



You said - We did

A Summary of the Centre for Trials Research
Stakeholder Survey 2021

Stakeholder Survey Results

The biennial Centre for Trials Research (CTR) Stakeholder Survey is a key part of the Centre’s strategy to enhance, nurture and develop relationships with all stakeholders.

The 80 respondents to the 2021 survey included 64 (80%) from priority stakeholder groups core to the Centre’s success, such as chief investigators, collaborators, funders, members of the public, sponsors etc, but also 16 (20%) who have not yet worked with the Centre directly, who are an important group to help us understand areas of opportunity and potential barriers to engagement.

Overall, our stakeholders gave us a lot of positive feedback: CTR staff were described as motivated, positive, responsive, providing high quality support and expertise and the organisation was experienced by stakeholders as efficient and well structured. These responses were particularly valued in the context of the last 18 months when our working world, like everyone else’s, has been turned upside down. There were six main areas relating to our current activity and future focus that the stakeholders identified as important for us to consider:

- 1 Communication and Engagement
- 2 Patient and Public Focus
- 3 Areas of Practice
- 4 Approaches and Methods
- 5 Education and Training
- 6 Resource Management



What follows is a summary of the feedback in those 6 areas and then how we are approaching them, either in terms of work that is already happening or what we plan to do to address them. Several of the points will include reference to the CTR Strategy which is the 5 year strategy based on our objectives and key performance indicators for 2020-2025.



Communication and Engagement



Be clear what different people in the team do

Blow your own trumpet more

Engage with clinical staff to identify questions of clinical importance

Our study is not a trial/is not big enough for you to be interested

Explain to people what you do and how you work with external chief investigators



The strategy identifies specific deliverables in terms of the mix of large trials and developmental studies

Our annual report is also a great way to learn more about the breadth of our work

The Collaborators guide is a brochure intended for all collaborators and includes information

Our communication strategy

Both our CI Guide and latest Annual Report are available online:
www.cardiff.ac.uk/centre-for-trials-research/about-us



Make our 5-year strategy publicly available

At least one larger “trumpet-blowing” event per year

Celebrate the breadth of the portfolio including smaller as well as larger studies at events, via social media and on the website

Develop website to make it even more accessible and informative. This will include descriptions of the work of the CTR and the role of different staff

We will find out how the collaborator guide is being used distributed and used by CTR staff and current collaborators

We will revisit the content of the guide and potentially revise the content in light of feedback from collaborators



Patient and Public Focus



Put patients and public at the centre of what you do

Signpost ways to get involved with research for members of the public

More emphasis on patient-reported outcomes and on capturing patient experience



Patient and public involvement and engagement (PI&E) is one of the main themes of the CTR strategy with a determination to normalise PI&E across all aspects of our work

We currently ensure all CTR studies consider PI&E from the outset through its study adoption process, with all teams required to detail PI&E activity to date and planned. Lay research partners attend the study adoption meetings

We have recently completed a new guide for research partners (RPs) - to introduce what working with CTR means for members of the public

We will continue to work with both our core funders, Health and Care Research Wales and Cancer Research UK, to promote opportunities for research partners to our studies (via their networks and processes) as well as a wide variety of other routes



We will make all routes for research partners to join us visible on our website and review how we can make better use of social / other media, including our website, for promoting opportunities

We will use the new guide to plan and implement public involvement in individual studies

We will make our new guide for research partners publicly available on our website

We will work on the recommendations of a CTR task and finish group on inclusivity in research which include amending CTR processes to highlight inclusivity, developing new guidance and ensuring that the principles of inclusivity are embedded across all our studies

Areas of Practice



Service Delivery

Emerging areas of clinical practice

Bio-informatics

Social Care



Increasing social care studies is a target in the current strategy

Our portfolio of studies is ever-evolving and includes new areas consistent with our themes but also developing depth in particular areas



We will work hard on our communications to ensure that external partners and potential new partners know we are responsive and open to emerging areas



Approaches and Methods



Make sure you are addressing real-world problems including service level innovation, impact as well as effectiveness, translational research

Expand innovative trial design approaches

Overhaul some processes e.g. data-sharing and do not need all SOPs for all studies

Look at AI/machine learning/ big data across all research groups

Ensure flexibility and be willing to critique your own practice so you can be adaptable and respond to what's needed

Digital approaches to communication and study management e.g. eCRFs as they make it easier for sites and also for sustainability



Our strategy includes an objective to: “Ensure that our research truly changes lives, by informing policy, practice and the general public”

We are committed to partnership working and have working groups set up to progress the use of digital technology, the secondary use of data and novel designs



We will work with external partners e.g. the Trial Methodology Research Partnership and data providers to reduce administrative burden/optimize processes for data sharing

We will work on streamlining processes for observational and low-risk studies

We will ensure that we provide regular opportunities for stakeholders to comment on our practice through open forums and the biennial survey

We will pilot an end of study review process to ensure lessons learned by project teams in the study delivery are shared more widely through the CTR

Education and Training



Make the most of your wealth of expertise and offer training to less experienced researchers particularly in areas of statistics and trial design



This is outside our current remit and funding model

We have developed some training where we have been able to secure funding to do so e.g. CENTRIC training for researchers using routine data, training on feasibility study designs for use in social care research)

<https://centrictraining.org/>



We will work on a model of a business case for offering short courses



Resource Management



Moving staff on and off projects can be disruptive and stressful for everyone

Make sure you have enough of the right staff with right mix of methodological expertise

Ensure you have team members who are leaders in their field – encourage training and provide suitable career progression



The strategy includes an objective relating to leadership opportunities via monitoring committee membership and the Learning and Development (L&D) committee addresses staff training opportunities

We avoid moving staff off projects unless there is a good reason as we know how disruptive it can be. Our capacity to move staff onto projects to replace staff who are leaving etc is one of the strengths of the CTR model

Part of CTR role is to source/advise on the right team even if that is not within CTR

The CTR is committed to the PDR process and developing staff, supporting applications for promotions, providing in house opportunities such as observer roles, secondments, members of UKCRC groups



We will make sure that there is a transparent process for project teams for any staff movement on/off a project

We will develop improved handover processes/checklist for Trial and Data Managers

We will continue to strive to make the CTR a great place for staff to work including line management support and career development opportunities

Contact us

The Centre for Trials Research is willing to consider any well-designed study or trial idea, even those outside its current areas of research. For more information about collaborating with our research team or to keep up to date with news and events:

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