A Collaborative Model of Research Support Across Primary and Secondary Care

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Collaborative Working Model

With changing models of care and the delivery of patient services spanning across both Primary and Secondary providers, it is recognised that the delivery of research studies needs to develop in conjunction with these changes. The aim of developing a collaborative model of research support is to enable the facilitation of research study delivery across the emerging Primary / Secondary Care interface, regardless of the healthcare specialty or setting. These revised models and ways of working (hybrid model), incorporating collaborative working, aim to gain an improved knowledge of research processes across Primary and Secondary Care including study set-up and delivery, with measurement to include staff’s involvement in the set-up of cross working studies.

Following the forward thinking of both the CRN Primary Care team and fellow colleagues within Secondary Care, a pilot scheme was created that focussed on bridging collaborations between the two care environments. Quite often a patient’s journey follows a path of treatment initiating within Primary Care which then flows into Secondary Care, and culminates with their treatment plan echoing around the two. It is therefore vital that as patient journey’s commence, healthcare research must flow seamlessly across settings, thus creating an environment which places patients at the uppermost forefront of up-to-date, research proven, quality assured healthcare, regardless of setting. Without bridging the Primary Care/Secondary Care research interface, how can true quality assurance be ensured for patients?

The pilot scheme created liaison facilitator posts that concentrated on developing professional relationships and helping to identify research studies that could bridge across care settings. The NCMH study was already well established within Secondary Care and with recent advances in raising awareness for better diagnosis and treatment of Mental Health, was a perfect study to bring across into Primary Care.

The National Centre for Mental Health (NCMH) brings together Primary and Secondary Care NIHR researchers with world-leading researchers from Cardiff, Swansea and Bangor Universities to learn more about the triggers and causes of mental health problems. The study aim is the collection of information and samples for genetic, biological, psychological and clinical research to look for genes and other factors which make people with mental health issues more likely than others to become ill. With the main aim to improve understanding of mental health conditions and help to find better treatments in the future.

The study is now open to recruitment across both Primary and Secondary Care settings. Through joint working with study setup and delivery collaborative working has ensured that patients are forwarded the same opportunity to participate in the study across both care settings, helping to build strong working relationships whilst promoting patient choice and equality.