

About the NIHR Research Delivery Network

From October 2024, the current NIHR Clinical Research Network will be changing to become the [NIHR Research Delivery Network](#) (RDN). The RDN will continue to support the effective and efficient initiation and delivery of funded research across the health and care system in England for the benefit of patients, the health and care system and the economy, with a name that better reflects the scope and purpose of the network to support:

- Clinical trials and other well-designed health and social care research studies (including studies that are delivered outside of an NHS setting);
- Public health studies that require the recruitment of individuals within an NHS setting (that is, acute, ambulance, mental health, community or primary care) or an episode of care which involves contact with the NHS.

The whole of England will be supported through 12 NIHR Regional Research Delivery Networks (RRDNs). These will work with the national RDN Coordinating Centre (RDNCC) to provide a joint RDN leadership function so that the NIHR RDN as a whole functions as a single organisation with a shared vision and purpose across England. University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust will be the Host Organisation for the South West Central RRDN region.

The NIHR RRDNs will have three key roles.

- First, to provide support to research sites to enable the effective and efficient initiation and delivery of funded research across the health and care system in England.
- Second, to enable the strategic development of new and more effective research delivery capability and capacity. This will include bringing research to under-served regions and communities with major health and care needs.
- Third, to work jointly with the RDNCC in the strategic oversight of the NIHR RDN. This will ensure that the Portfolio is maintained as a cohort of high-quality, fully-funded, viable and deliverable studies. It will also ensure that the NIHR RDN as a whole serves the needs of researchers and R&D teams and is responsive to the changing domestic and global environment for health and care, life sciences and health research.

NIHR RRDNs will need to develop excellent relationships with the organisations commissioning and providing health and social care across their regions, which are mapped onto NHS regions and integrated care systems. They will help support research undertaken by those providers and at sites across the region, and promote research meeting the needs of local populations. NIHR RRDNs will work together with the RDNCC to support health and care research for the benefit of patients, the health and care system and the economy as a whole.

The RRDN Management Team, Agile Research Support Team and regional RRDN Specialty and Settings Leads will comprise the “RRDN Staff”.

The RRDN Management Team means the staff employed, or otherwise procured, by the Host Organisation to lead and manage the RRDN services and functions. This team includes the RRDN directors.

The Agile Research Support Team means the flexible team that will work peripatetically to ensure delivery of Portfolio studies across a range of activities in a range of settings, in line with need.

RRDN Specialty and Settings Leads will provide clinical leadership at regional level with a particular focus on strategic development and portfolio oversight. A Specialty is defined as a Community of Experts and comprises individuals able to relate health and care expertise to research. Specialty areas will cover all aspects of health and care provided directly to an individual, group or whole population by or under the direction of any health or care specialist. A Setting is defined as the environment in which the potential research participants are provided with care or support for their health or care needs. The Community of Experts within Settings will have expertise particular to that environment relevant to research. Settings are agnostic of Specialty and may include multiple types of organisations and research locations. RRDNs will include specified Regional Specialties and Settings Leads, as defined by the RDN Board, supported by RDN funding, working as part of the national Community of Experts.