

UK CLINICAL RESEARCH DELIVERY

A cross-sector programme

November 2025 Update

This monthly update summarises recent news, announcements, guidance, and updates on progress made to propel the aims of the UK Clinical Research Delivery (UKCRD) programme of work.

As such, this update provides examples of how organisations individually and collaboratively are achieving the collective goal of making the UK a world leader in clinical trials.

Highlights

- The Chief Scientific Adviser for the Department of Health and Social Care and the National Medical Director of NHS England have shared a letter with NHS Trusts Boards on supporting the national ambitions for life sciences research and the 150-day target on set-up of clinical trials. Click [here](#) to read more.
- An FAQ focussing on questions around the government's 150-day set-up target has been published on the new UKCRD website. Click [here](#) for more information.
- We now have a UKCRD website for you to bookmark (<https://ukcrd.org/>), replacing the previous microsite (with some items currently being forwarded across, so please bear with us).

UK Clinical Research Delivery Performance Indicators Report

The latest monthly [UK Clinical Research Delivery Performance Indicators Report](#) incorporates a collection of system-wide UK metrics that monitor progress towards developing a faster, more efficient and more innovative clinical research delivery system.

The indicators were developed in collaboration with the NHS, industry and medical research charities. Using data collected by the NIHR and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the monthly report is produced by the DHSC on behalf of the UK clinical research system. **The report provides transparent updates on progress towards our goals over time.**

On the following page is a snapshot of the full UK Clinical Research Delivery Performance Indicators Report. [Click here to read the full report.](#)

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Performance Indicators Report summary

UK Performance Indicator	Target	Delivery	Trend	Baseline ²	October 2025
All ³ Proportion of studies receiving a combined review decision within 60 days	99%	Maintain target	✓	100%	100%
C ⁴ Proportion of studies open to recruitment within 60 days of HRA approval letter or equivalent process used by the Devolved Administrations	90%	November 2024	●	39%	20% ⁵
C Proportion of studies recruiting first participant within 30 days of sites opening to recruitment	90%	November 2024	●	25%	0% ⁵
C Proportion of NHS trusts in England that accept the NCVR process for late-phase studies	100%	December 2023	✓	79%	100%
All Proportion of open studies on track, delivering to time and target	80%	June 2023	✓	80%	84% ⁶
All Recruitment to studies is maintained compared to the pre-pandemic baseline (61,000) ^{7, 8}	70,000 or more per month ⁹	Ongoing	✓	70,000	84,173 ⁹
C Recruitment to all commercial studies to be monitored in support of the ambition to double and double again from the pre-pandemic baseline of 3,200 ^{7, 8}	Reported per month ⁹	Ongoing	●	3,200	3,528 ⁹

² Some measures are new and therefore the baseline was established in different months.

³ All indicates a measure that applies to all studies.

⁴ 'C' indicates that it applies to commercial contract studies only.

⁵ There is a latency or lag between activity and data being recorded in the central system. This means that the data for these indicators for most recent months is often incomplete and low. The data are updated retrospectively, taking six months or more for the datasets to be fully consolidated.

⁶ Based on recruitment in England and England target.

⁷ Average per month in England only from 2015 to 2020.

⁸ Data on trial phase to be provided subsequent to implementation of digital infrastructure.

⁹ Rolling average across the previous 12 months.

Trust Level Set-Up Report

One of the deliverables of the [Study Set-Up Plan](#), a UKCRD programme of work aimed at streamlining and reforming the set-up and delivery of clinical trials, is to provide an additional monthly snapshot of site-level commercial study set-up performance. The aim of this report is to take initial steps in improving the granularity of study set-up activity to support closer to real time monitoring of system performance.

You can find the latest report here: [Trust Level Set-Up Report](#).



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News and Announcements

The following updates are from our dedicated partners from across the sector.

- The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) has awarded more than [**£14 million to GP-led primary care organisations**](#) across England to expand commercial research delivery and improve access to groundbreaking clinical trials, with 14 PC-CRDCs set up across the country.
- A [**Q&A on the Research Delivery Data & Intelligence \(RDDI\) project**](#) has been published on the UKCRD website, outlining the project's purpose and providing additional information about the work.
- The Health Research Authority (HRA) and the Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) have published a [**blog**](#) to start the six-month countdown to the upcoming UK clinical trials regulations update.
- HRA has announced plans to pilot the new [**Plan and Manage Health and Care Research Service**](#) (replacing IRAS), with 10 sponsors starting in December this year.
- MHRA has secured over [**£2 million in government support to lead three pioneering AI-driven projects**](#) that will modernise how medicines and medical technologies are tested and approved – helping patients access safe and effective treatments faster. The findings of these projects will help shape the next generation of clinical trials.
- HRA and MHRA have shared their latest [**article**](#) published in the DIA Global Forum, which looks at how embedding inclusion and diversity in UK clinical trials is central to addressing inequity.
- NIHR's [**Sex and Gender policy**](#) came into effect on 10th November 2025 – the policy is a core component of NIHR's inclusive research funding conditions.
- [**A new ground-breaking Clinical Trials Centre has opened at Ulster Hospital**](#) in Northern Ireland (NI). The facility will significantly broaden the scope and scale of research available to patients and will support the Health and Social Care Research and Development Division's "One NI" strategy for commercial research delivery across the region.
- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) have released a [**podcast**](#) with representatives from the MHRA discussing how industry will play its part in getting medicines to NHS patients faster.
- Join NIHR's upcoming November webinars - on the 27th an [**Insider's guide to developing your healthtech innovation in the UK**](#), and on the 28th NICE and NIHR - [**Enabling HealthTech Development and Uptake**](#). Register to receive a link to watch the session recordings.
- Leaders from [**across Wales's research infrastructure gathered**](#) to discuss how £22.1 million VPAG investment is unlocking the country's potential to deliver more world leading research.
- The [**Life Sciences Strategy for Scotland**](#) was recently published, setting out a vision for how Scottish life sciences will become a £25 billion sector by 2035.

*If you would like to submit an update to this monthly publication, please email [**UKCRDprogramme@dhsc.gov.uk**](mailto:UKCRDprogramme@dhsc.gov.uk).*



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