Clinical Research at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Information for patients
Research at Leeds Teaching Hospitals

The Trust’s ambition is to be a global leader in research and innovation (R&I), delivering benefit to patients and making a real and lasting difference to the quality of care we provide.

We are involved in research at all levels, from basic laboratory science to developing and trialling new treatments for patients. We want every patient to have the opportunity to take part in a research study if suitable because we know that being involved in research helps provide better care to our patients.

This leaflet explains what research is, why it’s important and what taking part in research means for you.

What is research?

Research is about generating new knowledge that could lead to improvements in treatments and care for patients.

A research study starts with questions about the cause of disease or how best to provide care or treatment for patients. Doctors and health professionals carry out a research study to gather the evidence to answer these questions.

Research is an everyday part of our work in this Trust and across the NHS. The people who carry out research are mostly the same doctors and healthcare professionals who treat people.
Why is research important?

Research is essential in working out which treatments are more effective for patients. It leads to new treatments, changes the way healthcare is delivered, brings potential benefits for individual patients who take part in research studies and helps to improve the health of the nation overall.

What does research involve?

All clinical research involves the collection of information known as research data. The data is analysed, reviewed and published in medical journals. It may be the data from a single study or from a number of studies considered together, that will change how care and treatment is provided.

There are different types of clinical research study. Some involve in-depth interviews with patients about their experiences of disease or care. Others may look at new ways to test for the presence of disease. Clinical trials are research studies which look at new treatments and medicines to see whether they are safe and work well.

They may also look at the use of current treatments when they are used in different ways or in different combinations.

Taking part in research

Many patients voluntarily take part in research as participants in clinical trials or research studies.
Taking part in research can be quite simple and involve a donation of blood or tissue, or more complex involving treatment interventions, extra tests, close monitoring and more frequent visits to hospital.

**Do I have to take part?**

Taking part in research is entirely voluntary. You must be told about the study, given an information sheet and have time to think about the study in order for you to decide if you would like to take part. The researcher will provide you with all the necessary information and answer any questions you have.

If you decide not to take part, or leave the trial or study early, your treatment will not be affected and you will continue to be looked after like any other patient.

**Is research safe?**

All drugs, including the ones we routinely prescribe to patients, may have side effects. In all research, including clinical trials, potential risks are carefully balanced against the benefits. Trials are designed to keep risks to a minimum and patients are closely monitored.
What are the benefits for me?

The reasons for people taking part in a study vary. Taking part in research is felt by some people as ‘giving something back’ to benefit others in the future. Other people may receive direct benefit from the treatment and drugs provided and are reassured by the close medical monitoring and check-ups provided by the researchers.

Helping to shape research

Patients are also very important in helping researchers to develop and improve their ideas for research in many ways. It could be helping to design or collect data for a research study, helping to write information about a research study that is easy for patients to understand or helping to make decisions about which research studies should receive funding.

For more information see www.crn.nihr.ac.uk/can-help/patients-carers-public/how-you-can-get-more-involved

Where can I get further information?

If you are considering taking part in research we would encourage you to contact your doctor, health professional or research nurse for further information.

You can also contact the Research & Innovation Team
Tel: 0113 392 0162 or
email: leedsth-tr.lthtresearch@nhs.net

Please also see our website at: www.leedsth.nhs.uk/research
How to take part in a research study?

Many patients voluntarily take part in research as ‘participants’ in clinical trials or studies. These aim to test how beneficial treatments might be for people.

Clinical trials and studies

Clinical trials are a type of study that involve large numbers of people in order to test new treatments. Many, but not all studies, are clinical trials.

Clinical studies aim to find out important information in response to a health question in a very systematic way. A well designed study will provide reliable evidence that can help improve NHS services and treatments and the medical understanding of health professionals.

To be reliable it usually involves obtaining health data from a wide range of people whose health issues fit the topic of the study. Where patients agree, or “consent”, to participate as volunteers, this data might be obtained by:

- Interviews
- Questionnaires
- Tests on patients in a clinical setting that measure the effects of new drugs
- Using patient records
- A combination of the above

Their aim is to find better ways of looking after patients and keeping people healthy.
What will happen to me in a clinical trial?

Every trial is carefully planned to investigate something specific, therefore the duration of the trial and the investigations required, (e.g. blood sampling, ECG, x-rays) will vary. It is likely that you will need to attend the Clinical Research Centre for clinic follow-up.

Please rest assured that everything required will be clearly explained to you before you agree to take part in a trial.