

Summer, 2025

# Research Newsletter



**NHS**  
Mersey and West Lancashire  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Trust



**NIHR** | National Institute for  
Health and Care Research

## International Clinical Trials Day 2025



**Observed annually on May 20**, International Clinical Trials Day commemorates a pivotal moment in medical history—the 1747 scurvy trial by **James Lind**. Aboard the HMS *Salisbury*, Lind conducted one of the earliest controlled clinical trials, treating 12 sailors with various remedies. His discovery—that citrus fruits rapidly cured scurvy—was later published in the landmark *Treatise of the Scurvy* (1753), a work widely regarded as the foundation of modern clinical trials.

Today, this day reminds us that **clinical trials remain the cornerstone of medical advancement**, shaping the future of treatments, vaccines, and public health.

## Study Spotlight: SONAR 1 Study

**SONAR aims to estimate the incidence of intraoperative pain during caesarean delivery under neuraxial anaesthesia. In addition, the project will assess the impact of this experience through patient-reported outcome measures collected at two key time points: 24 hours and 6 weeks postpartum.**

**The study involves collecting data from all patients undergoing caesarean delivery—regardless of category or indication—where neuraxial anaesthesia is the primary mode of anaesthesia at the time of delivery.**



Participating in the Snapshot Obstetric National Anaesthesia Research (SONAR) study at Ormskirk District General Hospital is a highly valuable experience for our maternity unit and for me personally as a consultant anaesthetist.

Personally, I am very interested in this study as it is conducted on a national scale and aims to capture real-world data on obstetric anaesthesia practices. Not only this, but the study also addresses us that how women may perceive anaesthetic care and how this may influence their long-term experience.

I believe that the study design is straightforward, yet highly effective. The study is based on a prospective snapshot model to collect data over a defined period from maternity units across the UK. Additionally, the study includes a carefully designed questionnaire that captures women's feedback on their anaesthetic experiences during labour and delivery, as well as their long-term experiences.

At Ormskirk, the process of data collection encouraged greater collaboration between anaesthetists, midwives, and obstetricians. It also created meaningful opportunities for us to reflect on how we deliver care, what we do well, and where improvements might be made.

I believe the findings from SONAR will help shape national best practice and empower maternity teams to provide more patient centered care. Ultimately, this will promote more positive birthing experiences for women across the country.

**'It was a real pleasure to participate in the SONAR study. It was a very favourable experience for myself and our maternity unit.**

**Thank you for the opportunity you gave me to reflect on this marvellous work.'**

*Mohamed Osman—Consultant Anaesthetist*



## Uncorked

### Overall top recruiting Trust

The UNCORKED study aims to understand how temporary escalation areas (where patients are cared for when the usual cubicle spaces are full) are used within the Emergency Department (ED).

*"We're incredibly proud that Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust has emerged as the top recruiter for the UNCORKED study. This achievement highlights our organisation's dedication to tackling the national emergency department crisis through meaningful research. The UNCORKED study, led by TERN, plays a crucial role in identifying and addressing the systemic challenges facing emergency care across the UK. Our frontline teams are not only delivering care under pressure—they're also driving the evidence base that will shape better, more sustainable emergency services nationwide."*

Craig Rimmer, Principal Investigator

## Roseta

The ROSETA Optimisation trial is testing how well four ways (called interventions) support women with breast cancer in taking hormone therapy. The study will test what, if any, is the best combination of the interventions.

**ROSETA**  
NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

**Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust**

23 participants recruited in just >10 months open to recruitment

but you have achieved so much more than this...

- ✓ 7 members of staff have completed SIV training
- ✓ 43 patients screened
- ✓ 110 CRFs entered onto MACRO
- ✓ 9 central supervision sessions attended
- ✓ 42 therapist CRFs entered onto MACRO

Just a note to say  
**'THANK YOU'**  
for all your hard work so far!

A message from our Chief Investigator, Professor Samuel Smith:-  
"A huge thank you from me for all the hard work taking place at sites. The work you are all doing on the ground is really helping us to drive through an important piece of research that will have major implications for women with early breast cancer. Please continue to pursue all routes to recruitment that are available to you as we race towards our recruitment target. Thank you again for all that you're doing!"

## "Supporting Research in Health Trusts"

On the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 Professor Ascanio Tridente, Clinical Director for Research at the Whiston, St Helens and Newton site attended an event at the St Helens Research Institute. He delivered a presentation "Supporting Research in Health Trusts" The event introduced the Academy's vision to build a leading centre for healthcare research in St Helens. The event showcased current projects, highlighted opportunities for collaboration, and brought together researchers, clinicians, and partners from across the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSFE) sector to identify future priorities for the Academy.





## The MelMarT-II Trial

Congratulations to Mersey West Lancashire  
for enrolling their 110<sup>th</sup> participant.

MelMarT-II is a simple randomised clinical trial. Patients from British and Australian melanoma charities helped to develop this trial. This study is designed to be able to prove or disprove that a 1 cm excision margin is just as safe as a 2 cm margin for high-risk melanoma of the skin. This study is designed to show that the risk of long-term pain associated with surgery can be halved and quality of life can be improved with a 1 cm margin due to reduced side effects and need for reconstructive surgery after treatment. This trial will also evaluate the economic impact of safely using less surgery for the NHS and society in general. It is expected that this study will define the surgical treatment world-wide for all high-risk melanoma patients.

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## GenOMICC



### We were top recruiter for GenOMICC in January 2025!

We are undertaking a genetic research study involving people with critical illness and healthy volunteers. Some of our genes (or DNA) affect how vulnerable we are to critical illness. We are trying to find these genes because they can help us to develop better treatments for other patients in the future.

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## Mammo-50

Published in The Lancet—read [here](#)

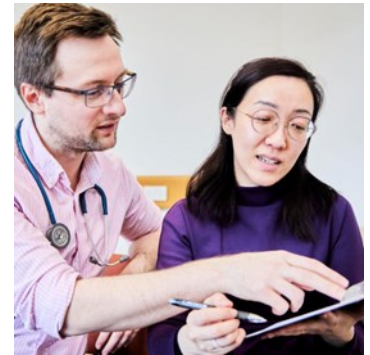
The Mammo-50 study was for women with early-stage breast cancer (cancer has not spread beyond breast tissue or local lymph nodes), aged 50 years or over at the time of their diagnosis. The study was done to try to find the safest and most effective follow up for these women up after their breast cancer surgery. Following surgery (either a mammogram or a lumpectomy), women with this type of breast cancer are often followed up with yearly mammograms. However, there is no gold standard – different cancer centres offer different forms of follow up. Mammo-50 is the first major study to look at this.

We wanted to find out for this group of patients, whether it is necessary for mammograms to be done yearly or whether it would be safe to do them less frequently. We also wanted to find out what the women thought about their mammograms and look at the cost of follow up in the NHS.

## **Applications now open: NIHR Principal Investigator Pipeline Programme**

This initiative offers research delivery nurses, midwives and allied health professionals the opportunity to develop as Principal Investigators on NIHR portfolio studies.

The programme offers online training, mentorship, and hands-on experience to help you lead clinical studies with confidence.



**What does it offer?** Training, mentoring, and practical research opportunities. **Why get involved?** Advance your career, contribute to high-quality research, and improve patient care. Find out more and apply for the Principal Investigator Pipeline Programme (PIPP).

## **NIHR's INSIGHT: inspiring students into research programme**

Applications are open for funded places on the second year of this scheme. These research masters places are open to students and recent graduates from a diverse group of health and care professions.

The NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West, led by the University of Central Lancashire, is a collaboration of the region's research-intensive Universities of Lancaster, Liverpool and Manchester, and over 30 partners representing the regions health and social care providers.

To develop a highly skilled research workforce, equipped to tackle the complex health and care challenges of the future, and to navigate a landscape of widening health inequalities, **we will fund up to 30 health and social care Research Masters Studentships each year.**

Whether you are interested in pursuing a research career, or simply want develop your understanding of, and contribution to, evidence-based practice within your service, this programme is for you.

### Becoming a Principal Investigator (PI) course

4th July 2025

#### Aims / Objectives:

To gain an understanding of:

- The role of the Principal Investigator in the context of clinical research delivery
- The preparation and practical steps needed for taking on this role
- Key relationships & guidance to support you to integrate research into your practice

At the end of the session you will be aware of the roles and responsibilities of being a PI and the expectations of the Sponsor in your role.

If you would like to book onto the Becoming a PI course on the 4<sup>th</sup> July then you will need to have an [NIHR Learn](#) account and complete the [PI training form](#), which can also be found there, in order to get a certificate. If you have any problems accessing NIHR Learn, contact the RDI team who can help.

### #Red4Research—20th June

Follow us on the 20th June as we wear red to celebrate all things research! We will be running an X campaign, posting images and quotes of our staff who are involved in research!

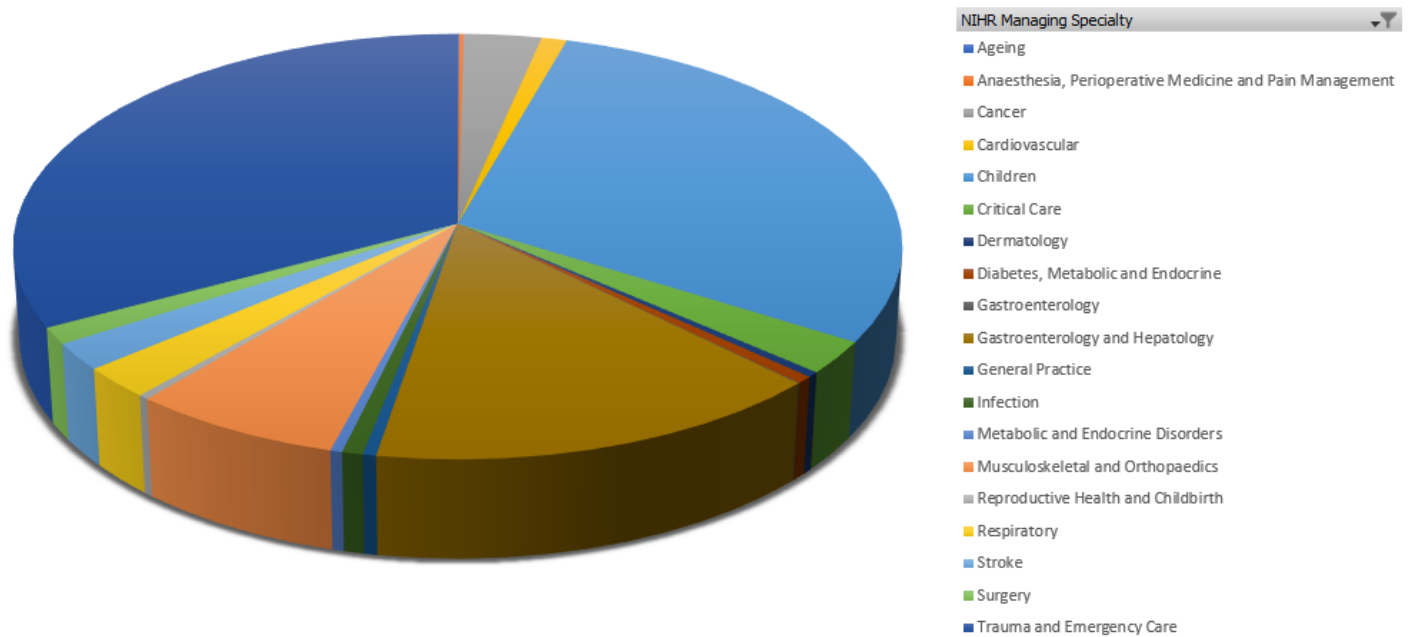


For more information please contact us

[Soh-tr.researchsonhs.nhs.uk](mailto:Soh-tr.researchsonhs.nhs.uk)

# Recruitment Figures by Speciality

**Recruitment by speciality for 2024/2025 with a grand total of 2046 participants! Congratulations to all involved.**



Ageing	1
Anaesthesia, Perioperative Medicine and Pain Management	4
Cancer	64
Cardiovascular	21
Children	604
Critical Care	51
Dermatology	8
Diabetes, Metabolic and Endocrine	11
Gastroenterology	1
Gastroenterology and Hepatology	312
General Practice	9
Infection	14
Metabolic and Endocrine Disorders	8
Musculoskeletal and Orthopaedics	143
Reproductive Health and Childbirth	7
Respiratory	49
Stroke	42
Surgery	26
Trauma and Emergency Care	671

### Say hello to Kerri Bowness! Our latest #MWLPeople star!

Kerri is a Paediatric Research Nurse at Ormskirk and Whiston hospitals. She's passionate about working in clinical research and contributing to future healthcare for young patients.

"I originally spent 11 years working on the general paediatric wards as a staff nurse. I really enjoyed my time on the wards, working with newborn babies all the way up to teenagers. Whilst I was there, I started to get involved with research and audit and worked on a clinical audit into the effectiveness of care received by children with epilepsy. After a while I wanted to specialise in my career and make research my main focus."

"Being in research is busy like the wards but it is completely different, it's a different language, it involves assessing the feasibility of new studies, setting up research clinics, screening and identifying patients, there's always a lot going on. I've been fortunate to be involved in various paediatric studies, such as asthma, allergies, and respiratory syncytial virus. At the moment I'm working on a study of a new rice milk formula that could be used for feeding infants with a cow's milk protein allergy."

"Studies can last for several months and sometimes years. You really get to know the children and their families, build a relationship, and watch them grow up. Depending on the study, we can see symptoms improve and patients getting better which is wonderful.

"If we didn't do research, nothing would improve in healthcare, there wouldn't be any new treatments or drugs. That's why we're really grateful to the patients who take part in our trials, we couldn't do any of this without them".



**We are pleased to welcome our newest members of the team,  
Kristin and Mika!**

### Research Midwife

*I'm Kristin, the new research Midwife, I was previously employed as a community midwife at Whiston. I am really enjoying the role in Ormskirk and have recently taken part in my first research project, SONAR 1. All staff involved were very helpful and accommodating and it was nice to get to know the maternity team. I am really looking forward to being involved in future studies.*



### Project Support Officer

*My name is Mika Algeo, and I have recently moved into the role of Project Support Officer in the Whiston Research Hub.*

*This is my first job within research, and I am enjoying it so far, working with a skilled team of admin and clinical staff who have supported me in settling into my role. I have quickly learned that Research is an exciting venture with no two days the same!*

*I look forward to my journey into the research world and getting involved with even more vital new studies.*



**For any further information about items in this newsletter, please get in touch with us!**



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