Focus on Airedale NHS Foundation Trust

This Progress report, along with regular articles, has a number of features on the Airedale NHS Foundation Trust

1 UPDATE: WEST YORKSHIRE COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL RESEARCH NETWORK

1.1 WYCLRN AND TRUST PORTFOLIO ACTIVITY

Portfolio activity is the activity on projects that have been adopted onto the National Institute for Health Research portfolio and it is the basis on which Trust’s performance and research support funding is based. The portfolio activity within the WYCLRN currently stands at 775 studies with 25398 patients recruited for 2011/12 and 653 studies and 19516 patients recruited to date for 2012/13 (information current January 2013).

Figure 1 and Figure 2 below show the portfolio activity for 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13 (as at Jan 2013).

![Figure 1: Portfolio Studies Active within WYCLRN Area](image1.png)

![Figure 2: Patient Recruitment into Active WYCLRN Portfolio Studies](image2.png)
1.2 WYCLRN CORE RESEARCH FUNDING

The application process for Core Research Funding for 2013/14 (for period October 2013 to March 2014) has just been launched. Information is required from research teams on the funding required for staff working on NIHR Portfolio projects, current NIHR projects working on and future studies that research teams are likely to be involved in.

2 RESEARCH PROFILE: AIREDALE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Introduction

The past 12 months has seen a number of changes within the R&D Department at Airedale. These include changes of staff due to retirements and relocation, and a broadening of the research portfolio into new specialties. Whilst the bulk of research is concentrated in Oncology and Stroke, there are now a significant number of studies open in Cardiology, Paediatrics and Gastroenterology. A Rheumatology research nurse has been appointed and is due to commence on 1st March 2013, with 3 trials already in the pipeline. Commercial activity is also starting to increase and this is a major focus for 2013/14 with two commercial portfolio trials in oncology firmly in the pipeline and 2 non-portfolio trials already up and running.

Airedale does not yet lead on any portfolio studies, but there is interest in applying for programme grants from two specialty groups, and the intention is to follow up the research proposals early in 2013.

2.1 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH AT AIREDALE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

The key areas of research activity by specialty and by type are illustrated in Figures 3 and 4 below.

![Fig 3. Trials Portfolio Activity by Speciality Group](image-url)
Currently a total of 136 studies are running at Airedale, approximately half of which are on the National Portfolio.

**Research Governance**

A research approvals tracker, developed by our Research Governance Manager, has streamlined and improved the Trust research approvals process in line with National objectives. The median average approval time for Airedale is just less than 10 days, against a National target of 30 days. The tracker has attracted regional and National interest, and a representative of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) has been to the Trust to have a look at it with a view to using it as an example of best practice. In tandem with the tracker, a new database has also been developed which enables recruitment monitoring against National targets.

Currently the team are looking at new strategies to achieve recruitment to time and target, with an emphasis on forward planning to avoid periods of relatively low activity.

**Training & Education**

A number of in-house research training courses have been held throughout the year. The Trust Health Information Specialist has run courses on critical appraisal, use of internet resources and literature searching in the library. We have also hosted Good Clinical Practice updates, which are essential for those engaging in clinical trials. We continue to keep a record of all staff publications and presentations, and these are submitted as part of our Quality Accounts.

Good Clinical Practice training is an essential requirement for clinicians engaging in interventional research. This year, two of the research nurses became GCP facilitators and have now run their first in-house GCP update courses.

**Spotlight on Gastroenterology Research**

Over the past 2 years the Trust has opened 4 Gastroenterology portfolio trials with 2 active PIs. The Trust now has a dedicated Clinical Trials Coordinator for Gastroenterology trials and currently a new endoscopy unit is being built within the hospital in which it is hoped that better engagement might be made between the research team, patients and staff.

**Spotlight on Diabetes Research**

The SCOUT diabetes trial has just been completed after 6 months of intensive work recruiting healthy volunteers which largely came from the staff population in the Trust. The SCOUT DS is a noninvasive diabetes screening device that employs fluorescence and reflectance spectroscopy to measure changes in the dermis on the underside of the forearm, indicative of developing diabetes. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the accuracy of SCOUT DS, capillary glucose and a diabetes risk questionnaire for identifying pre-diabetes and type 2 diabetes. The SCOUT DS® device uses a painless
beam of light (both visible and ultraviolet light [invisible light present in sunlight]) to measure substances in the skin of the forearm known to be present in people with abnormal blood sugar levels. Over 330 volunteers were recruited to this commercial study.

Pharmacy Success

Carl Booth, the Trust Lead Pharmacist for Cancer Services and Clinical Trials, has recently been appointed to the BOPA (British Oncology Pharmacy Association) committee and has been given the job of liaising with the Faculty of Cancer Pharmacy in order to promote collaborative research and audit amongst oncology pharmacists and technicians across the UK. He will be judging the poster abstracts for next year’s symposium and helping to introduce a joint BOPA / FCP research strategy.

Carole Paley
R&D Manager

3 RESEARCHER PROFILE

Dr Richard Shenderey, Consultant Gastroenterologist

I am consultant gastroenterologist trained in the North East and Yorkshire who is developing a research interest at AGH and is currently PI for PRED4 and PRED5 and hoping to continue further non-CTIMP and potentially introduce CTIMP studies at Airedale in the future. I attend meetings of the West Yorkshire CLRN on a regular basis to help improve links between local hospitals and raise Airedale General Hospital’s profile

4 RESEARCH ACTIVITY

4.1 RESEARCH FUNDING

Grants Awarded:

- 280k from the Health Foundation to fund an Improvement Science Fellowship Programme with BIHR and the University of Leeds.

5 RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT

5.1 BRADFORD RESEARCH SUPPORT UNIT

The Bradford Research Support Unit (BRSU) within the BIHR has now been operational for nearly 9 months. This is a venture with the University of York and the unit provides help and support to researchers in developing their research. Methodological, statistical and health economic support is available. The Unit to date has provided support to a number of researchers and also offered a half day training course.

5.2 BTHFT RESEARCH SUPPORT & GOVERNANCE

The Research Support and Governance Office at BTHFT have spent a considerable amount of time over the last few months looking at research performance in terms of recruiting to time and target and when the first patient is recruited after NHS Permission has been given for research studies. Quarterly reports are now required by the Department of Health on this information. The Research Support and Governance Office has been working with researchers in two areas around this:

- A new system of working with research teams before any formal NHS approvals is requested to ensure that the feasibility of the research project is undertaken early and it is clear that the organisation can conduct and host the research. This will help in ensuring that the formal NHS approval of projects can be undertaken in a timely manner and that the trial can be started as soon as the NHS approval is given.

- The Research Support and Governance Office is piloting a new database system within the Trust on behalf of the WYCLRN which will capture real time recruitment and research activity information. This will enable the Trust and the WYCLRN to have up to date performance information and will help with submission of performance reports to the Department of Health.

6 BIHR ACTIVITY

6.1 BIHR CLINICAL RESEARCH FACILITY
A small extension is to be built on to the CRF to provide much needed lab space for the facility. The new lab will house a fridge, -20°C freezer, a newly purchased -80°C freezer and a centrifuge.

7 RESEARCH PERFORMANCE

7.1 NUMBER OF STUDIES ON UKCRN PORTFOLIO AND ACCRURAL INFORMATION (EXCLUDES COMMERCIAL STUDIES)

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Table 1: Accrual figures for WYCLRN 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13
(Figures taken from WYCLRN portfolio update Jan 2013)