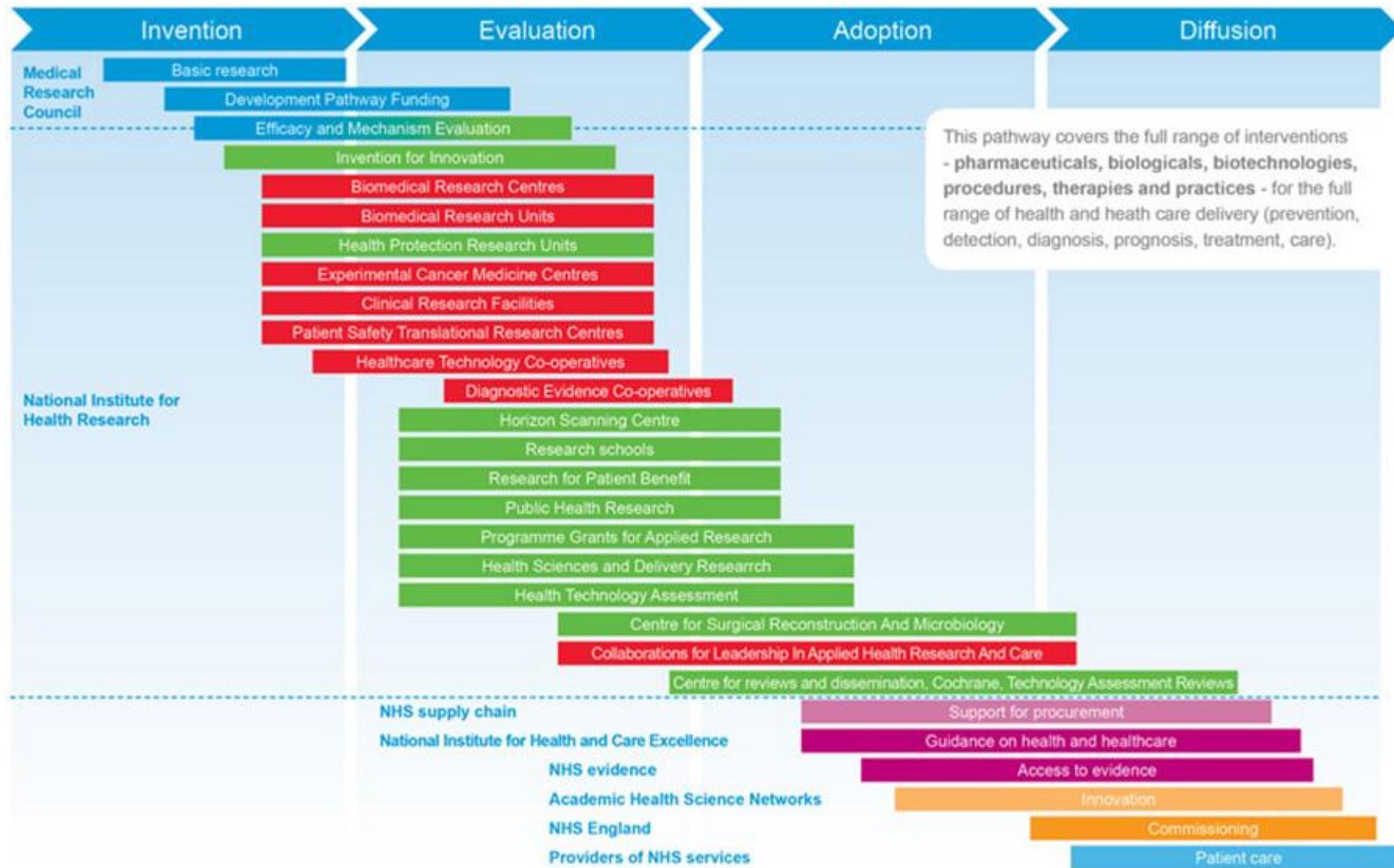
10.4 **The Research steering group** is responsible for overseeing the management and governance of research and ensuring that research strategies and policies are in line with the Trust and wider NHS objectives. Terms of reference are available on the Trust intranet

10.5 **Locality Governance meetings** oversee operational management of research studies

11. Reporting and monitoring

What will be monitored	How will the monitoring be carried out	When monitoring will occur	Who will conduct the monitoring	Where results will be reported to	How will the resulting action plan be progressed and monitored	Non-compliance is escalated to which Assurance Committee	How will learning take place
Progress against action plan	Bi-annually	March	Research Manager	Research Steering Group	Research Steering Group	Quality Risk and Assurance Committee	Revision to action plan
Progress against action plan	Annually	July	Research Manager	Quality and Risk Assurance Committee	Research Steering Group	Quality Risk and Assurance Committee	Revision to action plan

Appendix 1: NIHR Research Innovation Pathway



From NIHR website February 2016