

Trust Board public paper O

Meeting title:	Trust Board
Date of the meeting:	14 August 2025
Title:	R&I Quarterly Trust Board Report
Report presented by:	Prof Nigel Brunskill, Director of R&I
Report written by:	Prof Nigel Brunskill, Director of R&I

Action – this paper is for:	Decision/Approval		Assurance	x	Update	x
Where this report has been discussed previously	N/A					

To your knowledge, does the report provide assurance or mitigate any significant risks? If yes, please detail which
No

Impact assessment
<p>The report highlights the delivery and performance of R&I at UHL, progress of important research, engagement activities and newsworthy items.</p> <p>These elements have a largely positive impact on staff and patients and highlight efforts around engagement in research. Good research outcomes have had a positive impact on reputation.</p>

Purpose of the Report

To give assurance around UHL R&I activity and performance

Recommendation

To receive updates and to be assured

UHL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION QUARTERLY TRUST BOARD REPORT August 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes UHL R&I activities, performance and delivery in the last few months.

2. RESEARCH PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY

2.1 Recruitment and performance into CRN Portfolio Studies

This is a key performance metric and current recruitment remains healthy.

Participant recruitment in 2024/25 was >28,000. This was our best ever non-Covid year and the high participant recruitment was largely driven by a single high recruiting study which opened in October 2024, but has now completed recruitment.

The current 25/26 research activity dashboard is provided below. Extrapolating forwards would predict recruitment of circa 14-15,000 participants in 2025/26.

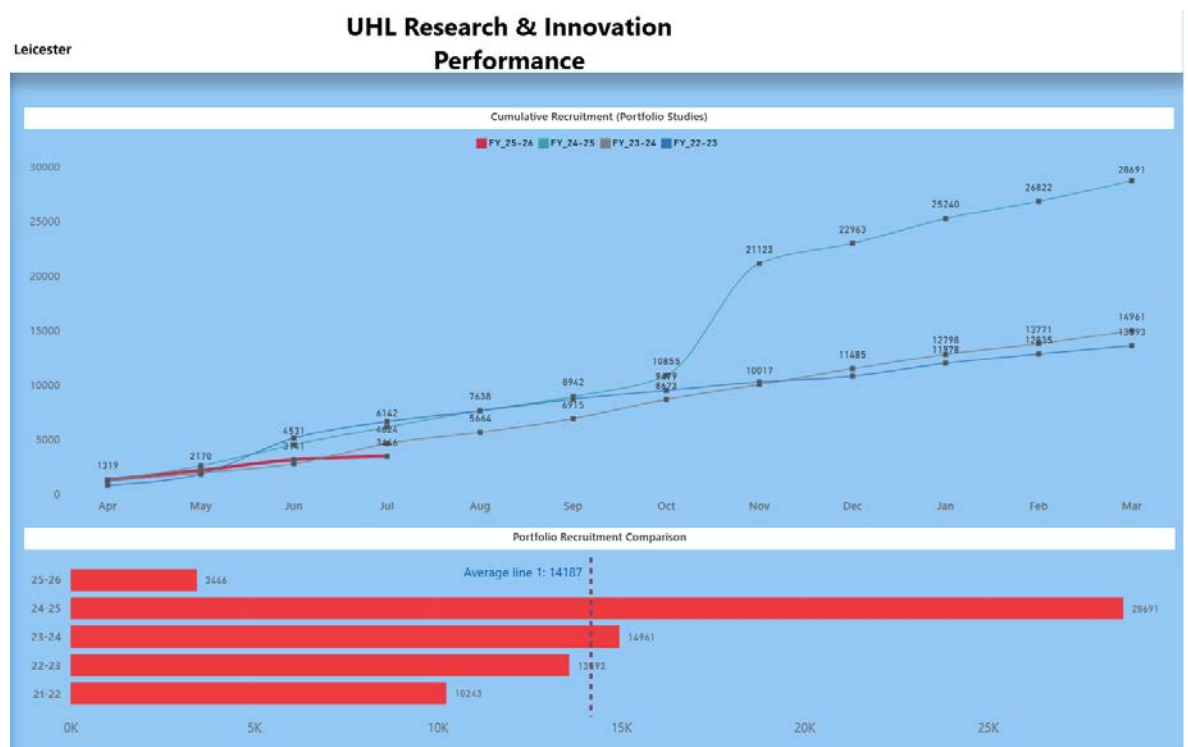


Figure 1: Current and comparative UHL research study recruitment metrics up to early July 2025.

2.2 Trial complexity and speciality profile of clinical trial recruitment at UHL

Recruitment performance can also be broken down into the more complex interventional and controlled trials of interventional medical products (CTIMP). This shows that current activity is in line with previous years. The speciality profile of study activity at UHL varies from year to year. The current speciality recruitment profile is shown in below.

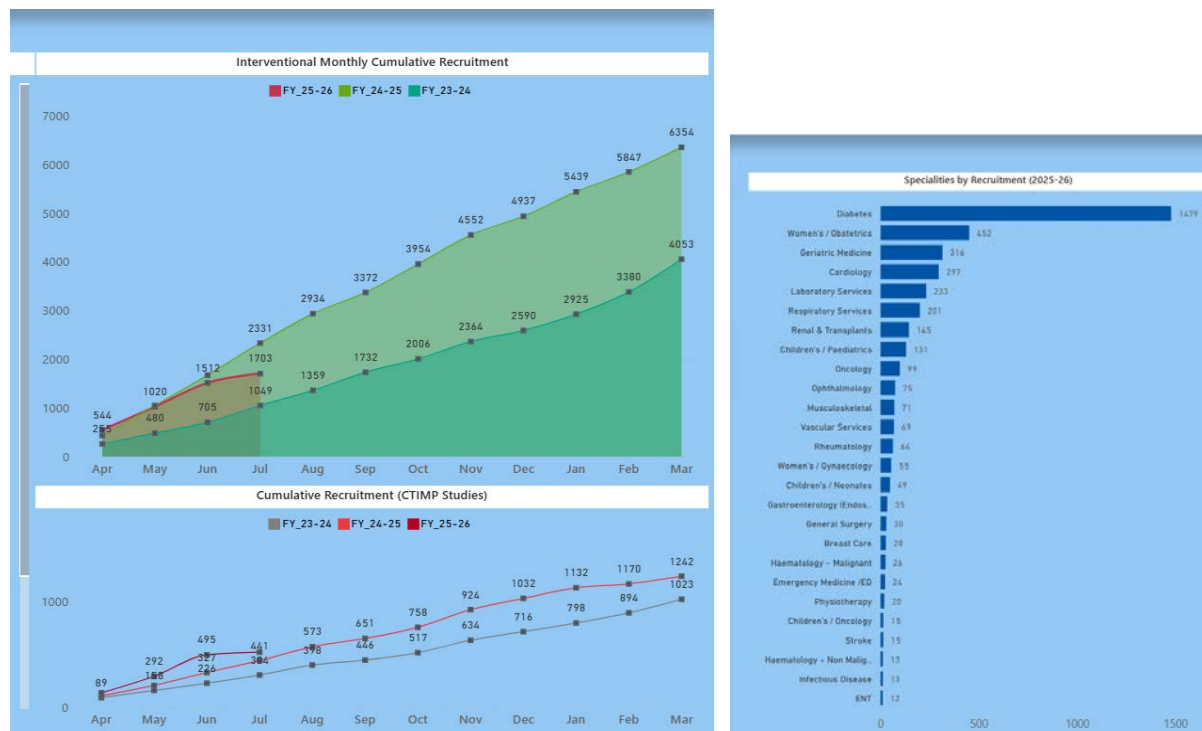


Figure 2. Recruitment into more complex interventional and CTIMP studies and recruitment by clinical speciality.

3. UHL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME (REP)

As part of the UHL R&I strategy to increase research participation by the UHL workforce the REP uses R&I capacity building funds to provide opportunities for nurses, midwives allied health Professionals including clinical scientists to gain research experience. REP provides salary back-fill to release colleagues from clinical roles into a research experience role supported by a mentor.

Seventeen applications were received in the first round. Seven applicants were successful including dietitians, physiotherapists and nurses from both adult and paediatric specialities.

The second round for applications opened on 31/03/2025 and thirteen applications were received. Applicants were from a range of professions, but only one nurse.

Twelve were fundable, but one applicant was unable to take up the award because they couldn't be released from clinical duties.

4. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUNDING AND EVENTS

4.1 NIHR Commercial Research Delivery Centre (CRDC) UK Network Award

In the last R&I report to Trust Board it was highlighted that UHL had been awarded £4.7M in national competition to host an NIHR funded CRDC following on from the existing NIHR Patient Recruitment Centre awarded to Leicester in 2020.

UHL has now been further awarded the hosting function for the newly formed CRDC UK Network for seven years from 2025. The CRDC UK Network will be the structure supporting all CRDCs to work together, learn from each other, and help make trials simpler, faster, and available to all patients wherever they live and whatever their background. This Network will promote CRDCs to industry partners to encourage them to choose the NHS for their trials. All 21 CRDCs have helped to plan the Network to make sure it will work well for everybody and meet their needs.

Work is organised into priority areas:

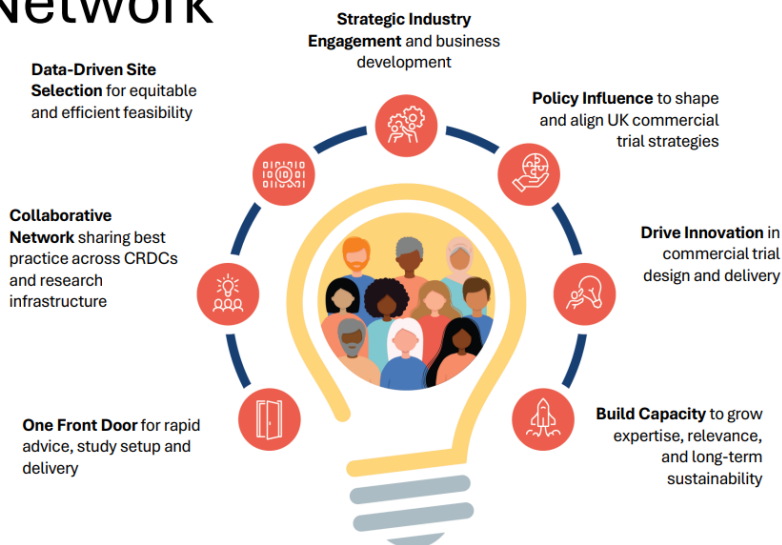
- Industry engagement: Promoting CRDCs and our research partners to industry.
- Strategic Collaboration: Working with UK research regulators and organisations to streamline how commercial trials are carried out.
- Cross-CRDC Coordination: Helping CRDCs to work together. This includes matching new trials with CRDCs that have the best skills to deliver them. For example, running cancer trials in CRDCs with cancer experts.
- Operational Services: Creating a system to run trials quickly and to a high standard. This will help address important barriers for commercial trials in the UK.
- Data, Activity and Performance: Leading new ways of delivering trials and improving how data are used. For example, aiming studies at the right group

CRDC UK Network

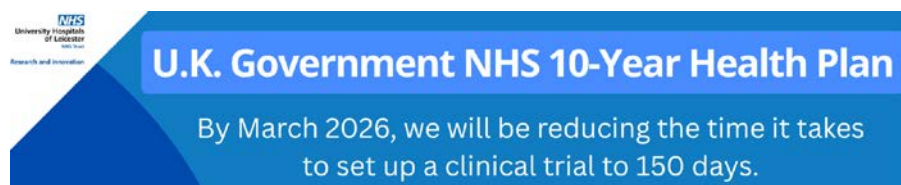
Our Vision

To establish a **UK-leading, person-centred network** that ensures **equitable access, diverse recruitment, and efficient, gold-standard trial delivery** — accelerating NHS innovation

CRDC UK
NETWORK



4.2 New Commercial Research Metrics



The delivery of the CRDC Network is a major priority for DHSC and NIHR. A new performance metric was announced by the Prime Minister. This metric reflects a new level of scrutiny over delivery performance and defines a 150 day set up time for clinical trials.



- 60 days for HRA approval
- 60 days for set up in Trusts
- 30 days to recruit first patient

These are new timelines to be measured and then achieved. A deep dive into process in the R&I Office and support departments is underway.

5. DEVELOPING NEW RESEARCH AREAS

The NIHR Leicester Clinical Research Facility is developing new research areas in collaboration with colleagues in neurology, mental health and clinical genetics in collaboration with Leicester shire Partnership NHS Trust.

- The HD Clarity study will sample cerebrospinal fluid from patients with Huntington's Disease to identify biomarkers of disease and targets for new treatment interventions.
- The Leicester CRF is working to support the development of a Fragile X Hub in the Children's Research Space at LRI. This will provide a centre for clinical assessment of children with this condition and a platform for clinical trials of novel interventions. **Prof Julian Barwell (Clinical Genetics) and Chris McQuade (parent of 2 affected boys) will present this vision to the Board.**

6. RESEARCH FINANCES

As at quarter one, the current actual to date position, April to June 2025, is a surplus of £180k. The year-to-date performance against budget is deficit of £47k. This is largely driven by commercial income which is activity driven and results in some variability from month to month whereas expenditure has a more consistent profile.

	Budget	Budget Year to Date	Actual to Date	Surplus/(Deficit)
	£Ms	£Ms	£Ms	£Ms
Income	56.157	14.039	14.558	0.519
Pay	(24.369)	(6.092)	(6.079)	0.014
Non Pay	(30.879)	(7.720)	(8.299)	(0.579)
TOTAL	0.909	0.227	0.180	(0.047)

7. R&I AWARDS AND OTHER NEWS

7.1 BRC Half Time

The summer of 2025 marks the halfway point of our BRC. A number of events have been arranged as Half Time Celebrations including:

- PhD symposium
- Clean Air day walk hosted by Environment Theme
- Research inclusion in Action Symposium

- Cardiovascular Theme half time celebration
- Respiratory Theme e celebration in the secret garden
- Hackathon
- Cancer and Lifestyle Celebrations
- Excellence Awards

7.2 Awards and achievements

- Professor Dean Fennell was shortlisted in the Research Category of the Royal College of Physicians Excellence in Patient Care Awards
- UHL respiratory researchers recruited the global first patient into a clinical trial evaluating a new treatment to preserve muscle integrity in patients with COPD.
- The NIHR Leicester Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) and Clinical Research
- Facility (CRF) Research Culture Survey 2024 Report was published in May 2025
- Linzy Houchen-Wolloff, Senior Research Physiotherapist, has won a Senior Clinical and Practitioner Research Award

Prof Nigel Brunskill

July 2025