

# Patients to benefit following clinical research boost

- UK continues to be a world leader in delivery of clinical research which is saving lives
- Second phase of government plan will build on work already done – including halving approval times for clinical trials
- Plan will enable innovative research to be carried out more quickly, helping to bust the Covid backlogs

Patients across the UK will benefit from a super-charged clinical research system, backed by £175 million of dedicated investment, which will save lives across the country.

The UK-wide plan published today (Thursday 30 June) will enable innovative research to be carried out more quickly, helping patients access cutting-edge treatments sooner, speeding up diagnosis and helping to bust the Covid backlogs. It will:

- Increase the amount of research and the size of the workforce putting the UK at the centre of cutting edge and global clinical studies
- Improve the quality of research by broadening responsibility and accountability for studies across the NHS
- Ensure studies address the needs and challenges facing the NHS, including improving inclusivity and accessibility
- Take advantage of opportunities outside the EU to reduce regulations allowing for safe, speedy and flexible research
- Improve participation in research across the UK by investment in digitally focused trials

This will further cement to UK's position as a world leader in life sciences and the delivery of clinical research, and follows the country's successful development and rollout out of Covid vaccinations.

The plan – which sets out the second phase of work through 2022-2025 to achieve the vision for The Future of UK Clinical Research Delivery – includes £150 million of additional funding from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) and £25 million additional funding from other delivery partners in the UK Clinical Research Recovery, Resilience and Growth Programme.

The second phase will build on work already done, including halving the approval times for new clinical trials.

The £175 million investment is on top of up to £200 million funding announced earlier this year to strengthen the data infrastructure in the devolved administrations to enable better research and cement the UK's status as a global life sciences superpower.

The continued investment means clinical trials can take place more quickly

with a strengthened workforce and improved technology, helping patients take part virtually, which is already benefiting the whole of the UK, with examples including the delivery of antiviral treatments to protect vulnerable people from Covid.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

We are bolstering clinical research to improve healthcare for patients across the UK, by providing our world-leading experts with the tools needed to deliver cutting edge scientific developments, grow the workforce and harness digital innovations.

As a global life sciences superpower, we have led the world on vaccines and antiviral treatments and today's plan will ensure we continue to be at the forefront of clinical research to save lives and bust the Covid backlog.

Minister for Technology, Innovation and Life Sciences Lord Kamall said:

Our world leading scientists and clinicians proved time and again during the Covid pandemic they are at the cutting edge of innovation and scientific advancement.

We will continue to support them by providing the funding, infrastructure and workforce required for state-of-the-art clinical research which ultimately saves lives.

By working together we can protect the NHS, slash the backlog and ensure patients benefit from speedy and safe clinical research.

Significant strides to bolster research already include:

- Halving the approval times for new clinical trials, enabling them to start faster and innovative new research to be discovered more quickly
- Launching a new UK-wide professional accreditation scheme for Clinical Research Practitioners to help double the size of this important workforce and enable more research to take place
- Providing a £200 million investment in health data infrastructure in England to strengthen the data infrastructure in the devolved administrations to enable better research

Improving the UK's ability to harness technology and conduct studies virtually and in the community, such as the PANORAMIC trial of antiviral treatments for Covid and the RELIEVE IBS-D virtual trial designed to help people with IBS-D manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life.

Professor Lucy Chappell, Chief Executive of the NIHR, said:

I am delighted to be working with such a strong and broad cross-

sector partnership to transform the future of research delivery.

I know we all want to deliver real change for patients and researchers, and these plans mark our shared commitment to strengthen our drive for efficient, innovative and patient-centred research that meets the health and care challenges of the future.

Robin Swann, Minister for Health, Northern Ireland Executive, said:

The recommendations contained in this plan will build on and strengthen the important contribution that Northern Ireland has already made to local, UK and global research.

They will draw on local leadership, the commitment of our health and social care staff to ensuring that patients are offered participation in trials and are supported through them, and the willingness of the public to be part of, and partners in these studies. Research should be integral to practice in health and social care, and recovery, resilience and growth of this research is vital to improving the health and wellbeing of the people of Northern Ireland. This new plan provides us with the foundations to achieve this.

Humza Yousaf, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Scottish Government said:

The UK clinical research strategy, published last year, set out an ambitious vision to realise the true potential of clinical research. Over the last year, we have worked with our partners across the research community, across nations and across sectors progressing our shared goal of a more innovative and resilient research system with clinical research embedded in the NHS.

This is vital to NHS recovery, and the phase 2 plan published today sets out key areas of focus for the next three years. Scotland is proud to be part of this work – by building on our combined research strengths across the UK we can make the vision a reality, help shape the future of healthcare and improve people's lives for years to come.

Health and Social Services Minister Eluned Morgan, Welsh Government, said:

The UK clinical research strategy published last year was an important catalyst for a new way of working to drive the research agenda across the UK as we emerge from the pandemic.

Wales is proud to be a key partner in building increased resilience

in the research sector, embedding research in the NHS and driving innovation that will improve care, wellbeing and treatments here in Wales and further afield.

I look forward to working with the other devolved nations and with Health and Care Research Wales to drive through these ambitious plans that will support the life sciences agenda, as well as tackle health inequalities and improve the health of people across the UK.