

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
HELD ON 19TH FEBRUARY 2014

Subject	Clinical Research Committees at STHFT and the University of Sheffield 2014
Supporting TEG Member	David Throssell
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Status¹	A

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To summarise the current status of clinical research at STHFT, and present the findings of the 2013 Newby report into Clinical Research at STHFT.
2. To present the proposed Terms of Reference for the STHFT Research Committee, and outline the proposed structure for oversight and promotion of clinical research at STHFT.
3. To outline the proposed structure for the oversight of Clinical Research at the University of Sheffield.
4. To present the proposed Terms of Reference for the University of Sheffield Clinical Working Group, the STHFT and UoS Joint Clinical Staff committee, and the STHFT and UoS Joint Estates committee.

KEY POINTS

- It is a widely held view that clinical research at STHFT is not currently attracting the amount of research funding, or delivering the research output, of which it is capable. On this basis, much work is needed to realise STHFT's aspiration to become the best provider of clinical research in the UK.
- Current research performance is variable, and successful applications for Biomedical Research Units in Metabolic Bone and Cardiology and a Cancer Research UK Centre were followed by a failure to obtain continued funding at the time of renewal. The Trust was awarded over £3m to support experimental medicine studies in the CRF in 2012, but an application for renewal will need to be made in two years' time. The Trust is highly ranked nationally in respect of the numbers of studies offered to patients, but is failing to meet stiff metrics imposed by the NIHR to commence recruitment into trials within 70 days of a valid application or recruit all of those predicted within the time allowed. To review the current status of research at STHFT, and canvas advice about how research output could be improved, it was agreed in 2013 that an external review of research should be commissioned.
- In April 2013 Professor David Newby, Director of the Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Facility in Edinburgh, conducted an invited review of Clinical Research at STHFT (Appendix 1). He concluded that
 - STH and UoS have world leading academics and clear excellence in clinical research.
 - Clinical research at STH needs strong and clear strategic leadership.
 - Selective and targeted modest investments combined with better collegiate and efficient working practices have the potential to transform its clinical research output.
 - Trust employees should be incentivised to participate in clinical research
 - Re-engagement of clinical academics with strong NHS support will be critical to achieving the Trust's goals.
- Having considered this report, and a similar review into Clinical Research at the University of Sheffield by carried out by Professor Sir John Tooke later in 2013, the infrastructure supporting clinical research in both institutions has been reviewed, and new structures proposed.
- At STHFT, it has been agreed that a Research Committee (ToR attached as Appendix 2), which will drive improvements in the quality and quantity of clinical research, will be established. This committee will not consider education or innovation, which will be overseen in other fora.
- At the University of Sheffield a Clinical working group, supported by Joint Clinical Staff and Estates committees, will be established. Terms of Reference for these groups are attached as Appendix 3.
- The structures outlined are designed to increase the profile of clinical research across STHFT and the UoS, and address the recommendations made in the Newby and Tooke reviews.

IMPLICATIONS²

AIM OF THE STHFT CORPORATE STRATEGY 2012-2017		TICK AS APPROPRIATE
1	Deliver the Best Clinical Outcomes	
2	Provide Patient Centred Services	
3	Employ Caring and Cared for Staff	√
4	Spend Public Money Wisely	√
5	Deliver Excellent Research, Education & Innovation	√

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board of Directors is asked to review, consider and approve the proposed infrastructure to support clinical research across STHFT.

APPROVAL PROCESS

Meeting	Date	Approved Y/N
Trust Executive Group	29/1/14	

¹ Status: A = Approval
A* = Approval & Requiring Board Approval
D = Debate
N = Note

² Against the five aims of the STHFT Corporate Strategy 2012-2017