



The Clatterbridge
Cancer Centre
NHS Foundation Trust



RESEARCH
STRATEGY
2021-2026



BE RESEARCH LEADERS

Be leaders in cancer research to improve outcomes for patients now and in the future

OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS:

We will increase the number of patients accessing clinical trials year on year to **2,000 patients per year by 2026.**

We will continue to improve trial set-up times and **'time to first patient' targets** so that we are best in class.

We will secure **CR-UK Centre** status by ensuring the success of the LCRI*.

We will secure **CR-UK CTU** programme funding by driving and facilitating trial leadership and engagement with the LCTC.

We will secure renewal of the **CR-UK/NIHR ECMC** programme through additional investment and recruitment and by optimising early-phase trial development/delivery, biobanking and industry engagement.

We will collaborate with the University of Liverpool to increase the numbers of **new clinical academic positions.**

We will **increase investment in research** in line with our agreed targets.

We will **invest in postgraduate studentships** for allied healthcare staff.

We will **recruit additional clinical research** fellows.

We will **increase publications emanating from the Trust.**

We will increase **external project and programmatic grant funding**, especially from CR-UK and NIHR funding streams.

We will **increase our sponsorship of Liverpool-led trials by 15%.**

We will launch an annual **'Research@Clatterbridge Day'** for dissemination of research achievements to staff, patients and carers.

We will **double** the number of research-active **NHS consultants.**

* See the glossary on page 24 for explanations of all abbreviations

OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS:

We will create a panel of **'Patient Ambassadors'** to foster public participation to influence research strategy and implementation and ensure we meet the needs of our population.

We will **increase investment** in research in line with our agreed targets.

We will **increase our research income** in line with our agreed targets.

We will **build on and further enhance our research impact** in line with our role as one of the UK's leading cancer centres.



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The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust is committed to delivering world-class cancer care. In June 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we opened our new flagship Clatterbridge Cancer Centre – Liverpool in the heart of the city’s Knowledge Quarter as part of a £162m investment in delivering state-of-the-art, highly-specialist cancer care to the communities we serve and who need it most.

The new hospital is testimony to our ongoing commitment to providing the highest quality of care to our patients, underpinned by investment in research and education and collaboration with acute care providers and local and regional NHS and academic partners. Our ambitious plans will transform cancer care and outcomes for the population that we serve.

Our strategy has emerged from wide consultation within the organisation, patient engagement, and local and national drivers for clinical and academic research.

This five-year strategy will improve:

- Patient outcomes, experience and journey
- Research culture, ethos and outputs within the organisation, and further enhance our reputation in provision of world-class cancer care
- Staff engagement and education both within the organisation and as system leaders for cancer services



The opening of our ‘state-of-art’ hospital at the heart of the Knowledge Quarter in Liverpool is a unique opportunity to ensure Research and Innovation is central to all efforts to improve choices, experience and outcomes for cancer patients in the region and beyond.

Prof Nagesh Kalakonda, Clinical Director of Research

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RESEARCH CULTURE AND ETHOS

The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust (CCC) is the principal provider of non-surgical cancer services in Cheshire and Merseyside.



We care for over **35,000 patients** per year

We manage **more than 250,000 patient contacts** a year (treatments/appointments)

Our staff continue to deliver high-quality and patient-centred cancer care, which is reflected in patient satisfaction surveys. We have made significant progress in the delivery of cancer services and continue to transform, influence and improve cancer care within the region. In addition, over the last five years we have continued to make incremental gains in clinical trials activities and academic pursuits.

Our **new clinical divisions**, embedded tumour **site reference groups (SRGs)** and our geographical **‘hub and spoke’ model** will enhance research participation and outputs to address regional population needs.

All these factors contribute to an environment that engenders and facilitates high-quality research.

Clatterbridge Cancer Centre – Liverpool: key to research success

Having a new state-of-the-art cancer hospital in the heart of the Knowledge Quarter – and adjacent to a major acute teaching hospital and the University of Liverpool – will enable us to deliver the step change in research outlined in this strategy:

- Proximity to a teaching hospital and acute clinical services such as critical care, which is necessary for first-in-human and early-phase trials, will foster new collaborations for clinical trial delivery.
- Existing academic research partnerships will be strengthened and developed through close collaboration with the University, which will increase successful grant bids and awards.

Our clear focus is to increase research capacity and capability for patient benefit. This is a fundamental tenet of the new hospital’s design and build:

- The **bespoke clinical trial treatment rooms** on the main SACT/Chemotherapy floors enable us to support complex gene therapy, advanced biological and early-phase trials, and are where patients attend research clinics.
- **A full inpatient service** is also available for first-in-human and Phase I trials.
- Trials are supported through a **bespoke trials pharmacy** aseptic / gene therapy / Advanced Therapy Investigational Medicinal Products (ATIMP) service.
- An **interventional radiology** service has been established to support complex trial needs and streamline trial delivery and patient experience.
- We have invested in expanding the **CCC Biobank and Trials Laboratory**, also co-located with the clinical trials treatment rooms. As well as supporting clinical trials, the laboratory has an expanded biobank facility with its own HTA licence and ethics. This enables broad sample collection for CCC-led research, providing a unique range of biological samples for basic and translational cancer research and increased collaboration with academic partners to enhance research capability and outputs.





Our unique haemato-oncology and ECMC-led repositories that systematically biobank patient samples collected locally and nationally are supporting UK genomic initiatives and generating outputs of significant impact.

Prof Dan Palmer,
Director of Liverpool ECMC and Consultant Medical Oncologist

Partnerships and collaborations

Our research strategy aligns with the NHS Long Term Plan and the priorities of national funding organisations (such as **Cancer Research UK, NIHR, MRC and BRC**).

As the main provider of cancer services within the region and as host of the Cheshire & Merseyside Cancer Alliance (CMCA), we will provide leadership: driving and influencing cancer care and research initiatives that harness local strengths and address population needs across the whole patient journey.

Planning and implementing a refreshed research strategy and building on recent successes will require continued collaboration and ongoing discussions with:

Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance (CMCA)

Liverpool Health Partners (LHP)

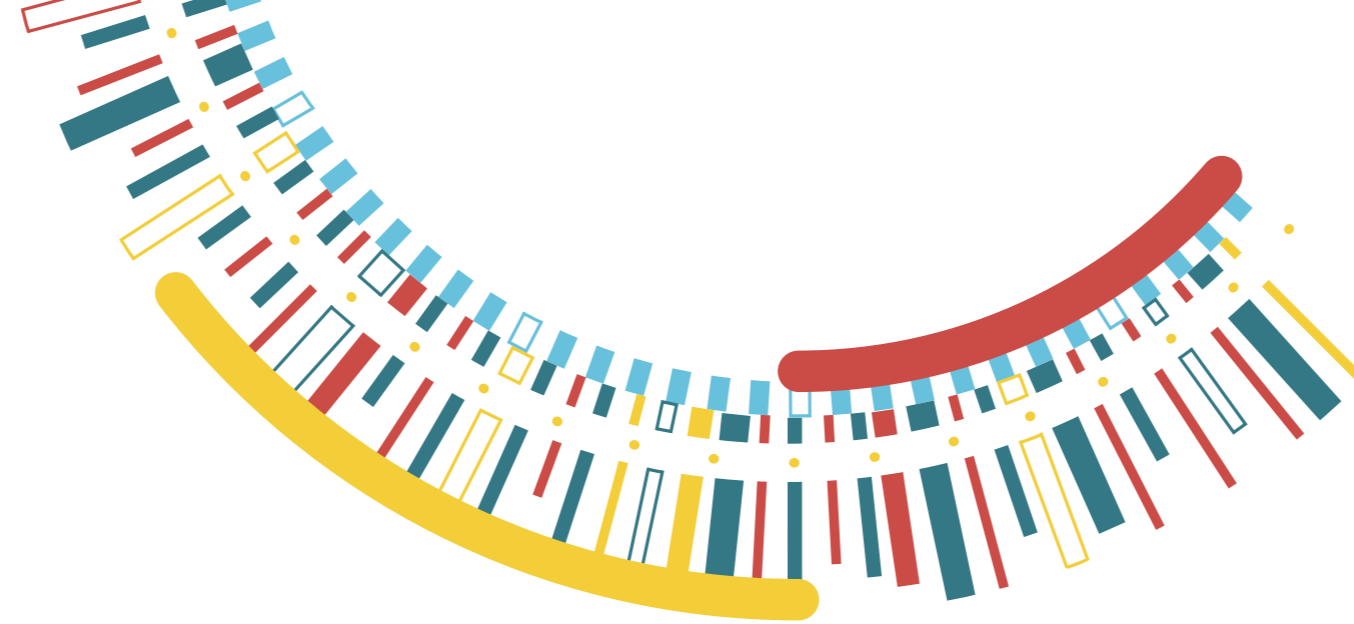
Patient ambassadors

Other stakeholders

Regional academic partners

Our commissioners

Local councils



Our cross-cutting themes

- Diagnostics**
 - Genomics and biobanking**
 - Digital and data initiatives**
 - Palliative care and survivorship**
 - Radiotherapy**
-

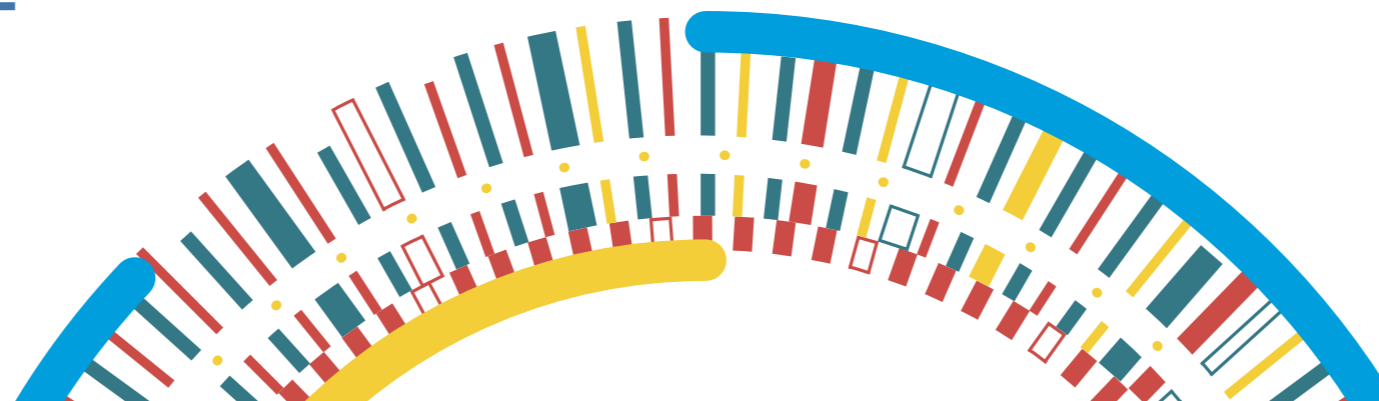
The cross-cutting themes of diagnostics, genomics and biobanking, digital and data research will enable us to lead on personalised patient care.

Prof Christian Ottensmeier,
Chair of Immuno-Oncology
and Consultant Medical Oncologist



As the only NHS provider of radiotherapy services across Cheshire and Merseyside, we deliver excellent care to patients and will ensure they can access research and trials in radiotherapy.

Dr Isabel Syndikus, Consultant Clinical Oncologist



RESEARCH CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Clinical trials delivery and infrastructure

Our Research & Innovation (R&I) infrastructure has developed significantly in the last five years, with real-time metrics and streamlined activities. As a direct result of these changes, we saw a surge in trial recruitment in 2019/20 – our target to recruit 1,000 patients per year was achieved ahead of schedule and without addition to R&I staff numbers. This compares to <500 patients a year prior to 2018.

In addition, there has been a significant reduction in trial set-up times and 'time to first patient recruited' since 2018. We achieved top 10 status in two of the NIHR activity league tables in 2019, including the largest increase in the number of research studies opened and the greatest increase in commercial contract studies opened.

Our staff played a major role in planning and facilitating the launch of the unique **LHP-SPARK** collaborative that provides a single point of access for delivering high-quality research governance, costing, contracting and onboarding of clinical trials and research endeavours within the region, thereby simplifying contract negotiations and minimising set-up times.

Building on these gains will be a key component of our research strategy. We will invest in additional research nurses and biobank staff to address our research agenda for common and rare cancers and support ECMC activities. To help deliver our strategic goals, we will also invest in a quality, performance and innovation lead, a partnerships and sponsorship lead, and a communications lead.

Dr Gillian Heap, Director of Research & Innovation Operations

Key deliverables

We will increase the number of patients accessing clinical trials year on year to **2,000 patients per year by 2026.**

We will continue to improve trial set-up times and **'time to first patient'** targets so that we are best in class.

The **Liverpool Cancer Research Institute (LCRI)** – a new partnership between The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre, the University of Liverpool (UoL) and funders – provides a forum for shaping the future of academic oncology, increasing NHS and UoL collaborations and driving biomedical research. The newly formed **Liverpool Clinical Trials Centre (LCTC)** brings together a wealth of internationally recognised expertise in statistics and trials methodologies and will enable us to regain CR-UK Programme funding for cancer trials.



Research is at the core of everything we do and every patient should have the opportunity to be involved in research. The new hospital in the Knowledge Quarter is very exciting and brings lots of opportunities. We're expanding our team to drive and deliver cutting-edge research with a wide range of roles including advanced research practitioners, research nurses and administrative staff.

Michelle Moffitt, Matron for Research & Innovation

Key deliverables

We will secure CR-UK Centre status by ensuring the success of the LCRI.

We will secure CR-UK CTU programme funding by driving and facilitating trial leadership and engagement with the LCTC.

Securing ECMC status in partnership with the University of Liverpool has been a major achievement and has enhanced early-phase trial availability and recruitment. This is providing our patients with access to novel and emerging therapies.

We will secure renewal of the CR-UK/NIHR ECMC programme through additional investment and recruitment and by optimising early-phase trial development/delivery, biobanking and industry engagement.

Academic research

The recent appointment of a Chair of Immuno-Oncology enhances our ability to inform novel agents/therapies and increase ECMC activities. We will support growth in academic oncology to lead on future bids for an NIHR BRC, CR-UK Centre and CR-UK CTU programmes. We will collaborate with the University of Liverpool (UoL) and regional and national partners to ensure success.

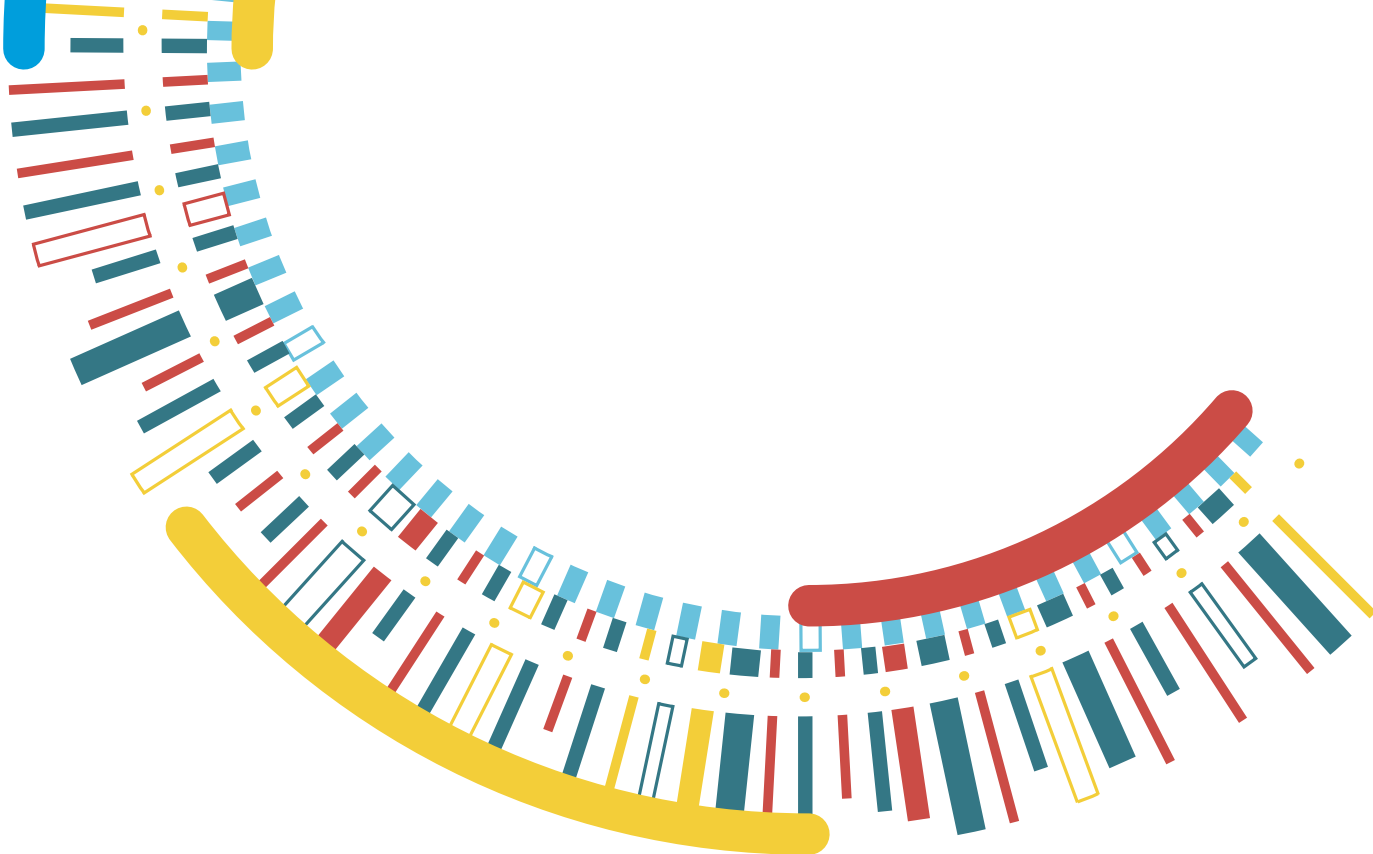
We will collaborate with UoL to increase the numbers of new clinical academic positions over the next five years.

The Clatterbridge Cancer Charity provides vital investment for our research. We will support projects of impact with initial investment. These projects will attract further external investment and will help improve outcomes for people with cancer.

We will increase investment in the Clatterbridge research funding scheme over the next five years.



We will recruit additional clinical research fellows over the next five years.

We will invest in postgraduate studentships for allied healthcare staff.



A major success in recent years is the establishment of the jointly funded (CCC and UoL) Clinical Research Fellowship scheme, which supports specialist trainees in oncology to undertake a period of academic research within the University of Liverpool. The programme supports academic fellows, nurtures local talent and ensures a pipeline of research leaders for the future.

We will implement a fully-costed plan for the retention of successful trainees as well as investing in our allied healthcare staff to provide support for patients participating in clinical trials and enhance research activities.



We will provide support and resources to prepare grant applications, publications and undertake statistical tasks. This will enhance income generation and outputs, transform the research culture and ethos within the organisation, and enhance the Trust's reputation.

We will increase publications emanating from the Trust over the next five years.

We will increase external project and programmatic grant funding, especially from CR-UK and NIHR funding streams.

We will increase our sponsorship of Liverpool-led trials by 15%.



Research and trials are critical to technical advancements in Radiotherapy and establishing best practice. We look forward to further developing our work with innovative technologies and improving the impact of treatments on our patient outcomes, quality of life, and journey.

Roxanna Hooton,
Clinical Research Radiographer



RESEARCH COLLABORATION: AWARENESS AND EDUCATION THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

In an increasingly global economy, we will seek and secure partnerships nationally and with an international cancer centre for mutual benefit. Work is ongoing to partner with bio-pharmaceutical companies and clinical research organisations (CROs) to gain preferred site status, especially for early-phase clinical trials so that our patients have access to promising and emerging treatments.

To ensure that our patients have the best possible outcomes, we will continue to pursue a civic agenda for service delivery and R&I by engaging with regional commissioners and local councils.

Research awareness and education

Our successful 'Research Rounds' – regular seminars with invited internal and external speakers – attract a wide audience from within the organisation, the region, and University of Liverpool academics.

We will launch an annual 'Research@Clatterbridge Day' for dissemination of research achievements to staff, patients and carers.

Embedding research within site reference groups (SRGs)

The migration of service delivery to an SRG model has provided an opportunity to institute a new scheme to address the culture and ethos within the Trust. Since August 2019, the R&I directorate has appointed research leads embedded within each SRG who work closely with their respective SRG leads.

The SRG Research Leads Forum meets on a regular basis to highlight needs, barriers and share best practice. The SRG research leads will play a key role to ensure that the proposed research strategy is implemented over the next five years and beyond.

Fulfilling our research potential will involve close collaboration between NHS and academic colleagues. To further strengthen this relationship, we will encourage CCC staff whose research and teaching contributes to the University of Liverpool to apply for and secure honorary UoL appointments.

We will double the number of research-active NHS consultants over the next five years.

Patient and public involvement

It is essential that our research strategy includes active consultation and participation of patients, carers, commissioners, voluntary, charitable, and community organisations to gather the views of the public at large.

Such engagement will be essential to ensure a positive impact on patient participation, experience, care, and outcomes. We are currently formulating a patient and public involvement (PPI) strategy that should be ready within the first year of the plan.

The R&I directorate is committed to ensuring that PPI is integral to the planning, delivery and evaluation of the research strategy in accordance with published NICE guidance.

We will create a panel of 'Patient Ambassadors' to foster public participation to influence research strategy and implementation and ensure we meet the needs of our population.

RESEARCH INVESTMENT AND IMPACT

Financial investment for implementing and delivering the strategy

To address, implement, and deliver the refreshed research strategy will require investment – largely from charitable donations to the Trust – and is believed to be realistic.

A detailed business plan detailing projected costs with a breakdown of year-on-year investment sought has been approved by the Trust Board. The five-year individual workplans and the proportional allocation mainly address the domains highlighted in this document (Figure 1).

We will increase investment in research over the next five years in line with our agreed targets.

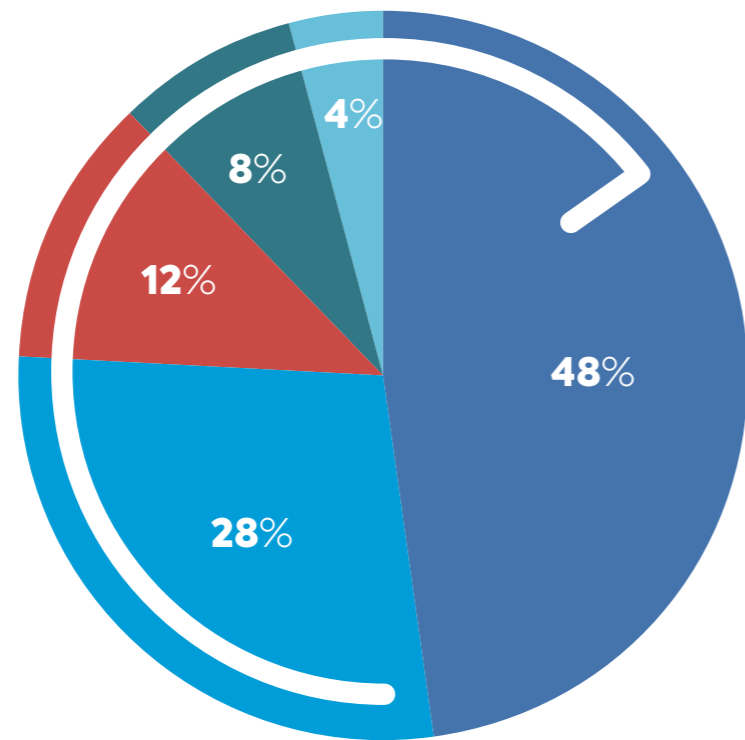


Figure 1: Allocation of investment for research themes

- Academic research and workforce
- Clinical trials infrastructure
- Cross-cutting research themes
- Research education and awareness
- Research partnerships and collaboration

The projected increases in recruitment to National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) portfolio trials delivery will help secure additional funding from NWC CRN and mitigate some of the investment needed. It is likely that the enhanced research activities will generate additional external grant income and will be a key metric to ascertain and monitor impact. Such investment will radically transform the culture and ethos for R&I within the organisation and have reputational impact.

We will increase our research income over the next five years in line with our agreed targets.

We will build on and further enhance our research impact over the next five years, in line with our role as one of the UK's leading cancer centres.

Conclusion

This refreshed research strategy is an ambitious plan to address and further enhance our clinical and academic research culture, capacity and capability, investment, and impact over the next five years. It will ensure that we incorporate research into all core business activities spanning all aspects of the patient journey. In doing so, we will ensure we continue to deliver world-class cancer care aligned with national, regional and local drivers to improve patient choices, experience and outcomes.

Glossary

BRC	Biomedical Research Centre
CCC	The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust
CCC-L	Clatterbridge Cancer Centre – Liverpool (our main site)
CMCA	Cheshire & Merseyside Cancer Alliance
CR-UK	Cancer Research UK
CTU	Clinical Trials Unit
ECMC	Experimental Cancer Medicine Centre
HPV	Human Papilloma Virus
HTA	Human Tissue Authority
LCRI	Liverpool Cancer Research Institute (led by CCC, NWCR and UoL)
LCTC	Liverpool Clinical Trials Centre (formed by the merger of LCTU and UoL Clinical Trials Research Centre)
LCTU	Liverpool Cancer Trials Unit (superseded by LCTC)
LHP	Liverpool Health Partners (academic and NHS organisations)
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Team
MRC	Medical Research Council
NICE	National Institute of Health and Care Excellence
NCRAS	National Cancer Registration and Analysis Service
NIHR	National Institute of Health Research
NWCR	North West Cancer Research
NWC CRN	North West Coast Clinical Research Network
PA	Programmed Activity (time allocated to a specific purpose in a doctor's contract, usually 4 hours)
SRG	Site Reference Group (tumour site groups within CCC)
UoL	University of Liverpool



If you have any questions or feedback
on our Research Strategy, please email

ccf-tr.researchstrategyccc@nhs.net

www.clatterbridgecc.nhs.uk

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 The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust