

NHS

**University Hospital
Southampton**
NHS Foundation Trust



RESEARCH FOR IMPACT

2023-2028

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*Front Page Photograph Dedication: 'Nurse and Baby' was the winning entry in the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) photo competition in 2014. It captures our dear friend and colleague Sue Mapstone at work with the babies she loved in the NIHR Southampton Clinical Research Facility (CRF). She had a 24 year career at UHS, first as an orthopaedic nurse in child health before joining the CRF paediatric team in 2012. She was a dedicated, expert research nurse whose joy is so well captured in this beautiful photo. @UHSResNurses use the photo as our twitter profile and it is still used

by NIHR. Tragically research had not progressed fast enough to treat her cancer and Sue died in 2018. Sue was supported to remain at work for as long as she was able to do so and was a positive and loving presence. The CRF courtyard was rededicated to her memory and she remains much loved and very much missed and a reminder of why we strive to make as many opportunities for research as possible.





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“A LEADING
TEACHING HOSPITAL
WITH A GROWING,
REPUTABLE AND
INNOVATIVE
RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT
PORTFOLIO.”



FOREWORD BY PAUL GRUNDY – CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

Clinical research plays a crucial role in addressing health challenges, as highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic. University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS) was at the forefront of that global effort to develop vaccines, drugs and testing. We were there because we are one of the largest and most prolific teaching hospitals for research in the NHS.

In 2021 we marked our 50th year as a research-active, university teaching hospital. Evidence shows that hospitals engaged in research achieve better outcomes for patients, providing early access to new and emerging therapies to drive direct benefits on the quality of care provided. Add in improved staff satisfaction and morale, with better retention and lower vacancy rates, and you have high-performing, high quality care. We look towards the next 50 years from a position of strength and confidence in research. Post-pandemic, our strategic partnership with the University of Southampton (UoS) is stronger than ever.

We are at the centre of regional efforts to combine research strengths to meet real need. We do this because we know the NHS must evolve: by using insights from experience and research, by embracing innovations and by changing service delivery to better serve patients' needs. This is all recognised in the NHS constitution¹, in NHS England's long-term plan², and by the Care Quality Commission (CQC)³.

Our intent is to harness research to offer world-class, evidence-informed care to attract and retain the best people. By doing so, we aim to provide the best outcomes for all, including those with the most serious and complex needs. We see this driving a better future for our patients, staff and the community's region wide. We are committed to delivering healthcare research with impact across the organisation - it's what we believe in, and what we do best.

Paul Grundy

Paul Grundy
Chief Medical Officer

 **PIONEERING RESEARCH
AND INNOVATION**



VISION STATEMENT

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**“OUR VISION IS TO
DELIVER RESEARCH
WITH IMPACT TO
BRING THE FUTURE OF
HEALTHCARE CLOSER
TO TODAY.”**

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Through our established clinical research centres of excellence, we enhance health and quality-of-life by improving resilience to disease, injury and the consequences of ageing across the lifecourse through translational research, large-scale longitudinal studies and the use of national disease registries for both discovery and clinical trials.

EXCELLENCE ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE

Improving **lifelong health and resilience** by addressing patient and population needs through better nutrition, exercise, and management of lifestyle factors like smoking, alcohol use, obesity, and chronic disease risk.

Our **allergy and respiratory disease** research improves outcomes by creating new tests, therapies, and treatments from lab discoveries to increase patient, community and healthcare system resilience.

Harnessing computer science, artificial intelligence and exploration of societal implications to create a trusted and trustworthy **learning healthcare system**.

Developing new solutions to prevent, diagnose, and treat **infectious diseases**, including **antimicrobial resistance**, through early intervention, transmission reduction, and point-of-care diagnostics.

Perioperative and Critical Care use individualised care and shared decision making to improve survival, recovery and quality of life for those experiencing surgery or critical illness.

Our **cancer** research focuses on harnessing the body's immune system to fight cancer through immunotherapy, discovering biological mechanisms to develop ground-breaking new treatments.

Using AI to analyse large datasets of ophthalmic images to help diagnose and manage **eye diseases**, optimise treatment plans, and predict disease progression.

Improving **musculoskeletal** health through the development and testing of lifestyle, behavioural, and pharmacological interventions, based on observational studies, and using these findings to influence health policy.

Advances in imaging, biomarkers, large datasets, and AI are helping researchers better understand the underlying mechanisms of **dementia and neuro-degenerative diseases**. This can lead to earlier detection and identification of new targets for treatment and prevention trials.



OUR MISSION

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“OUR MISSION IS TO SEAMLESSLY INTEGRATE AND DELIVER RESEARCH THAT SUPPORTS AND ENHANCES OUR CLINICAL SERVICES TO ACHIEVE WORLD CLASS CARE.”

We are one of the UK's leading teaching hospitals, known for its research excellence. We are committed to building that reputation locally, regionally, and internationally through the quality and impact of our research. We aim to constantly surpass the benchmarks set by our peers and become a leader in the field.

Together with our patients, communities and partners, we aim to advance healthcare, and work to ensure our research meets real world needs, faster.



NATIONAL DRIVERS

We must now focus our research excellence on the nation's post-pandemic research priorities and environment. Central to this are the real-world health needs and inequalities of our communities, as evidenced by the pandemic-exacerbated health inequalities. The **Levelling Up agenda**⁴ and **Core20Plus5**⁵ are shaping these national research priorities and geographical funding allocations.

The regions, and the Integrated Care Systems, are the lenses for focussing much of this effort (see below). Yet the UK is also aiming at a better, more attractive post-pandemic life science ecosystem. Several strategies and position papers have converged to shape this national agenda.

The **Life Sciences Vision**⁶ and the **UK Research and Development Roadmap**⁷ are key. Both support research prioritisation according to health and social care needs, promote rapid NHS uptake of innovations and an attractive business environment. The **Care Quality Commission's 2021 Strategy**⁸ encourages clinical service participation in research to look at local care provision's impact on outcomes and health inequalities.

The **Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) Areas of Research Interest**¹⁰ sets key focus areas. These include:

- Early action to prevent poor health outcomes
- Reducing pressures on the NHS and social care
- Shaping and supporting the health and social care workforce of the future
- Delivering research and innovation that reduces health disparities and brings health and economic benefits for the most deprived 20% of the population.

The National Institute for Health & Care Research (NIHR) lays out how national health and care research will tackle these. Its **Best Research for Best Health: The Next Chapter**⁹ emphasizes the need to:

- Increase capacity in public health and social care research
- Integrate research delivery into 'real world' health and care settings
- Adopt an inclusive approach to research that embeds equality, diversity, and inclusion^{11,12}.

DHSC's **Saving and Improving Lives: Future of Clinical Research Delivery**¹³ supports adoption of new practices and approaches. Digital and virtual systems are a key focus here, aiming to enable engagement with participants. The Association of the British Pharmaceuticals Industry (ABPI) **An opportunity for growth: Clinical research in the UK**¹⁴ gives the industry view. It prioritises strong NHS research capacity and capability to meet key needs for reliability and predictability in research study delivery.

The **Health Research Authority's (HRA) Make it Public**¹⁵ aims to make information about health and social care research studies publicly available in a meaningful and timely way.



REGIONAL SYSTEMS

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are the vehicle for the NHS Long Term Plan. This aims to improve health and wellbeing for everyone by delivering high-quality, sustainable health services. ICSs promote research and innovation with shared outcome measures monitored by NHS England. The **Hampshire & Isle of Wight Integrated Care Strategy**¹⁶ highlights the importance of research evidence in informing healthcare services. It also recognises the need to do research where there are gaps in that evidence.

Key regional research needs have been defined by Wessex Academic Health Science Network, in partnership with our NIHR infrastructure. Corresponding to national priorities, these are:



These inform ICS research prioritisation and the work of Wessex Health Partners (WHP). WHP brings together NHS Trusts and Higher Education Institutes. It aims to create a collaborative regional research and innovation ecosystem. It is our platform for combining our health and care research strengths to tackle our communities' real-world challenges.



LOCAL CONTEXT

Community Needs: We have a major influence on the health and wellbeing of local people. We can harness our research to drive positive change in our communities. By engaging with them, we can tackle health inequalities to help address marked variation in outcomes and drive social and economic value. As a Civic University, our strategic partner University of Southampton (UoS) shares this commitment. We will work with them, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations in this.

Quality and Performance: Our research activity supports the UHS intent to be CQC 'outstanding'. Research enhances the performance and quality of healthcare organisations. Research active hospitals achieve better patient outcomes, survival rates^{17,19} and experience¹⁸. Recruitment to interventional trials correlates with higher CQC ratings¹⁹. Research activity fosters staff attitudes and behaviour that improve the care they give²⁰.

People: Research also supports our People Strategy aim to attract and retain the most talented people. Research active hospitals are a more attractive place to work²¹. Research-engaged staff report positive outcomes for themselves, including enriched professional development opportunities, greater recognition and reward and reduced burnout²².

Culture: A culture that values research is key to realising our ambitions. The pandemic was pivotal in making the value of research crystal clear. The NIHR's Ok to Ask²⁵ campaign shows that patients are keen to discuss research. Our aim now is to build on this, to ensure recognition and reward of staff for their involvement in research, and to fully integrate it into our thinking and planning²⁷.

Integrating research and healthcare delivery like this turns research findings into better services faster²⁶. That's something the CQC recognises and values. Their **Inspection Key lines of Enquiry in the Well-led domain**, enable a Trust to set a framework for research³.

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“RESEARCH-ENGAGED STAFF
REPORT POSITIVE OUTCOMES
FOR THEMSELVES, INCLUDING
ENRICHED PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES,
GREATER RECOGNITION AND
REWARD AND
REDUCED BURNOUT.”



RESEARCH FINANCE

Clinical and applied health research is fundamental to improving the UK's health and wealth. This holds true for our Trust and our city too.

UHS' research income has grown by 138% in the last 5 years from £19.5m to £46.4m per annum.

By doing research well, we have secured a 70% uplift in external funding, with growth in UHS hosted infrastructure from £34.5M to £50.6M (based on the value of previous awards).

Every £1 of NIHR infrastructure funding we receive leverages a further £10 of external funding. Much of this is invested within our clinical services, as described below.

We intend to continue driving investment into our Trust, our city and our communities. All whilst advancing clinical care.

Key impact reports have shown that:

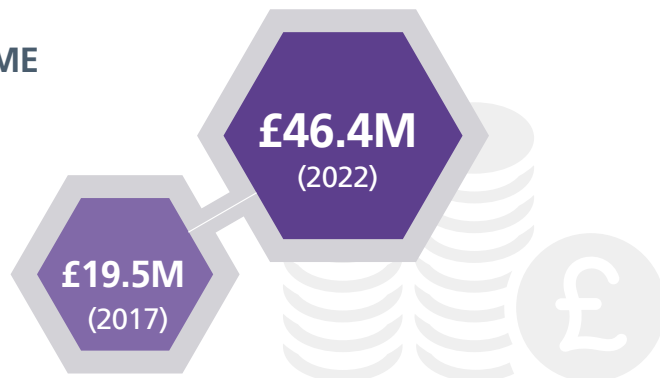
- Every £1 invested in medical research now generates a return equivalent to 25p every year, in perpetuity²³
- Commercial clinical trials yield returns of £9k per patient to the NHS²⁴

These translate at the local level: in funding for new jobs, facilities and technology; in early access to cutting-edge treatments and diagnostics - and service commissioning opportunities; and in growth of a skilled, high-performing workforce providing quality, efficient care.

RESEARCH INCOME HAS GROWN BY

138%

IN THE LAST 5 YEARS



Staff numbers within the research infrastructure have doubled over the last decade, increasing headcount from 224 in 2012 to 417 in 2022.



UHS invested £15m+ in 2021 over 5 years to support our research leaders and drive emerging therapeutic interventions and research enabled by data, digital innovation and AI.



OUR KEY STRATEGY GOALS

Pioneering Research & Innovation: Our ambition is to be a leading teaching hospital with a growing, reputable and innovative research and development portfolio that attracts the best people and efficiently delivers the best possible research, treatments and care for our patients.

To achieve our ambition of **World Class People Delivering World Class Care** we will:

INSPIRE patients, our people and partners to become involved in our research.

We will do that by sharing the lifesaving, life-enhancing impacts of our research. We will enable our workforce's research activity, improving performance and patient outcomes. We will harness research expertise across disciplines to tackle current healthcare challenges and assess clinical practices. We will promote evidence-based care to realise better services, faster.

ENGAGE with our patients, communities, and strategic partners.

We will do that by focussing on real needs and sharing priorities. Through this, we will increase access to our research. We will increase the diversity of those taking part in, and shaping, our research. We will increase the relevance and quality of our work. We will work through the UHS Always Improving Strategy to support evidence-informed care.

DELIVER high quality clinical research, through clinical integration and world-class research support.

We will do that by always improving, aligning with UHS clinical strategy, and growing our infrastructure. Through this, we will ensure the best research access, environments and support for public and colleagues' region wide. We will have, and give others, complete confidence in the quality, safety, and impact of the research we do together.



RESEARCH FOR IMPACT

OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Pioneering Research and Innovation - one of five pillars in our strategic framework and vital to the successful delivery of our ambition of World Class People delivering World Class Care.



Our strategy goals will be delivered by integrating with strategic initiatives across all pillars.



WHAT ARE WE AIMING FOR?

INSPIRE

Our people excel, bringing tomorrow's world-class care closer to today



OUR PEOPLE EXCEL, BRINGING TOMORROW'S WORLD-CLASS CARE CLOSER TO TODAY

ENCOURAGE - our staff to engage in research, highlighting the patient outcome and experience benefits, and the impact on the services we provide.

CREATE - an environment where staff have the time and skills to take part in research.

PROVIDE - leadership and a culture which values and promotes research.

DEVELOP - our future research leaders across all healthcare professions, supported by fair and transparent career progression across the UHS/UoS strategic partnership.

EMBED - research within clinical services, supporting them in providing leading-edge treatments and care.

OFFER - patients access to the latest techniques and therapies through research as a routine care option.

ENSURE - our workforce see and maximize their role in turning research into better healthcare and patient outcomes.

ADDRESS - system challenges by using research to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

CREATE A LEARNING HEALTH SYSTEM - to maximise research outputs to inform care, drive sustainability and realise the full benefits of being a university teaching hospital.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE?

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR MEASURES

Develop a set of initiatives to recognise and reward staff for engaging in research, determine realistic goals and achieve by 2028.

By 2025 have clear research-related career pathways for all healthcare professions across the UHS/UoS partnership.

By 2024 show a clear return on investment of the Research Leaders Programme (RLP), and establish the RLP as a sustainable, on-going programme by 2028.

Achieve a consistently positive research participant experience, as measured by the NIHR Patient Research Experience Survey (PRES) and increase number and diversity of participants completing PRES by 20% per annum.

By 2024 agree UHS/UoS collaborative clinical research centres of excellence, and on areas for strategic growth.

By 2028, deliver at least 25 CRN portfolio studies requiring cross system working in partnership with local NHS organisations and the CRN.

By 2024 have a financially sustainable Wessex Clinical Research Hub Network, with a 10% increase in research recruitment per annum.

Develop a set of peer benchmarking metrics by 2024, determine realistic goal to increase our performance and achieve by 2028.

Develop mechanisms to capture research impact by 2024, determine realistic goal to increase and achieve by 2028.



WHAT ARE WE AIMING FOR?

ENGAGE

Our people, patients, partners and communities make our research relevant and impactful



OUR PEOPLE, PARTNERS, PATIENTS AND COMMUNITIES MAKE OUR RESEARCH RELEVANT AND IMPACTFUL

INCLUDE - by engaging across communities and groups to identify the research important to them and promote participation in research.

SEEK - to align research participation with disease prevalence and social determinants of health to increase the impact of our research on patients and the wider community.

DEEPEN - relationships with clinical specialities, support clinical research centres of excellence and alignment of clinical academic development across the UHS/UoS strategic partnership.

STRENGTHEN & BROADEN - our strategic partnership with the University of Southampton to address national priorities, meet future healthcare challenges, secure research funding, and drive impact.

REALISE - opportunities for inter-disciplinary research to meet clinical needs and address NHS system challenges.

DELIVER - Wessex Health Partners (WHP) to create system-wide partnerships to improve population health, patient outcomes, and economic development focused on real-world challenges and un-met clinical need.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE?

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR MEASURES

By 2028, increase the number of UHS staff (outside research infrastructure) involved in research by 30%.

Increase the number of formal research roles such as research champions, research internships and joint research/clinical posts by 10% per annum.

Improvement of research staff satisfaction in development opportunities, as measured by the annual NHS Staff Survey.

Achieve an annual increase in the number of UHS patients being approached and participating in research studies.

Develop systems to capture research participation and socioeconomic & protected characteristics data by 2024.

Increase research participation mapped to local socioeconomic and protected characteristics population data by 2028.

Increase number and diversity of public partners actively engaged in our research per annum.

Increase number of Care Groups actively involved in strategic research planning by 2 per annum.

By 2025, deliver a consensus statement addressing collaborative working across improvement, innovation, research and teaching to deliver a learning health care system.

By 2028, increase number of interdisciplinary and operational projects across UHS/UoS partnership by 25%.

Deliver 10 UHS practice-changing impact case studies delivered through Wessex Health Partners by 2028.



WHAT ARE WE AIMING FOR?

DELIVER

Effective, efficient
clinical research,
embedded in
everything we do



EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT CLINICAL RESEARCH, EMBEDDED IN EVERYTHING WE DO

RESPOND - to national initiatives and policies implementing efficient clinical research delivery.

IMPROVE - equity of access to research & the diversity of participants, by making research easier to take part in and more accessible for our communities.

ENSURE - we have adequate systems, facilities and workforce to deliver clinical research with high quality data.

SUSTAIN - a research workforce with the right skills and expertise to optimise clinical research delivery.

BE ATTRACTIVE - to our strategic partners through high quality, efficient study delivery, with clear processes and well-communicated timelines.

ESTABLISH - our strengths within the Integrated Care System, delivering experimental and translational medicine and med-tech trials.

USE REGIONAL DELIVERY MODELS - that utilise networked pathways to create opportunities for regional participation in research, focused on our communities underserved by research.

ENHANCE - our existing research programs and infrastructure, and grow our national and international reputation by creating sustainable partnerships aligned with national research priorities.

CREATE A HEALTH & INNOVATION CAMPUS AT ADANAC PARK - supporting excellence through the Southampton Centre for Emerging Therapies & Technologies (SETT Centre). This will be co-located with an outpatients hub to increase opportunities for patient recruitment and enhance participation in research.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE?

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR MEASURES

Meet Trust Board Key Performance Indicators and national metrics for site set up, time to target and recruitment activity for research studies, with an initial 20% reduction in study set up times by 2024.

Deliver national metrics for site set up in clinical trials, oncology and advanced therapy pharmacy.

Maintain a balanced portfolio of early-phase experimental medicine research activity (never less than 30%) that are relevant to our populations needs and our clinical research centres of excellence.

Secure top 5 ranking for recruitment, weighted for complexity, to CRN portfolio studies for established clinical research centres of excellence, and top 10 ranking for new clinical research centres of excellence by 2028.

Increase the number of Associate, Principal and Chief Investigators across all healthcare professions by 50%, 30% and 10%, respectively by 2028.

For 5% of NIHR CRN portfolio studies to be led by UHS/UoS Chief Investigators.

Improvement of researcher satisfaction across the UHS/UoS strategic partnership with research support, as measured by an annual research set up and delivery survey.

By 2028, achieve a 50% increase in SETT research projects in 1) advanced therapies, 2) medtech and 3) data and AI delivered.

By 2028, increase total value of income to UHS through grant applications by 30% and the percentage of successful grant applications led by UHS by 10%.

Increase research income to £40m per annum by 2028, including a 50% increase in income from commercial research.

Secure existing infrastructure awards with a financial uplift at renewal (BRC, CRF, ARC, ECMC, RRDN, CTU, CRUK, MRC, RDS) and two new research infrastructure awards, including WHP regional bids, by 2028.

Grant funding leveraged by the NIHR Southampton infrastructure to be at least 12-fold increase on NIHR core infrastructure funding by 2028.



HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR GOALS?

We will develop an implementation plan to deliver our strategic goals. This will incorporate critical deliverables into our annual corporate objectives through:



WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE?

Deaths from cancer, circulatory and respiratory diseases are the greatest causes of the differences in life expectancy between the most and least deprived in Hampshire & Isle of Wight Integrated Care System. We will address the challenges faced by our ageing population and the growing number of people living with dementia, multiple long-term conditions and frailty through new clinical research centres of excellence, and grow our research infrastructure to ensure we stay at the forefront of clinical research.

EXCELLENCE ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE

We will prioritise interdisciplinary operational research that utilises mathematical modelling, statistical analysis, and optimisation techniques to address NHS system challenges in areas such as patient flow, discharge, and demand management.

We will accelerate our research capabilities in emerging therapies, Med Tech, and Data and AI through the Southampton Centre for Emerging Therapies and Technology (SETT) to deliver the newest treatment options as part of routine care, and enhance how we build the clinical services of the future.

Drive impact through our Southampton Centre for Research Engagement and Impact (SCREI) to ensure that what we do brings benefit to our people and communities.

Work with our partners to enhance and grow our infrastructure to support faster discovery and translation of research evidence into clinical care.

Grow further Research Centres of Excellence (RCoE) focused on specialist services including paediatrics, dermatology, gastroenterology, cardiovascular, rheumatology, brain health and surgery, across the lifespan.

As a clinical centre of excellence for maternity care and foetal medicine, we will study the impact of environmental, behavioural, and social factors on health during pregnancy and offspring development.

Embed genomic and omic sequencing into clinical pathways to facilitate predictive and precision medicine for cancer and rare diseases.

Our trauma research covers the entire spectrum of trauma care, from injury to rehabilitation. We will utilise our data and AI capabilities across the PRANA network to identify targets for trauma prevention and improve clinical decision-making.

We will leverage the promise of vaccine research to advance our ability to prevent and treat infectious diseases, as well as other health conditions such as cancer.



GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

The UHS Research & Development Steering Group (RDSG) provides oversight and assurance for this strategy. It will review it with patients and partners regularly. Together they will ensure it remains relevant in the evolving clinical research environment. Their primary concern will be our aim of being a world-class research centre, delivering high-quality patient care.

Annual objectives will be set based on the five-year strategic plan. Strategic initiatives and work plans will be detailed in annual plans (linked to corporate objectives). These will be approved by RDSG, Trust Executive Committee and Trust Board.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be reported to Trust Board monthly. KPIs will focus on research quality, relevance, and impact, plus measures of research culture. KPIs will be benchmarked against national performance targets and our peers. A more detailed performance framework that aligns with our strategic goals will support these KPIs.

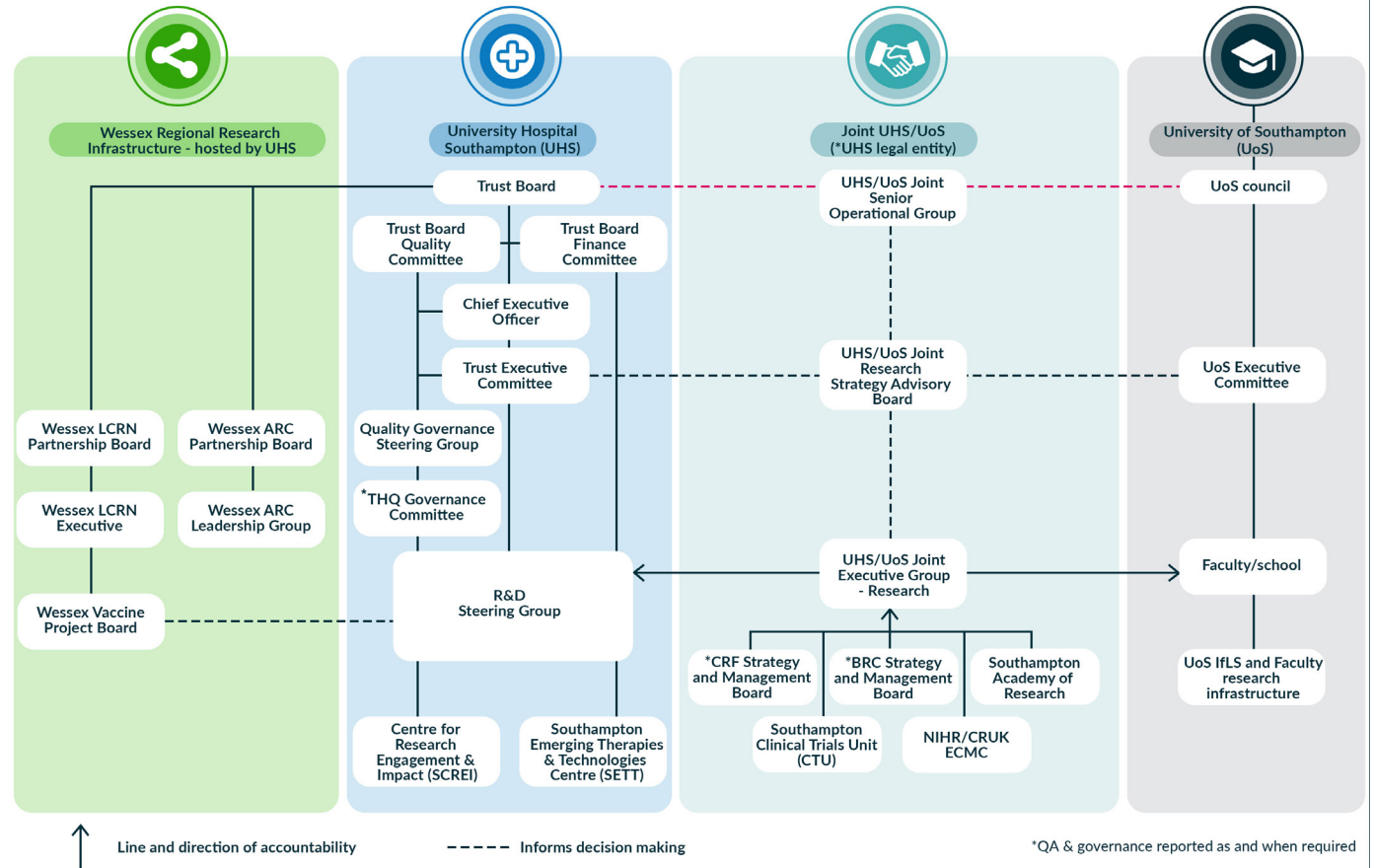
The Research and Development Steering Group (RDSG) will review performance metrics monthly, and Divisional R&D Leads will review performance within their clinical divisions. Our KPIs will be reviewed annually and amended as required.



GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

The University of Southampton and Wessex Health Partners (WHP) are key partners. Their objectives align with UHS R&D. The UHS/UoS Joint Research Strategy Advisory Board (JRSB) is the means of coordinating and aligning our strategies. It provides leadership and assurance on strategy, policy, culture and finance related to translational and clinical research across the partnership. It reports to the Trust Executive Committee, UoS Executive Committee and UHS/UoS Joint Senior Operational Group. A WHP Partnership Board will govern WHP. An Executive Group will be accountable for implementing WHP's strategy and work programmes.

The Joint UHS/UoS Executive Group - Research (JEG-R) is a sub-committee of JRSB. Created to provide accountability for joint infrastructure, it will continue that oversight.





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