

Health and Care Research Wales

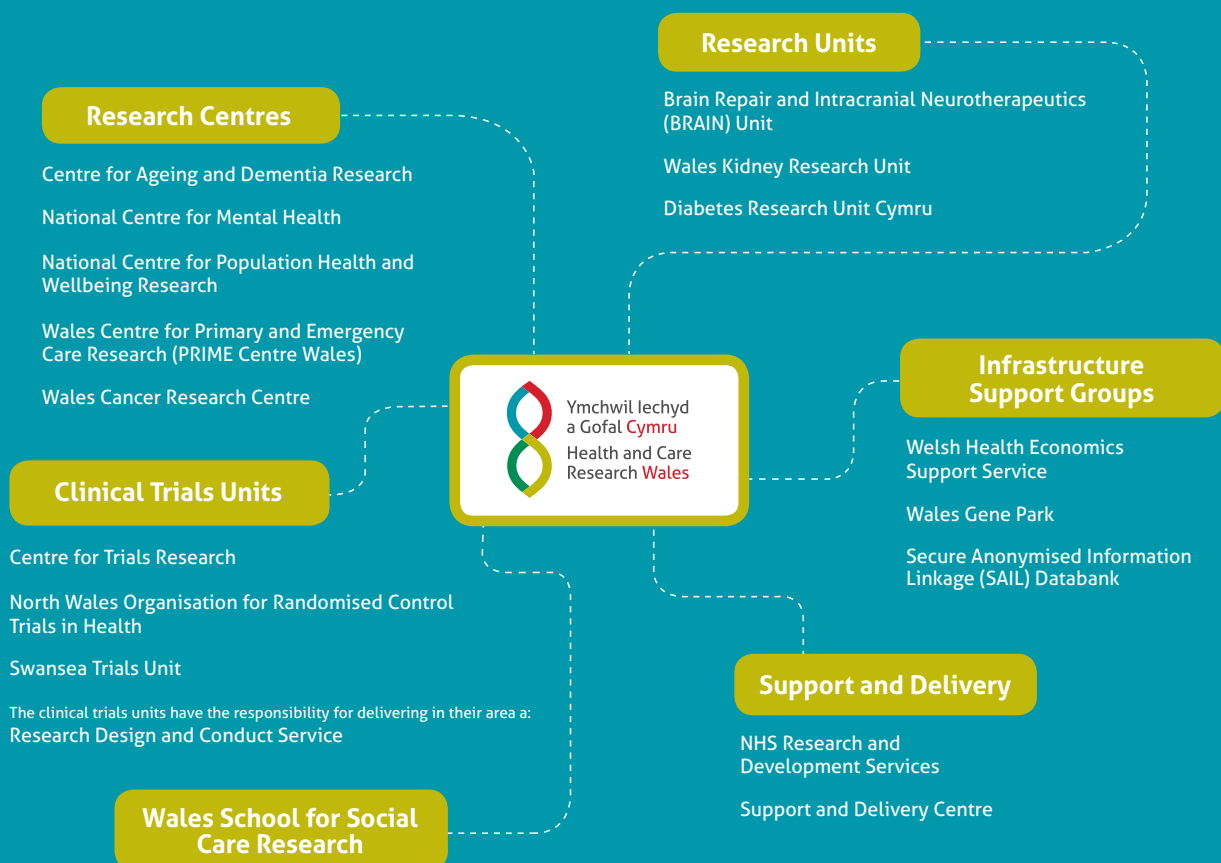
Annual Report
2018-19



Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

3	Foreword
4	Introduction
5	Strategic level partnerships
6	Programme level partnerships
8	Collaboration within Health and Care Research Wales
16	Funding highlights
18	Looking to the future

Research Infrastructure Map



Foreword

It has been yet another fruitful year for Health and Care Research Wales, as the contents of this report amply demonstrate. As we approach a new era, and welcome our new Director, Professor Kieran Walshe, it seems appropriate to reflect on the extensive partnership and collaboration that takes place across all Health and Care Research Wales activity and makes many of our achievements possible.

Collaborative working in its various forms has been the glue that draws together much of what we do, and, indeed, it's only by stopping and reflecting on its importance that we realise quite how much of it we do. 'No one is an island', to paraphrase John Donne, and these days no research funder with serious ambitions to positively improve health and wellbeing works in isolation, and nor do the researchers, groups and services it funds.

Whether at an international, UK or Wales level – and whether we are networking, coordinating, cooperating or collaborating – partnership working is crucial if we are to function at our best, and it will remain key under Kieran's leadership as we develop a strategy for the next five years. Those of us working in a Welsh Government context are committed to ensuring that the partnership ethos extends to our engagement with Welsh Government colleagues.

In 2018-19, the Chief Scientific Adviser for Health, Dr Rob Orford, published Statements of Intent on Genomics and Precision Medicine, and Advanced Therapies. 2018-19 also saw the development of an implementation programme for *A Healthier Wales* which includes the creation of Research, Innovation and Improvement hubs. The Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Peter Halligan, created both the Research and Innovation Strategic Engagement Group (RISE) and a Science Strategy Group to coordinate support for research and innovation across Welsh Government. We give high priority to engagement in these developments to make sure that the work of Health and Care Research Wales is seen as relevant, aligned and effective.

Indeed, ensuring that health and care research, and its potential to transform health and wellbeing, is valued, has never been more important. With Brexit dominating the agenda, it's pleasing to note the efforts of all across Health and Care Research Wales, which put us in good shape to make the most of whatever challenges and opportunities the coming years bring.

A number of significant activities in 2018-19 will also contribute to future endeavour. We appointed new cohorts of specialty leads and senior research leaders, for example, and offered new competitive funding to refresh the research development infrastructure. We are very excited about some of the new groups that will emerge, and, in particular the way in which this will help us to progress social care research in Wales. We remain fully committed to providing a full range of support and delivery services to make the research environment easier to navigate for health and social care researchers and industry – playing our part in UK plc.

We look forward to working with you to further strengthen our strategic approach, bringing the benefits of research to all.



Carys Thomas

Joint Interim Directors,
Health and Care Research Wales



Michael Bowdery

Introduction

Our Strategic Plan 2015-2020 outlines Health and Care Research Wales' vision for Wales 'to be internationally recognised for its excellent health and social care research that has a positive impact on the health, wellbeing and prosperity of the people in Wales'. Our vision is underpinned by six strategic aims, covering public involvement, policy alignment, health and social care integration, investment in areas of strength, capacity building, excellent delivery and effective use of resources. What underlies all of our strategic aims, though is not always visible, is effective partnership working and throughout Health and Care Research Wales we are working to achieve our vision through teamwork, partnership, and strong collaboration.

As we look to renew our strategic plan for the coming five years, it is timely that we reflect and celebrate the various ways – both strategic and practical – in which Health and Care Research Wales engages in and supports partnership working and collaboration. We work across multiple sectors in health, social care, the third sector and industry, collaborating with a very wide range of partners including other government departments, the public, researchers, research funders, and others, not just in Wales but at a UK level and beyond.

The benefits of collaboration are immense, providing greater expertise, essential insights and sometimes inspiration as we work together to continuously improve the research environment, share and learn from best practice and encourage innovation. Collaboration opens new opportunities, extending the reach and breadth of our work and helping us to get best value from the Health and Care Research Wales budget, as we work to build research capacity and capability in Wales and drive research excellence.

It's easy to take partnership working for granted, and much of the work undertaken to develop and nurture relationships is unseen, yet often this is the engine room of daily activity from which many of the visible Health and Care Research Wales successes emerge.

In this report, we highlight some of the achievements over the last year, which have led to the development and delivery of excellent research for the benefit of the people of Wales. We showcase some of the strong partnerships and collaborations which have led to many of Health and Care Research Wales' achievements, and which will be critical to building strong foundations for the future.



Strategic level partnerships

Health and Care Research Wales works in close collaboration with its UK partners to add value and ensure the effective use of research funding to maximise impact.

As a member of the Office for Strategic Coordination of Health Research (OSCHR), Health and Care Research Wales works with the other UK government health and social care departments, the relevant UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) partners (including the Medical Research Council) and key third sector and commercial partners, to coordinate activity across the health and care research spectrum in the UK. OSCHR ensures UK funders direct resource to areas of need in a coherent and consistent way, from investment in underpinning science, early stage innovation and prevention research, through to service organisation and delivery.

The broader alliance of research funders and other organisations within the UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC) provides a forum for wide-ranging discussion, and action, on strategic and practical issues that affect us all. We continue to be key partners in bespoke UKCRC activities. For example, all three of the Health and Care Research Wales funded trials units are required to achieve UKCRC Clinical Trials Unit registration (an essential and recognised quality mark). In 2018-19, we also contributed to the latest Health Research Analysis report (expected in 2019-20) which will provide its fourth snapshot of the UK grant funding landscape.

We continue to be a member of the National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) which brings the UK government health and social care departments, research councils, Cancer Research UK and other charitable funders together in a national research effort in the fight against cancer.

We have continued to actively participate in the international funders' collaboration, the Ensuring Value in Research (EViR) Forum, which works to advance the practices of health-related research and research funding to maximise the benefits of research. Examples of activities in 2018-19 include exploring research prioritisation processes and current funder practices in relation to the dissemination and implementation of research findings.

We also collaborate with colleagues in the rest of the UK, at a policy and operational level, across a range of functions to improve the efficiency and speed of study set up and delivery across all four UK nations. Our strong partnership working with the Health Research Authority (HRA) in England has continued to grow and we have worked closely to align our approvals process and integrate the teams that support research ethics committees and other approvals. Across the UK, we have collaborated on a new strategy for research transparency, the development of new information systems to support regulatory approvals and have agreed a coordinated UK process for identifying research sites, helping commercial sponsors to access the UK through a single process.



Programme level partnerships

Health and Care Research Wales is also a partner in many UK-wide grant funding programmes, investing in key research programmes, maximising opportunities for partnership and collaboration, as well as for Welsh health and social care researchers.

A cross-funder collaboration, the UK Prevention Research Partnership (UKPRP), ran its first funding call in 2018-19, which culminated in a range of consortia and network awards with a combined value of around £25 million. It is focused on tackling the bigger picture factors, including social, economic and environmental influences, which affect our health and wellbeing and are key to our understanding of how we can best prevent non-communicable disease. This is a ground-breaking initiative with Welsh coapplicants and collaborators involved in five of the eight awards. The UKPRP will launch a second call in autumn 2019.

Along with the Alzheimer's Society, the Department of Health and Social Care (England) and the Public Health Agency (Northern Ireland), Health and Care Research Wales committed a pooled resource of £2.15 million to a £15.75 million Joint Programme for Neurodegenerative Diseases call that involved countries from across Europe, as well as Australia and Canada. Of the ten cross-nation collaborative projects subsequently funded, eight involve research teams from the UK. Only one of the collaborative projects is led from the UK, and that is Professor Monica Busse's Multi-Domain Lifestyle Targets for Improving Prognosis in Huntington's Disease (DOMINO HD) project, which will look at how sleep, nutrition and physical activity affect the disease and their implications for quality of life for those living with it.

Health and Care Research Wales has continued to invest in an agreed set of National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) funding programmes (the NIHR Evaluation, Trials and Studies programmes), opening significant funding streams to Welsh researchers that would otherwise not be available. In 2018-19, this resulted in seven awards led by Welsh researchers with a combined funding value of £6.26 million. Two of these awards were made through the Health Service and Delivery Programme, two through the Public Health Research Programme, and three through the Health Technology Assessment Programme. In addition, a further 21 projects were funded with Welsh coapplicants, enhancing the financial return and demonstrating the ongoing Welsh contribution to UK-level research.

Health and Care Research Wales continues to be a core funding partner in Health Data Research UK, within which the Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) Databank at Swansea University is one of six substantive sites, contributing towards the vision to unite the UK's health data to make discoveries that improve people's lives. In the last 12 months, we have seen the establishment of the Health Data Research Alliance to support this agenda, aiming to facilitate partnership working across NHS organisations and other health data custodians, leading to an ethical, consistent approach to the use of data and public engagement.

2018-19 also saw strong partnership working through the cultivation of new potential funding partnerships with third sector partners. Health and Care Research Wales is pleased to have partnered with Fight for Sight (the UK's leading eye research charity) and offered a Fight for Sight/Welsh Government Project Grant Award - with Welsh Government's Chief Optometric Adviser (David O'Sullivan) playing a key part in setting priorities and shortlisting bids in the subsequent call. We are working with the Scar Free Foundation (a national charity working towards 'scar free healing within a generation' and fellow EViR member) to identify opportunities for Welsh researchers under their ambitious new strategy in 2019-20.



NORTH WEST
CANCER RESEARCH

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Collaboration within Health and Care Research Wales

Putting the public at the centre

Putting the public at the centre of all that we do is a priority for us and in 2018-19 we began the coproduction of a Health and Care Research Wales Statement of Intent for the further development of public involvement and engagement ambitions for research in Wales. The Statement is still in its early stages, with further consultation and workshops ongoing throughout 2019. It will aim to address engagement, empowerment, embedding and evidencing, as the foundation for a future action plan.

In 2018-19, we also further developed our partnership with the UK nations to drive forward the National Standards for Public Involvement, which were launched in March 2018. Health and Care Research Wales forms a key part of the UK-wide partnership that has been developing the set of standards and indicators which aim to improve the quality and consistency of public involvement in research.

The implementation of the Standards was piloted by ten sites across the UK including the Wales School for Social Care Research and the Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research, who joined together to be the one pilot site from Wales. Many other sites in Wales chose to pilot or be guided by the Standards to strengthen their activities and our Public Involvement Delivery Board also used the Standards to produce guidance for funding panels to assess public involvement within bid applications.

The year-long pilot enabled the sites to put the Standards to practical use in their own working environment and provided the opportunity to discuss progress, benefits and challenges. As a result of this collaborative four nations approach, the final version of the Standards will be formally launched in the autumn of 2019 as the UK Standards for Public Involvement.

Wales was also well represented in 2018-19 on other UK initiatives addressing diversity and inclusion, and the impact of public involvement in research. We worked collaboratively with the HRA to encourage researchers to involve the public in research at the earliest opportunity.

Throughout the year, our national team continued to support public involvement, as well as manage the Enabling Involvement Fund across Wales, supporting opportunities for public involvement at the research development stage. Our public involvement community has expanded to more than 300 members and social media was used increasingly to help researchers find members of the public with the necessary experiential knowledge to support various research activities.

Engaging through our flagship cohort

HealthWise Wales is a Health and Care Research Wales funded initiative which also has partnership with the public at its heart. It is a confidential research study that will help health and social care services plan for the future and provides an opportunity for everyone in Wales aged 16 or over to take part in research for better health, care and wellbeing. It is delivered through a collaborative approach via Cardiff University with public research partners.

At the end of March 2019, HealthWise Wales reached a milestone of 28,000 registered members of the public, making it one of the largest health research databases in Europe. By taking part in research studies and providing regular health and lifestyle information, HealthWise Wales participants will help researchers to find better ways to prevent and treat long-term health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and dementia.

HealthWise Wales has continued to collaborate with researchers across Wales and the UK, and has partnered with Dementias Platform UK to offer the Great Minds cognitive battery of tests to HealthWise Wales participants via its website. The HealthWise Wales team has also supported researchers to develop funding bids to utilise the HealthWise Wales cohort, including collaboration with colleagues undertaking research in public health, cardiology and gastroenterology.

As a result of opportunities promoted via the HealthWise Wales community, more than 4,000 people took part in new research studies this year.

Our research development infrastructure

A key aim of our research development infrastructure is to develop and grow a portfolio of high-quality research that will benefit the health, wellbeing and prosperity of people in Wales and beyond. The groups funded through Health and Care Research Wales, including our centres, units, trials units and infrastructure support groups, work on an all-Wales basis, as a part of a whole, with extensive partnership and collaboration at the heart of their approach. Our groups collaborate widely with a wide range of stakeholders including health and social care professionals, service providers, public research partners, third sector organisations, commercial companies and others as appropriate to their remit.

All of our research development infrastructure groups have excellent track records in partnership working and collaboration, with different areas of focus depending on the research context in which they work. The partnership and collaborative approaches described below provide examples to illustrate the nature and breadth of partnership working across the infrastructure in 2018-19.

Our **Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research (CADR)** has a strong record of third sector and community engagement, working in partnership to empower people living with dementia. In 2018-19, CADR delivered work, retirement and discrimination roadshows; worked with Innovations in Dementia to expand the peer support initiative Friendly Faces; worked closely with Ageing Well in Wales to deliver a national event, Making Wales a Nation of Age-friendly Communities; and used an Innovations in Dementia working together grant to create a film gathering the experiences and views of people living with dementia and demonstrating the benefits of peer support.

The **Diabetes Research Unit Cymru (DRU Cymru)** can also demonstrate significant third sector engagement working within the T1D UK consortium which, since 2015, has been funded by Diabetes UK and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation to promote, develop and support immunotherapy research in Type 1 Diabetes. DRU Cymru also boasts a strong track record of working with industry, evident in the current collaboration with Janssen-Cilag Ltd for the provision of Ustekinumab (STELAR®) for the NIHR-funded USTEKID study (part funded by Health and Care Research Wales through the NIHR Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation Programme and supported by the Swansea Trials Unit).

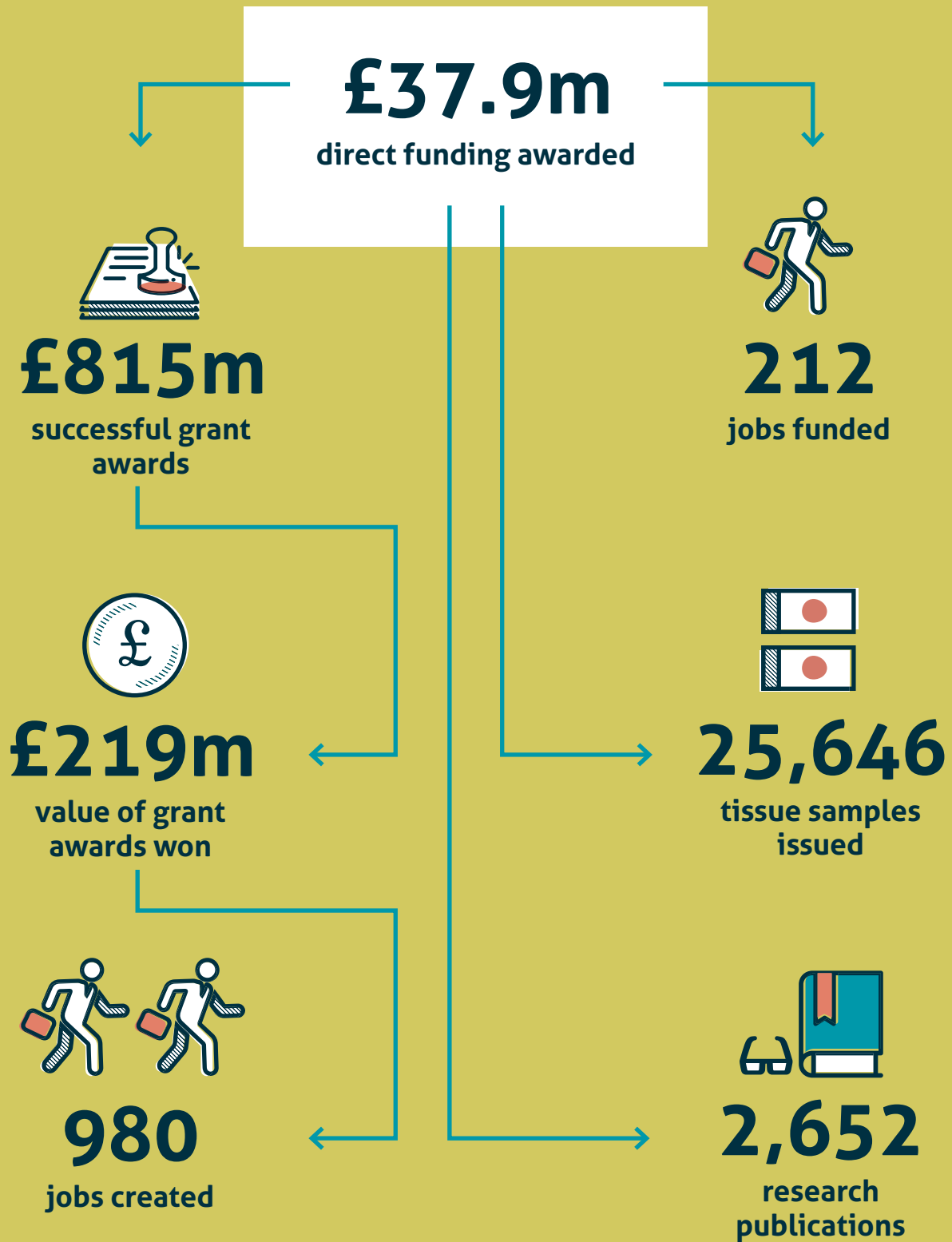
Through its SUPER group (Service Users for Primary and Emergency care Research), the **Wales Centre for Primary and Emergency Care Research** has developed an excellent model for ensuring that public involvement is at the heart of research topic identification, prioritisation and bid development. In 2018-19, SUPER members contributed to the development of research in multiple topic areas including social prescribing for people at risk of depression, novel methods and settings for delivering dentistry and general practice services in the community, and the safety, use and management of medicines.

The **Wales Cancer Research Centre** is playing a leading part in developing a national cancer strategy for Wales, with the aim of uniting the diverse areas of cancer research and bringing more effective cancer treatments and care to patients in Wales as fast as possible. The strategy is being developed in collaboration with many organisations and will identify priorities and reflect ambitions of NHS organisations, patients, charities, universities, industry and Welsh Government, providing a common goal for cancer researchers in Wales for the next ten years.

In a similar vein, the **Wales Gene Park** is now an integral part of Genomics Partnership Wales, which is bringing together all relevant partners to harness the potential of genomics for health and wellbeing. The partnership has been formed to establish a united approach to genomics in Wales and deliver a programme of work that will enable the ambition and commitment laid out in the Genomics for Precision Medicine Strategy (2017) to be realised.

To develop high-quality research, academic collaboration across Health and Care Research Wales is vital and remains at the heart of the research achievements. Our **trials units** and **Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) Databank** have continued to effectively provide the technical and specialist skills needed to support project development in their respective areas of expertise. The same is true of the **Wales Gene Park**, which has continued to facilitate high-quality genetic and genomic health research, and the **Welsh Health Economics Support Service**, providing health economics advice and input at all stages of research.

Clinical Research Infrastructure 2015-19



Partnership working in social care

Health and Care Research Wales has also played a key role in supporting the implementation of the Social Care Research and Development Strategy for Wales 2018-23, which aims to make Wales a leader in developing and carrying out excellent social care research that supports the people of Wales, by informing and improving social care policy and practice. Sitting on the Social Care Research & Development (R&D) Coordination Group, Health and Care Research Wales has worked in partnership with policy colleagues and Social Care Wales to implement the strategy.

Sector and community engagement is a golden thread across the Wales School for Social Care Research (a cross higher education institution partnership) work programmes, as well as strong links with academics, social care practitioners, policy makers and members of the public to promote, develop and undertake research.

One of its key aims is to increase research capacity by bridging the gap between academic research and social care services, and to this end the School awarded seven small grant and two pan-Wales network awards in 2018-19. The funded projects were led by a variety of organisations including local authorities and charities, supported by experienced researchers. Project themes included exploring the impact of involving the third sector in mental health services, exploring practices and experiences with a Welsh multi-agency young family's project and developing a network for carers to access short breaks to support health and wellbeing.

The School's capacity building endeavour also included the awarding of four PhD Studentships focusing on policy and practice relevant issues including: transitions in care from hospital for older people; cocreating, commissioning and delivering meaningful short breaks; Welsh speakers in care; and partnership working to support the mental health of children in care.

The School's Developing Evidence Enriched Practice (DEEP) approach has been in action across local authorities to join together evidence generation and knowledge transfer to support culture and practice change. The School also entered a collaboration of Welsh universities, led by the Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care at the University of South Wales, in a project to undertake a three year evaluation of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014).



Building research capacity in Wales

The Research Capacity Building Collaboration (RCBC) Wales, founded in 2005, aims to increase research capacity and capability in nursing, midwifery, pharmacy and allied health professions, and to contribute to the development of clinical academic roles. Since its inception, RCBC has made 102 awards over four funding phases. It receives additional funds from Tenovus Cancer Care.

RCBC continues to be an excellent example of cross-institutional collaboration. It comprises six university nursing and allied health departments/schools in Wales, (namely at the universities of South Wales, Swansea, Cardiff, Cardiff Metropolitan, Glyndwr and Bangor) and engages with the NHS, industry, charities and policy makers. The collaboration works to encourage and develop those undertaking research for the first time, helping to make the pathway to becoming an independent researcher more attractive and accessible. As such, it offers a range of awards, from First into Research fellowships, to PhDs, through to support for those wishing to undertake postdoctoral studies. Over the last year, fellows have started projects covering a variety of topics, including medication management, understanding patient perceptions of exercise, and post-critical care survivorship.

The collaborative ethos is exemplified by the RCBC Community of Scholars, which creates an inclusive, collegiate and nurturing environment, providing mentorship and master classes in research methods and research leadership.

Taking a One Wales approach

The Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Service provides researchers and industry with a range of services throughout the research pathway, making it quicker and easier to set up studies. Through effective partnership working with the public, researchers, sponsors, industry colleagues and others, in 2018-19, 837 high-quality studies took place across health and social care in Wales. This includes a range of studies, and although most research studies require people to participate, others use routine data, tissue or other methods. In 2018-19, 20,879 Welsh participants were recruited to studies requiring face-to-face contact.

The commitment from the local support and delivery teams across NHS organisations in contributing to this positive result cannot be underestimated as we continue to increase the number of open studies delivering to time and target.

Our top recruiting study was Be on the TEAM: Teenagers Against Meningitis which recruited 1,569 participants – an all-Wales effort led by Public Health Wales. This will help us understand whether immunising teenagers with vaccines against meningitis B could act as an effective prevention measure against these potentially deadly bacteria.

To facilitate the delivery of studies like this, our service has developed a One Wales approach to a range of activities, for example, in identifying sites across Wales, and a more streamlined contracting process, including piloting the One Wales contract review and negotiation process – which has already demonstrated impact in the speed of review for multi-site studies.

Collaborations with industry are also key to delivering our commercial research and our industry team continues to build strategic partnerships with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies in the UK and beyond. The benefits of our collaborative approach is seen in the successful delivery of the INTREPID study in Wales, launched by GlaxoSmithKline, which investigated the efficacy of treatment options for patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder. Working closely with Keir Lewis, our specialty lead for respiratory, the service identified investigators and sites across Wales at speed and implemented the new One Cost, One Contract approach to fast track uptake. This led to six sites being selected in Wales and the recruitment of 189 participants.

Our dedicated industry team also joined UK colleagues at major industry events to help increase understanding of global markets and raise awareness of commercial research capability in Wales, for example, Bio International in Philadelphia in June 2018 and Bio Europe in November 2018.

The work of the Support and Delivery Service cannot be achieved without coordination, so that all parts of the jigsaw come together: the specialty leads with their national lens, the local research and development (R&D) leads bringing context and organisational level championship, and the national Support and Delivery Centre providing a range of underpinning services and coordinating improvement programmes. For example, rolling out research management systems, producing business intelligence to inform decision making, providing opportunities to network through high profile conferences and providing a range of national training events from Good Clinical Practice to TED-style talk training.

As we progress into 2019-20, we will see the development of the evolving primary care research delivery network, including the development of a Wales Dental Research Network. A key priority also includes working with UK partners, as well as the local research community, to strengthen the support services for social care researchers.



Support & Delivery 2018-19



212

active commercially sponsored studies



20,879

participants recruited into high-quality research studies



625

active non-commercial high-quality studies



5.3

per 1000 population recruited per annum (5 year average)



61%

of studies delivered to time and target



68%

of studies recruited first participant within 30 days of site activation (commercial)



59%

of studies recruited first participant within 30 days of site activation (non-commercial)



243

studies open across more than one organisation (29% of all studies)

Funding highlights

Health and Care Research Wales grant schemes fund projects with public, practice and policy relevance while supporting the development of researchers across Wales. In 2018-19, the Health and Care Research Wales Grants Team ran calls that resulted in 17 new funding awards with a combined lifetime value of over £3.28 million.

This included Health Research Grants, Research for Patient and Public Benefit (RfPPB) Wales projects, Social Care Fellowships, along with Clinical Research Time Awards (CRTAs). All awards were expected to be active by 1 October 2019.

We were also pleased to fund two fellowship awards following successful applications from Welsh researchers to the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Fellowship Programme, at a total lifetime value of just under £1 million.



17

Health and Care Research
Wales Awards



4

Health or Social Care Fellowships



2

NIHR Fellowships



3

Health or Social Care Research
Funding Scheme Grants



4

Research for Patient and Public
Benefit (RfPPB) Wales awards



6

Clinical Research Time Awards
(CRTAs)

Social Care Fellowships

Providing talented individuals the support they need to become independent researchers while undertaking high-quality research projects benefiting social care in Wales.

- **Hannah Bayfield, Cardiff University**
Understanding the higher education experiences of care-experienced young people in Wales: Towards a model of best practice
- **Joe Hollinghurst, Swansea University**
Investigating the impact of interventions on social care: a quantitative approach using data linkage and joint modelling
- **Julie Marie Latchem-Hastings, Cardiff University**
Feeding, eating and drinking in neurological care; sharing practice to transform care
- **Georgina Powell, Cardiff University**
A longitudinal investigation of new 'Smart Speaker' personal assistants to improve independence and wellbeing in social care settings

Research Funding Scheme: Health Grants

Supporting high-quality research projects with clear relevance to health and wellbeing need and/or the organisation and delivery of health and social care services in Wales.

- **Kate Milward, Cardiff University**
Developing a blood-based assay for predicting response to immune checkpoint inhibition in cancer patients
- **Kelly Morgan, Cardiff University**
Choosing Active Role Models to INspire Girls (CHARMING): cluster randomised feasibility study of a school-based, community-linked programme to increase physical activity levels in 9-11 year old girls
- **Heather Strange, Cardiff University**
NIPT (Non-Invasive prenatal testing) WALES: Understanding and Improving the New Landscape of Prenatal Screening

Research for Patient and Public Benefit (RfPPB) Wales

Funding research related to the day-to-day practice of the health service, with clearly defined patient and public benefit.

- **Ivor Chestnutt, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board**
Optimising value-based, preventive care delivery in NHS General Dental Services (Themed application)

- **Jamie Duckers, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board**
CF PROSPER: Cystic Fibrosis Pregnancy Related Outcome data to Support PERSONAL choices (Themed application)
- **Stephen Jolles, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board**
SAIL databank analysis of Infection Related Outcomes in schizophrenia patients taking Clozapine (SIROC) Study (Themed application)
- **Andrew Kemp, Swansea Bay University Health Board**
Group-based positive psychotherapy for people living with Acquired Brain Injury: A feasibility study

Clinical Research Time Awards

Funding sessional time for talented NHS staff to engage in research and development activity.

- **Julie Cornish, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board**
- **Mark Davies, Swansea Bay University Health Board**
- **Adam Mackridge, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board**
- **Chris Moore, Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust**
- **James Powell, Velindre University NHS Trust**
- **Tom Rackley, Velindre University NHS Trust**

National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Fellowships

Supporting individuals on their trajectory to becoming future leaders in research. Health and Care Research Wales takes on the funding and management of successful applications to the NIHR Fellowship Programme.

- **Rhys Bevan Jones, Cardiff University**
Further development and feasibility trial of an online psychoeducational intervention for adolescent depression
- **Tim Pickles, Cardiff University**
Patient-reported Outcome Measures for Rheumatoid Arthritis Symptom Severity: Development of a computer adaptive test from an item bank using Rasch measurement theory (SOCRATES)

Looking to the future

As the incoming Director of Health and Care Research Wales, I want to spend time in the next few months meeting as many stakeholders as possible in the research, policy and practice communities in health and care, understanding their views and priorities, and working with colleagues to develop the next strategic plan.

This report demonstrates that great foundations for health and care research have been laid, and some key infrastructure is in place – a great credit to those in Health and Care Research Wales, Welsh Government, health boards and trusts, local authorities and other partners who have made this happen.

Perhaps the key question is – what next? What ambitions should we have for health and care research, and the contribution it makes to improving services, health and wellbeing for the people of Wales? How do we ensure that the research we do is both scientifically rigorous and internationally competitive - and also absolutely relevant to the need for evidence to inform decision makers now and in the future? How do we go about maximising the impact of our considerable investments to date, and making them work to serve the future research needs in health and social care? I want to hear what you think!

Finally – a word about where I am coming from. I am an academic at the University of Manchester with research interests mainly focused on quality and performance in healthcare, and I have set time aside to carry on with research alongside my new role – still being an active researcher will I think help me to lead Health and Care Research Wales well too. But I have also worked with national bodies and agencies, government and parliamentary select committees, and spent time as a Programme Director for the National Institute for Health Research, and I am a Non-executive Director of an NHS foundation trust – the Christie, in Manchester. I think that experience helps me to understand that research is not an end in itself, and the way we collaborate and partner to build and use the evidence base in health and social care is crucial to our shared success.



This report demonstrates that great foundations for health and care research have been laid.



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