

The NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) West Midlands

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) clinical research network (CRN) West Midlands is one of 15 such local networks in England, delivering research across 30 health specialties, with more than 800 different studies currently available across the region.

In the last ten years the Network has recruited more than half a million participants into high quality studies across the West Midlands – 64,278 of these in the last 12 months alone, the highest number in the country.

Participants have been recruited from every NHS trust in the West Midlands, from more than half of the region's GP practices, and in hospices, nursing homes, pharmacies, schools and prisons.

The enthusiastic engagement of NHS trainees and physicians is essential to sustain and build on this success, particularly given the many competing demands on clinician time and resources.

Ultimately, clinical research means patients get access to new treatments, interventions and medicines, and investment in research means better, more cost-effective patient care. The network is part of the National

Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network, the clinical research delivery arm of the NHS, and is the largest CRN in England by geography and by population. It supports clinicians to originate and deliver clinical research throughout the entire research pathway from the idea stage, through study set up and delivery, and in some cases, follow up, ensuring that clinical research occupies the place it deserves to in the day-to-day work of the NHS across the region.

It helps to increase the opportunities for patients to take part in clinical research, ensures that studies are carried out efficiently, and supports the Government's Strategy for UK Life Sciences by improving the environment for commercial clinical research.

Many research support posts in the NHS are funded by the Network, and training is provided so that researchers have access to experienced staff who can carry out the additional practical activities required by their study – such as obtaining patient consent for participation, carrying out extra tests, and collecting the clinical data required for the research.

Funding is also provided to meet the costs of using facilities such as

scanners and x-rays that are needed in the course of the study: practical help is also available to help in identifying and recruiting patients into high quality studies, so that researchers can be confident of completing the study on time, and on target.

For more information, please visit the Network website: www.crn.nihr.ac.uk/west-midlands.



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