

Research and Innovation Autumn Newsletter

Autumn 2025

East Midlands Newest Clinical Research Facility

On the 2nd of October 2025, Sherwood Forest Hospitals saw the launch of its very own Clinical Research Facility.

The launch was celebrated with an event which was sponsored the International Accrediting Organization for Clinical Research (IAOCR) & B&B Press. Whilst also supported by the Sherwood Forest Hospitals Charities & Academy Transformation Trust Further Education (ATTFE). Thank you to all these groups as without their support, we wouldn't have been able to celebrate this momentous occasion.

The trust has been research active for nearly two decades and finally has a space to realise their research ambitions. This facility which has capacity for 7 treatment spaces including a consultation room. The newly developed facility will offer more opportunities for the Mid-Nottinghamshire area to take part in Research then there ever has been before.



The event saw guests arrive from Sherwood Forest Hospitals, Commercial entities, academic institutions & the wider East Midlands clinical research community.

Professor Sir Johnathan Van-Tam led the way in cutting the ribbon opening the facility for guests to look around & challenging commercial research organisations to come & work with us. Head of Research & Innovation Alison Steel & Clinical Director Dr Jyothi Rajeswary led speeches on the potential of the new facility & what this means for Sherwood.

Our Mobile Research Unit was also on hand at the event to allow everyone to gain an insight to everything that Research & Innovation at Sherwood Forest Hospitals.

This wasn't just a celebration the launch of a Clinical Research Facility, It was a celebration of how far the Research at Sherwood Forest Hospitals has come.

Mobile Research Unit

In April 2025, Sherwood Forest Hospitals gained a Mobile Research Unit to aid in the trusts Research ambitions to reach out to the community. At the beginning, the MRU went out into the local community to raise the profile of Research opportunities in the area.



We have also been actively recruiting participants to the diabetic study SAFE-D & the ATTEND study which is aimed at the mental health of adolescents. The Mobile Research Unit has also allowed us to go to patients for follow ups, removing a barrier which would've otherwise prevented research participation.

As we have become more active with the MRU so has our notoriety. We have been invited to many events to show off the contributions to the research world that comes from Sherwood Forest Hospitals.

On July 31st the NIHR had invited us to Leicester King Power Stadium for the "Breathe Speak Out" event, all the while gaining more interest from research partners.

We've also attended community groups, big events such as the "Ashfield Show" & are now actively working with Mansfield & Ashfield District Councils for future joint ventures.



The Mobile Research Unit has gone from strength to strength in research participation & establishing Research & Innovation across Mid-Nottinghamshire.

Lead Mobile Research Unit Clinical Research Practitioner

With the Mobile Research Unit becoming a fixture of Research & Innovation at Sherwood, we needed someone to take the reins and lead the efforts.

Our colleague Nigel Thorpe has taken on the responsibility of leading with our MRU efforts by taking the role of Lead Mobile Research Unit Clinical Research Practitioner.

Nigel has had this to say about the new role & what it means to him.



After attending the research forum in May of this year, it was apparent that research in the community this was the way forward. When I first started my new role as the lead CRP for the MRU. I took on the role with an open mind and positivity, this was a huge step out of my comfort zone, as this was a completely new way of working for our department I soon settled into my role, and together with the help of the direct delivery team we soon ironed out any problems that we came across.

Until we had a study for the mobile unit we did a lot of community engagement events, to promote research and make the wider communities of mid Nottinghamshire, more aware of research in general and that Sherwood Forest Hospitals are a research active trust. Places we did community engagement days include both Mansfield Community Hospital

and Newark Hospital, we had two days at this year's Ashfield show for with great interest and made new connections for future events.

The study we are doing with the unit now is called Safe-D which is looking at newly diagnosed type 2 diabetic patients and a link to pancreatic cancer using a new blood test.

Identified by GP practices, participants are sent a link to register their interest and book an appointment on the system with a time that best suits them and at a convenient place close to home.

I have also taken Nurses to complete follow-ups at participants homes, which show we can take research to the community, so they can continue with the study rather than withdraw. Proving research is for everyone any one can take part.

Spotlight on PANACEA

In July, we opened the Imperial College London sponsored study PANACEA. Recruitment to the PANACEA study has been a success, within 3 months, we have recruited 87% of our target.

One of our Clinical Research Practitioner Sibya Charuvilla had this to say about **PANACEA**.

PANACEA stands for PAN Alimentary Cancer Exhaled Breath Analysis.

The study is to see if gastrointestinal cancers can be detected at an early stage through a breath test. These cancers are difficult to detect at an early stage as symptoms are similar to non-cancerous conditions.

The breath test is to detect small molecules known as volatile organic compounds that are made by

the cancer cells. By identifying these through a breath test means early detection and treatment.

Participants who are approached are given appointments for colonoscopy or endoscopy through the 2 weeks wait cancer pathway. They would be arriving early on the day of the appointment and doing the study by breathing into the bag. Since they will be fasting for the procedure, it is ideal to approach them on this day as participants need to be fasting for a minimum of 6 hours.

If the research study is successful, it will be rolled out to GP practices as a first line of investigation; hopefully reducing unnecessary invasive testing, lower waiting list time for people who do need the procedure for further investigation and also save money for the NHS. This study has had a great response from participant as it is not invasive or time consuming.