

NHS Research & Development North West



Annual Report 2015/16

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1. Executive summary

NHS Research & Development North West bases its work on four themes – **capacity**, **collaboration**, **connections** and **communities**. Our core team and faculty associates share the values of integrity, co-creation, inclusivity, altruism and humility.

Our work during 2015/16 has focused on:

- building NHS research and development capacity
- working collaboratively
- making and supporting connections
- engaging strategically
- communicating our work
- supporting patient and public involvement
- exploring new and creative ideas
- engaging nationally and internationally
- developing our team.

This annual report summarises our recent achievements in these areas. Key activities have included the following:

- **Let's Talk Research 2015** – Following the success of Let's Talk Research 2014, the 2015 conference was held over two days to give healthcare professionals more opportunities to hear and discuss research, learn new tools and techniques, and engage with fellow researchers. With a choice of over 24 workshops delivered by leading researchers, academics and clinicians, the delegates – of which there were 110 – were able to experience a wide range of research topics. This was supported by a schedule of workshops focusing on improving the 'softer skills' and more real-life aspects of research.
- **Releasing Potential programme** – *The NHS Constitution* (Department of Health, 2013) is explicit in its commitment to 'innovation and to the promotion, conduct and use of research to improve the current and future health and care of the population'. To support delivery on this agenda, the Releasing Potential programme supports the development of early-career researchers in NHS trusts in the North West, and of clinical team leads and service managers who are developing cultures of research and innovation in clinical teams. Work to extend the reach of programme during 2015/16 has focused on making it more accessible by increasing the use of social media and ICT.
- **Academy of Creative Minds** – We created the Academy of Creative Minds, bringing the arts and sciences together in health research. It draws on the skills of a dynamic, disparate group of artists – from composers to circus performers, and from directors to writers – who will share their 'tricks of the trade' with health researchers, to build confidence and expertise in using the creative arts to convey research messages in a more powerful and meaningful way. A six-month programme will provide 32 participants with training and support in communicating research, including pre-concert performances at the Manchester Camerata.

Other important activities have included leading the Innovation Leadership Development Programme; coordinating Health Education England's internship programme; running Catalyst networking events and two topical theme-based events; providing a workshop on dementia research to promote NHS engagement with higher-education institutions; maintaining engagement across the EU; contributing to the North West People in Research Forum; and developing communities of practice through masterclasses with experts in social leadership.

NHS R&D North West

CAPACITY

supporting you as you develop your career in health research



Researcher Development



The Researcher Magazine



Masterclass Series

Let's Talk Research

Conference

COMMUNITIES

establishing strong and sustainable research communities that help you to do what you need to do



Internships



Webinars



COMMUNICATIONS

sharing new and novel ways to communicate your research



Podcasts



Creative Workshops



Social/Digital Development



COLLABORATIONS

helping you connect with other researchers and develop new ideas for research



Patient & Public Involvement



Communities of Practice

2. Introduction

A devolved regional NHS function hosted by Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust, **NHS Research & Development North West** (NHS R&D NW) has high aspirations for research and development (R&D) in the North West of England. We aim to co-create a strategic approach to research, development and innovation, creating aspirational and innovative environments to enable health and social care communities to grow, thrive and deliver high-quality research.

Based in the heart of Manchester, we **bring together** an array of organisations and people in the region with an interest or involvement in health and social care research. We provide practical support to build research, development and innovation capacity throughout the full range of NHS organisations.

Our approach is based on four themes, which together help optimise NHS R&D in terms of people, processes, communication and impact. These themes are: capacity, collaboration, connections and communities.

Our core team

With experience in R&D, NHS clinical services, the voluntary sector, the private sector and academia, our core team comprises:

- Professor Stuart Eglin, Regional Director of R&D
- Gillian Southgate, Assistant Director of R&D
- Professor Bill Campbell, Assistant Director of R&D
- Amanda Byrne, Communications and Engagement Officer
- Jo-Anne Simpson, Operations Manager and Executive Assistant
- Leanne Gregory, Project Administrator.

Our faculty associates

The skills and expertise of the core team are complemented by those of our faculty of associates, who support our programmes of work, helping design and develop these programmes further. All associates are committed to our team values and approach, formalised through both a memorandum of understanding on the roles/responsibilities of associates and contractual agreements for specific pieces of work, including banding-based payments that meet the appropriate NHS procurement policy. In addition to three face-to-face meetings during the year, regular discussions have taken place between the core team and associates using social media, e.g. Google Hangouts.

Our associates come from a wide range of fields, including leadership, organisational development, workshop facilitation, psychology, coaching and mentorship, the creative arts, knowledge and information management, and research. Many of the programmes we develop are co-delivered with our associates, ensuring that we bring a breadth of expertise to all we do.

'The NHS aspires to the highest standards of excellence and professionalism ... through its commitment to innovation and to the promotion, conduct and use of research to improve the current and future health and care of the population.'

*The NHS Constitution
(Department of Health, 2013)*

Our faculty associates

- Dr Deborah Antcliff
- Vajramudita Armstrong
- Sarah Carr
- Dr Melanie Chapman
- Mark Duman
- Su Fowler-Johnson
- Dr Jan Goss
- Bec Hanley
- Dr Claire Harris
- Dr Helen Hurst
- Chanje Kunda
- Michelle Maden
- Dr Marie Marshall
- Dr Jane Martindale
- Dr Will Medd
- Valerie Michej
- More Than Minutes
- Steve Pashley
- Gill Phazey
- Nick Ponsillo
- Ged (Geraldine) Reilly
- Sue Roberts
- Chris Spry
- Janet Suckley
- Taravandana
- Steve Williams
- Kevin Wyke
- Rob Young
- Karen Zaman

Our approach

We contribute an established and evaluated track record, focusing specifically on:

- delivering R&D capacity throughout the full range of NHS organisations
- making and supporting connections across the boundaries of organisations and existing networks
- working collaboratively to facilitate the generation of ideas and research questions across multiple networks
- building communities, including through patient and public involvement (PPI) in R&D
- using digital tools to support our management, development and networking activities, so enhancing communication.

Team values

- Integrity:** *Honest and sincere with a strong moral principle*
- Co-creation:** *Focusing on stakeholder experience and interactive relationships*
- Inclusivity:** *Embracing the wider health research community using a multitude of physical and digital channels*
- Altruism:** *Working for the greater good of the health research community, and ultimately patients and the public*
- Humility:** *A modest team recognising the skills and abilities of others*
- Optimism:** *Hopeful and confident for the future of health research in the region*

What we do

We work to the regional agendas of our key stakeholders, which include the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR); Health Education England – North (HEE North); the Greater Manchester Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) and Innovation Agency (North West Coast AHSN); and Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRCs).

We also have an independent, entrepreneurial field of development that works with new and existing partners in health research. We engage strategically with the NHS, higher-education institutions (HEIs), local business, third sector, and health and social care organisations across the North West to ensure that research, development and implementation remain central to the agendas of new and emergent NHS organisations and related networks.

We host and support the North West People in Research Forum, and champion PPI in research across the region and nationally. A particular interest lies in exploring new and

creative ideas, as well as skills for learning and communicating R&D, and in sharing these with the health research community.

Our work is varied and includes workshops, Catalyst events, meetings and forums, engaging professionals from all backgrounds – ranging from early-career researchers (ECRs) needing support with developing their careers to CEOs developing regional health research strategies.

This report

This report describes our work during 2015/16 to enable connections, develop collaboration, deliver capacity and build communities. Further information about our work is available on our website at www.research.northwest.nhs.uk.

3. Building NHS R&D capacity

We work to build R&D capacity throughout the full range of NHS organisations in the North West, including those that have so far not fully recognised their potential contribution to the R&D agenda. During 2015/16, our objectives have been to:

- support NHS-based ECRs in professional and personal development
- continue the programme to explore the development of a research and innovation (R&I) lens on the NHS Healthcare Leadership Model
- plan and deliver the regional R&D conference
- extend the reach of the Releasing Potential programme to make it more accessible by increasing the use of social media and ICT
- co-ordinate the HEE internship programme in the Northern region.

Supporting ECRs

There is a growing community of NHS-based ECRs undertaking research at master's, doctoral and post-doctoral levels. Through a comprehensive programme of work, the Releasing Potential programme aims to support the development of this community. During the year, we held:

- three ECR workshops – including masterclasses on getting started in research, and getting the right balance
- two workshops to support healthcare professionals considering applying to the NIHR Integrated Clinical Academic Programme
- three post-doctoral network meetings
- two 'Power in your Pocket' workshops, on using social media to support and facilitate research networks, and as an integral part of the research process. Delivered by faculty associate Kevin Wyke, the first of these looked at the basics of social media, and the second at Curation, Evernote and Workflows.

Power in your Pocket



Getting started in research: Moving from thoughts to action

This workshop, held in October 2015, provided the opportunity to increase understanding of the opportunities to develop research skills and expertise; to develop a clear course of action; and to find out about sources of funding and resources available to support career progression.

Getting the right balance: Resilience and self-leadership in research

Held in March 2016, this day allowed participants to step back, re-align and plan the next steps in their research, recognising the need to get the balance right between work and the rest of life. The day built on questions around what was at stake, choosing a perspective, finding confidence, identifying habits that help and habits that hinder, and determining a way forward.

Developing an R&I lens

For over two years, NHS R&D NW has been leading a programme of work with service managers focused on cultures of R&I within clinical teams/services. The rationale for this work is that while managers are often highlighted as potential barriers to R&I within clinical practice, little work has been undertaken to determine their learning and development needs with regard to this aspect of clinical leadership, and how they can be supported better in delivering on this agenda.

The project is funded by HEE North through the Cumbria and Lancashire Local Workforce Education Group Forerunner funding, and informed by the Healthcare Leadership Model. The model comprises nine dimensions of leadership, and we have been working with managers to explore what each dimension would look like through an R&I lens.

In June 2015, we invited key stakeholders from across the region to participate in a half-day workshop to generate the content for an R&I lens on the Healthcare Leadership Model. The Innovation Leadership Development Programme – comprising four linked one-day workshops – began in March 2016, and will continue in 2016/17.

Innovation Leadership Development Programme

Aim

To equip leaders and managers to lead and develop cultures of R&I in their services

Objectives

- To develop knowledge and understanding of national, regional and organisational R&I agendas
- To increase understanding of how organisational cultures are formed and shaped by leaders
- To develop skills and expertise in facilitating and leading cultures of R&I within your service

Target participants

Service managers working at band 8a and above, or at band 7 and having a team of more than ten people

Planning and delivering the regional R&D conference

Following the success of Let's Talk Research 2014, the 2015 conference was held over two days – in September – to give healthcare professionals more opportunities to hear and discuss research, learn new tools and techniques, and engage with fellow researchers.

With a choice of over 24 workshops delivered by leading researchers, academics and clinicians, the delegates – of which there were 110 – were able to experience a wide range of research topics. This was supported by a schedule of workshops focusing on improving the 'softer skills' and more real-life aspects of research.



Let's Talk Research 2015

Feedback from delegates

'A great two-day event, very informative. Especially enjoyed the coaching sessions alongside networking opportunities. Looking forward to next year!'
'An insightful two days, which have given me the motivation to get on with my service evaluation study.'

Inspiration from speakers

'The older I get, the wiser I get, the more radical I become!' Dr Helen Bevan, Chief of Service Transformation, NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement
'Have courage, be persistent, think creatively!' Professor Ann-Louise Caress, Professor of Nursing, University of Manchester

For more information

Web: <http://www.research.northwest.nhs.uk/work/lets-talk-research/>

Storify: <https://storify.com/NHSRandDNW/let-s-talk-research-conference-2-2015>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/search?src=typd&q=%23ltrConf15>

Extending the reach of Releasing Potential

The NHS Constitution (Department of Health, 2013) is explicit in its commitment to 'innovation and to the promotion, conduct and use of research to improve the current and future health and care of the population'.

Delivering on this commitment is linked directly to improved patient outcomes and quality of care, greater efficiency and resource utilisation. It is predicated on a workforce equipped with the requisite skills working within a culture actively engaged with R&I.

To support delivery on this agenda, the Releasing Potential programme comprises two work streams:

- supporting the development and career progression of ECRs located within NHS trusts in the North West
- supporting the development of skills and expertise in clinical team leads and service managers with regard to developing cultures of R&I in clinical teams.

Work to extend the reach of the Releasing Potential programme during 2015/16 has focused on making it more accessible by increasing the use of social media and ICT.



For example, a series of eight action-focused webinars – with the overall title 'Being successful as an NHS-based researcher' – has been led by faculty associate Dr Will Medd.

'Being successful as an NHS-based researcher' webinar series	
Title	Content
What to prioritise?	How do you keep hold of what is important when you are swamped by the possibilities, feeling overwhelmed by the challenges, and unsure about the next step? This session invited participants to step back and ask: 'What is important to me in my research and how do I bring that alive, each day?'
What's possible?	Research is about the unknown; when dealing with unknown it is easy to lose track of what you are aiming for. This session explored participants' goals – whether long-term aspirations, or realistic expectations for the next month.
Keep up the energy	The excitement of 'being a researcher' can wear thin when the reality of the different (and sometimes mundane) demands hits. This session explored what happens when you learn to draw more on your strengths and bring them to bear on the different challenges you face.
Getting out of your own way	There are lots of things that get in the way of research without your own self-doubting and pressure raising voices. This session is an invitation to learn to spot the many guises of the 'gremlin' or 'inner critic' – and to start to manage this in more helpful ways.
Celebrating the knock-backs	In research, knock-backs come in all shapes and forms, and from different people. This session explored ways to reframe and to learn to celebrate those difficult situations.
As if you were confident	Confidence has nothing to do with how good you are at something. Confidence is an experience. This session explored how to conjure up your confidence and apply it when you need it to give your research a boost.
The art of procrastination	Participants who needed to come to this session most likely found reasons not to do so! The session explored just what is it that makes us do everything except the thing that matters to us, and identify strategies to get things done.
Getting unstuck	While research ought to be a creative space, the habits of evaluating and critique can often become traps. This session was about tapping into your creative potential in ways that enable you open up different perspectives and be more creative in how you approach your research.

Co-ordinating the HEE internship programme


 This highly prestigious internship programme is seen as the first step for healthcare professionals interested in developing a clinical academic career.

The fully funded internships provide the opportunity for healthcare professionals to spend 30 days in a research environment learning more about what is involved in health research, and a further eight days taking part in an educational programme.

The internships are open to registered health professionals working in the NHS in England and aim to:

- increase understanding of what it means to be involved in clinical academic research
- develop research skills and expertise
- enhance ability to become a research champion within a clinical setting
- inform decisions about progressing further in a clinical academic career.

The 2015/16 programme was open to 25 candidates, with the 15 candidates of the previous intake successfully completing the programme in July 2015. Interviews took place in September 2015, and the programme began in January 2016. Running for six months, it consists of three residentials. On completion, the cohort of interns will present at the Let's Talk Research conference 2016.

4. Working collaboratively

We work collaboratively to facilitate the generation of innovative ideas and research questions across multiple networks. During 2015/16, our objectives have been to:

- build the Catalyst programme in order to further develop the relationship between individuals and health/academic institutions in the North West
- promote engagement between the region's HEIs and NHS trusts regarding key national and EU agendas for research, development and implementation
- develop NHS R&D social and digital media to communicate more effectively with stakeholders.

Building the Catalyst programme

The Catalyst programme was established in recognition of the vast clinical and academic expertise in health research in the North West, and the lack of effective networking among those with that expertise. The aims of the programme are to:

- identify research questions of importance to policy-makers, commissioners, service providers, clinicians, patients and the public
- create new, exciting and innovative collaborations to develop research funding
- improve links between the NHS and universities to facilitate research and support changes in practice
- contribute to the economy of the North of England by attracting additional R&D funding
- give colleagues in the North of England an idea of strengths and potential gaps in research in the region.

What is Open Space?

Open Space is a method designed to enable people with mutual interests to meet and progress ideas in a short period of time. Participants have control over what is discussed and can choose to include themselves in various forums generated on the day. At the conclusion of the various forums, decisions are made about outcomes and further steps to progress them. Participants are expected to contribute further via the networks developed on the day, using various online community tools (e.g. Google Hangouts).

For animations on:

- Open Space, go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vEBcr_YkHU
- the Catalyst process, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwpQMtTSi5c>.

Catalyst events are run both as stand-alone topic specific events and as part of our other programmes of work. During 2015/16, we invested time in considering how we expand the Catalyst programme and enable others to deliver it within their own organisations; explored a business model for the programme and the generation of income to sustain it; ran a series of network events to keep the Catalyst community engaged; and delivered two Catalyst events on topical themes, using Open Space facilitation.

A Catalyst event held in December 2015 focused on **staff health and wellbeing**, in particular examining how having an engaged, motivated and healthy workforce can contribute to excellent patient experiences. The event was opened by Professor Michael West, who presented a summary of the current NHS landscape regarding staff health and wellbeing.

In January 2016, a second Catalyst event asked: **'Do we need health-education research?'** The programme was opened by Professor Ged Byrne, Director of Education and Quality, HEE North, followed by a presentation by Professor Tim Swanwick, Postgraduate Medical Dean, HEE North Central and East London. This was the first of a series of events to be delivered over 12 months, funded by HEE North, designed to build the local community of health-education researchers into a robust regional network, enabling greater

collaboration across the region to build a strong evidence base for the commissioning of health education. Two further events will take place in 2016, and the three will be linked by a number of facilitated network sessions that will work on outputs from the Catalyst events.



Aims of the Catalyst programme on health education

- To create the right environment for a robust community of health-education researchers to flourish and develop a strong regional network
- To identify research questions of importance to commissioners, educators, clinicians, policy-makers, service providers, patients and the public
- To create new, exciting and innovative collaborations to develop health-education research funding and build a strong network of researchers and practitioners
- To improve links between HENW, the universities, the NHS and other organisations to facilitate research and support changes in health education
- To contribute to the North West's economic agenda through the attraction of additional research and development funding, and to raise the profile of education research
- To give colleagues in the North West of England an idea of strengths and potential gaps in the evidence base for health-education research

Promoting engagement between HEIs and NHS trusts

We have continued to support and promote the regional R&D agenda for dementia and healthy ageing in collaboration with the Alzheimer's Society, as well as facilitating inter-organisational debate on a social model for mental health in Merseyside.

A workshop was held in May 2015, entitled 'Dementia Research: Impact in Practice'. The focus of the day was on the implementation of dementia research in health and social care practice. Colin Capper, Head of R&D for the Alzheimer's Society, spoke on the society's R&D focus and the launch of its Implementation Grant Scheme. Participants were also invited to present:

- findings of completed clinically focused research projects related to dementia, undertaken as part of a postgraduate degree or clinical research
- work undertaken within health and social care organisations or teams to promote innovative ways of supporting and caring for people living with dementia, and their carers and families
- novel and innovative approaches to communicating research related to supporting and caring for people with dementia.

Developing NHS R&D social and digital media

We have consciously developed our knowledge and application of social/digital platforms during the year to improve the presentation and circulation of important information. To support this, we contracted a social/digital media specialist to assist in updating and managing digital and social media for the team. In addition, we developed specialist groups on Google+ to promote the discussion and development of communities of research practice and networks.

We post a good mixture of news, information and professional support activities on Twitter and Facebook daily, in addition to continually retweeting the posts of key stakeholders.

We have increased our presence on YouTube, with playlists created based on themes of work, to drive awareness through communication using videos and animation.

5. Making and supporting connections

We work to make and support connections across the boundaries of organisations and existing networks. During 2015/16, our objectives have been to:

- complete the evaluation of the Community Outreach Dental Service
- maintain engagement with individuals and organisations across the EU with particular reference to Horizon 2020.

Evaluating the Community Outreach Dental Service

Sue Caton (Research Institute for Health and Social Change, Manchester Metropolitan University), Lynne Goodacre (then of NHS R&D North West) and Faye Greenhalgh (Revive Dental Practice) evaluated a community outreach dental service for homeless and 'hard-to-reach' patients. This research, which arose following the NHS R&D NW Dental Catalyst event, was disseminated at Let's Talk Research 2015, and published in January 2016 in the *British Dental Journal (BDJ)*:

<http://www.nature.com/bdj/journal/v220/n2/abs/sj.bdj.2016.56.html#close>

'Evaluation of a community dental service for homeless and "hard to reach" people': BDJ abstract

Objective: Since 2013, Revive Dental Care has been operating a community outreach dental service for homeless and 'hard-to-reach' patients. This research aimed to (a) explore the dental care experienced by people accessing the service, (b) examine barriers and facilitators to using a dental service, (c) examine the impact of the service and (d) identify good practice in providing dental services for homeless people.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews with 20 patients, nine members of the dental staff and four staff members from the community centres providing services for homeless people.

Results: Findings suggest that homeless patients have overall poor daily dental care and experience significant dental problems due to a range of lifestyle factors. Most participants had not seen a dentist for many years and previous experiences of seeing a dentist were often unpleasant. Barriers to care included fear, embarrassment, lack of money, living chaotic lifestyles, not prioritising dental care and difficulties finding an NHS dentist that would take on homeless people. Service provision for homeless and/or hard-to-reach patients needs to be proactive with dental staff going to community settings and making personal contact.

Conclusion: Crucially, providers must acknowledge that the patients are vulnerable. A successful service needs to be informal, adapt to patient needs and accommodates chaotic lives.

Maintaining engagement across the EU

Horizon 2020 is the biggest-ever EU R&I Programme, with nearly €80 billion of funding available over seven years (2014 to 2020). It is expected that this money will attract further private and public investment. The hope is that Horizon 2020 will lead to more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by moving innovative ideas from the laboratory to the market. The programme aims 'to ensure Europe produces world-class science and technology, removes barriers to innovation and makes it easier for the public and private sectors to work together in delivering solutions to big challenges facing our society', reflecting the three pillars: 'Excellence', 'Industrial Leadership' and 'Societal Challenges'.

Our programme of work was designed to support NHS organisations in the North West of England in becoming involved in European health research. During 2015/16, we have continued to:

- reconnect with R&D colleagues in Catalonia
- maintain our relationship with the NHS EU office in Brussels
- explore joint working on the EU agenda with other regional health partners.

6. Engaging strategically

We work to engage strategically across the North West in order to ensure that research, development and implementation remain central to the agendas of new and emergent NHS organisations and related networks. During 2015/16, our objectives have been to:

- develop and maintain strategic professional relationships with regional leaders in health
- invite key stakeholders and regional leaders to contribute to NHS R&D NW reference groups and advisory boards.

Developing and maintaining strategic relationships

During the year, we:

- held regular meetings and update sessions with HEE North's Director of Education and Quality, the chief executives of both local AHSNs, and the directors of the two North West CLAHRCs
- arranged ad-hoc meetings with NHS trust CEOs and R&D directors
- started to create partnerships with key NHS and stakeholder communication facilities.

Inviting contribution to NHS R&D NW groups and boards

We invited key stakeholders and regional leaders to attend meetings of the Releasing Potential Programme Reference Panel, and to discuss the development of the Catalyst programme.

7. Communicating our work

We work to ensure that the work of NHS R&D NW is communicated to all health and social care individuals and organisations in the region. During 2015/16, our objectives have been to:

- produce and disseminate our annual report, impact report, operational plan and new prospectus
- keep and update a comprehensive database of all NHS R&D NW stakeholders and supporters
- produce a quarterly newsletter
- communicate R&D news regularly
- maintain an online hub of information and resources via a dynamic, timely website.

Producing key documents

We developed and agreed our annual report, impact report, operational plan and new prospectus, commissioned writers for the annual and impact reports, and printed and disseminated our reports. You can see our impact report at <http://www.research.northwest.nhs.uk/publications/impact-report-2015/> and our prospectus at <http://www.research.northwest.nhs.uk/publications/prospectus-20152016/>.

Keeping a database of stakeholders and supporters

The Operations and Marketing team members worked closely together to maintain and develop a comprehensive database of all our business contacts – both stakeholders and supporters. In 2015, through increased investment in email marketing, the NHS database quadrupled in size. There is now a rich, loyal database of 2,400 contacts who receive regular news and support.

Producing a quarterly newsletter

Four times a year – in March, June, September and December – we gathered our quarterly news, wrote our newsletter, and disseminated this electronically using our database of stakeholders and supporters. You can see all our newsletters at http://www.research.northwest.nhs.uk/publication_list/; each provides news of events, programme and research of interest to those involved in NHS R&D, with links to more information. Amanda Byrne, who joined us during 2015/16 as Communications and Engagement Officer, took the lead on this workstream.

Communicating R&D news regularly

We communicated regular R&D news using our social media accounts as well as keeping the R&D website up-to-date and posting all up-and-coming events

Twitter

(www.twitter.com/@NHSNWRD)

Facebook

(www.facebook.com/NHSRandDNW)

We issued a total of 570 tweets in 2015/16, and currently have 1,515 Twitter followers.



We also release at least one email per week to the entire database of 2,400 addresses.

We ensure that the content of the email is relevant to our audience, and we always provide links to our website or partner sites for further information. Our email contact retention is high.

8. Supporting PPI

We work to support the North West People in Research Forum, and to champion PPI and public engagement (PE) in research across the region.

During 2015/16, our objectives have been to:

- contribute to the management and development of the forum
- support funding and strategy development.

Aims of the North West People in Research Forum

- To support researchers to involve and engage patients and the public
- To support patients and members of the public who are, or wish to become, involved in health and social care research
- To share learning about PPI and PE in research
- To form a link between researchers and patients/the public
- To raise awareness about – and opportunities to get involved in – health and social care research in the region

Contributing to the North West People in Research Forum

During 2015/16, we continued to provide line management and professional support to the forum's facilitator and support staff.

Supporting funding and strategy development

We engaged in discussions with potential funders, and helped shape the future strategy of the forum; ensured that forum members are included, where appropriate, in the work of NHS R&D NW to ensure the sharing of best practice; and supported the delivery of the strategy review.

9. Exploring new and creative ideas

We work to be a regional leader in the exploration of new and creative ideas for learning and communicating research, development and implementation, delivering an annual programme of work. During 2015/16, our objectives have been to:

- develop a comprehensive programme of work to embrace a range of creative ideas that can be used by researchers and other health professionals to communicate research and key health messages
- work in partnership with media students from the University of Salford at Media City to develop, film and broadcast a series of podcasts with regional leaders in health research
- deliver two workshops to learn about making short films with iPhones and iPads
- deliver two workshops to promote understanding and creation of stop-motion animation
- develop a comprehensive NHS R&D NW digital archive.

Developing a programme of creative ideas to communicate research

During the year, we put together an advisory group of 'critical friends'; called for creative people to showcase their art in relation to communicating research, leading to a series of 'auditions' and identification of the most promising creative practitioners; and planned workshops, exploring funding with Arts Council England.

The Academy of Creative Minds has since been born, bringing the arts and sciences together in health research. It draws on the skills of a dynamic, disparate group of artists – from composers to circus performers, and from directors to writers – who will share their 'tricks of the trade' with health researchers, to build confidence and expertise in using the creative arts to convey research messages in a more powerful and meaningful way.

The six-month programme – attracting 32 participants – was launched with a two-day residential in March 2016, and will also provide:

- five mentoring workshops, at monthly intervals
- presentation of participants' work at Let's Talk Research 2016
- pre-concert performances at the Manchester Camerata.

For detailed biographies and videos of the artists at work, see

<http://www.research.northwest.nhs.uk/work/academy-of-creative-minds/academy-of-creative-minds-artist-biographies/>

Working with University of Salford

We met with Paul Welshman, Associate Director of Enterprise at the University of Salford, to discuss ideas; wrote and submitted a brief for a podcast series; and developed, filmed, broadcast and evaluated the podcast series.

The podcasts aim to inspire people in the region to get involved in health research. Featuring key leaders and champions who have influenced the health research landscape, the podcasts create a snapshot of the individuals, their roles and challenges, and how they have made an impact using their particular approaches and ways of thinking.

The artists

- Alexander Douglas – conductor and educator
- Owen Gaynor – circus performer/director
- Jana Kennedy – comedian/performer
- Kate Marlow – theatre director, coach and writer
- Richard Taylor – composer
- Rob Young – writer

The podcasts

- Series 1 – The Champions (key health research leaders in the region and how they believe they have made an impact) – Professor Alistair Burns, Professor Ged Byrne, Dr Stuart Eglin, Dr Lynne Goodacre, Dr Liz Mear, Deborah Morris, Professor Jenny Popay, Professor Brenda Roe and Gillian Southgate)
- Series 2 – The Edgewalkers (people who have challenged current thinking and approaches, and made a difference) – Deborah Arnot, Dr Helen Bevan, Simon Denegri, David Fillingham, Professor Peter Kinderman, Professor Michael West and Dr Meg Wheatley)
- Series 3 – Let's Talk Research presentations (videos featuring key speakers at Let's Talk Research 2015)

You can watch the podcasts at <http://www.research.northwest.nhs.uk/work/podcasts/>

Making short films using iPhones and iPads

At NHS R&D NW, we recognise the importance of communicating effectively and reaching as wide an audience as possible to ensure that key R&D messages are being heard. Using and making short films is one way of capturing work, and of disseminating it easily and quickly through the internet. However, the cost of paying someone to make a short film can be prohibitive, especially for public-sector organisations, academics and researchers.

Therefore, we invited film-maker Tom Barrance, Director of Learnaboutfilm (who has worked in film education for many years), to deliver one-day workshops in Manchester on making short films and podcasts using iPhones and iPads. The workshops were designed for people with no film-making experience, starting with a simple brief and taking them through the complete film-making process.

Bringing research messages to life using stop-motion animation

A creative workshop in March 2016 gave researchers, academics, NHS professionals, and supporting marketing and communications staff the opportunity to improve the communication of key messages using stop-motion animation.

The technique can help to convey report findings, information requests, operational requirements, and facts and figures – making communications more impactful and engaging.

Developing a digital archive

We have compiled a digital archive of ten years of our work. This work, funded by HEE North Forerunner funding via the North West Health Care Libraries Unit scheme, was in partnership with North West Commissioning Support Unit. It was curated and narrated by local creative writer Chanje Kunde.

What is stop motion?

Stop motion is an animation technique that physically manipulates an object so that it appears to move on its own. The object is moved in small increments between individually photographed frames, creating the illusion of movement when the series of frames is played as a continuous sequence.

10. Engaging nationally and internationally

We work to engage with national and international experts relating to key R&D agendas to develop and shape regional strategy. During 2015/16, our objective has been to explore the theory and practice of the development of communities of practice.

Developing communities of practice

It is important to us to continually push the boundaries of how health and social care professionals think about research and support the delivery of research outputs and the communities that support them. In 2015/16, our thinking was enhanced by a series of masterclasses from three experts in social leadership and communities of practice.

In May 2015, Julian Stodd (founder and captain of Sea Salt Learning) took us through the mindset and skills required to be an effective leader in the social age. Julian is a learning and development professional specialising in learning, mobile learning, social media and learning theory. His NET model of leadership is built around three dimensions – narrative, engagement and technology – and recognises that power and authority are founded more on what you share and how you build your reputation than on simple positional authority.

In June 2015, we spent a day with Dr Meg Wheatley (an American writer and management consultant, who studies organisational behaviour). Her approach includes systems thinking, theories of change, chaos theory, leadership and the learning organisation. We reflected on being islands of sanity in a sea of insanity, and how to sustain yourself and your community as you walk on the edge of 'the system'. The first part of this master class can be viewed on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Np14wDSABYw>.

In September 2015, we benefited from the expertise of Etienne Wenger, an independent thinker, researcher, consultant, author and speaker. Etienne is mostly known for his work on communities of practice, though he considers himself a social learning theorist more generally. We discussed and applied Etienne's new learning model, not yet published, that allows planning, vision and evaluation.

We have used our learning from these events to inform how we grow, develop and support our communities of health researchers across the region.

11. New Projects

Introducing *The Researcher* magazine

To achieve the aspirational goal of embedding research within practice and increasing the numbers of healthcare professionals actively engaged in research, we identified an urgent need to develop and communicate a highly engaging and energising message about what it means to be a health researcher and to do health research.

We therefore announced a new national NHS project to develop a digital online publication designed exclusively for healthcare professionals starting out on their research journey. *The Researcher* will be a magazine created by health researchers for health researchers.

This will be a highly collaborative project, with ECRs developing the content and forming the editing team, supported by playwright Rob Young. Drawing on a bank of stories, news and content, *The Researcher* will focus on communicating – in an engaging, energising and innovative way – the backstories from research and researchers. A project team of 15 ECR enthusiasts with stories to tell and a passion to engage with others will join the project team, contributing to, editing and managing the three issues over the coming year (May 2016, September 2016 and January 2017).

Supporting the Global Health Exchange

The Global Health Exchange North West is sponsored by HEE North and run in collaboration with key partners in health and academia – including NHS R&D NW. The vision is to provide a system, processes and platform that will enable the exchange of staff and knowledge in the quest for improved healthcare, both in low/middle-income countries and in the UK.

12. Conclusion

2015/16 has been an excellent year for NHS R&D NW. Building on the success of the previous year, we were awarded extra funding from HEE; this has enabled the team to deliver a much wider programme of work, and to support a greater number of people working in the field of health and social care research. Our faculty of associates has also grown, working with us to co-create and deliver a number of new events and workshops.

The appointment of our new Communications and Engagement Officer has also ensured that everyone knows who we are and what we are doing, and has helped give a more visible profile to the team and to the work that we do.

Thank you to all our supporters, stakeholders, funders, associates, friends, patients and members of the public who have helped make this year go so well. We greatly appreciate your contribution to the work that we do.

Appendix: Event Attendance 2015-2016

NHS R&D NORTH WEST		
'Lets Talk Research' conference 2015	The Macron Stadium, Bolton	110
Podcast series	Series 1: Professor Alistair Burns, Professor Ged Byrne, Dr Liz Mear, Deborah Morris, Professor Jenny Popay, Professor Brenda Roe, NHS R&D NW; Series 2: Deborah Arnot, Dr Helen Bevan, Simon Denegri, David Fillingham, Professor Peter Kinderman, Professor Michael West and Dr Meg Wheatley	576
Catalyst & follow-up network events	Staff health & wellbeing; health-education research	189
HEE internship programme	3 residentials plus attendance at conference	40
R&I lens on the Healthcare Leadership Model	Programme development on cultures of R&I within clinical teams/services	65
Masterclass series	Researcher development: getting started in research; getting the right balance	51
NIHR Integrated Clinical Academic Programme	2 workshops to support healthcare professionals considering applying	13
Post-doctoral network meetings	A network to bring together people working in the NHS who have completed their PhDs	15
Regional stakeholder event	Shaping a vision for NHS research-capability building across the North	40
Monthly webinar series	Being successful as an NHS researcher (each 1 hour)	55
Academy of Creative Minds	2-day residential at Lancaster University, bringing together arts and research	32
Creative-communications workshops	iPad/iPhone film-making; stop-motion animation	26
Digital/social-media workshops	Power In Your Pocket' workshops to support and facilitate research networks	32
EVENT ATTENDANCE 2015/16		1289

Contacting us

If you would like to work with us and make a difference to health research in the North West, then please get in touch. We can deliver bespoke pieces of work, collaborate to support teams and organisations with the R&D agenda, or support and advise on a range of R&D issues. Full details of all our programmes are available on our website.

Postal address	NHS R&D North West 4 th Floor 82 King Street Manchester M2 4QW
Telephone number	0161 935 8430
Website	www.research.northwest.nhs.uk
Email	info@researchnorthwest.nhs.uk
Twitter	www.twitter.com/@NHSNWRD
LinkedIn	http://uk.linkedin.com/pub/nhs-r-d-north-west/55/324/745
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/NHSRandDNW
SlideShare	www.slideshare.net/NHSNWRD

Abbreviations

AHSN	Academic Health Science Network
BDJ	British Dental Journal
CEO	Chief executive officer
CLAHRC	Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care
ECR	Early-career researcher
EU	European Union
HEE	Health Education England
HEI	Higher-education institution
ICT	Information and communication technology
NIHR	National Institute for Health Research
NHS	National Health Service
NW	North West
PE	Public engagement
PPI	Patient and public involvement
R&D	Research and development
R&I	Research and innovation