

NIHR HealthTech Research Centre in Emergency and Acute Care

Research Inclusion Strategy (2024-2029)

“The NIHR HealthTech Research Centre (HRC) in Emergency and Acute Care is committed to advancing inclusive research that ensures equitable access to health technologies. Our Strategy aligns with the NIHR Research Inclusion Strategy (2022–2027) and focuses on reducing health inequalities in Greater Manchester. By embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion into every stage of the research lifecycle, we aim to drive impactful, patient-centred innovations.”



Professor Tim Felton, Director

Vision:

The overarching vision of the NIHR HRC in Emergency and Acute Care is to transform emergency and acute care by driving the commercial development of health technologies (HealthTech).

We are committed to inclusive research ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) is championed in all we do.

Our vision for Inclusive Research and EDI is built around core values which will be embodied in everything we do across the whole research lifecycle of the HRC.

Aligned with NIHR's Operating Principle on Inclusion, we are committed to demonstrating how the HRC will contribute to NIHR's mission of reducing health inequalities in Greater Manchester. Our approach prioritises under-served communities, adopts a needs-based strategy to uncover unmet health needs, and leverages existing evidence while actively expanding the evidence base.

1. **Patient-Centred Innovation:** We will engage with patients and the public, particularly groups under-served in research or those who might find it challenging to access and use technology, ensuring the evidence and outputs are accessible and beneficial to all. Public contributors will play a central role in the governance and development of our research programs.
2. **Inclusive community building:** We are dedicated to building a community of practitioners that reflects the diversity of Greater Manchester. This inclusive approach will ensure that our research benefits from a broad range of perspectives with the aim of improving outcomes for all populations.

Our key strategic aims relate closely to the key themes of the NIHR Inclusive Research Strategy (2022-2027):

Aim 1. Widen access and participation for greater diversity and inclusion

The NIHR HRC in Emergency and Acute care will:

- Actively widen access and participation in research by engaging under-served groups across Greater Manchester, and through a deep understanding of our local population through mapping inequalities and the protected characteristics.
- Involve the public, particularly under-served populations, increasing opportunities for inclusion in research and working to understand the barriers to participation.

Aim 2. Improve and invest in the NIHR talent pipeline

The NIHR HRC in Emergency and Acute care will:

- Increase research capacity and capability in inclusive research by training researchers/ innovators from across academia, healthcare and industry through training in inclusive research concepts and methodologies and encouraging EDI in this workforce.
- Develop an inclusive community of practitioners that reflects and embodies the diverse community of Greater Manchester.

- Implement inclusive cultures and processes to improve diverse recruitment, retention, and career progression within the HRC.

Aim 3. Embed evidence-led diversity and inclusion approaches

The NIHR HRC in Emergency and Acute care will:

- Embed inclusive research practices across all activities and projects.
- Create evidence-based recommendations on best practices for diversity and inclusion in HealthTech research.

Aim 4. Collaborate with partners for impact and sustainability

The NIHR HRC in Emergency and Acute care will:

- Leverage our existing partnerships with other regional NIHR infrastructure to maximise the impact of our research.
- Ensure the sustainability of an inclusive, patient and public centred research environment.

The HRC in Emergency and Acute Care Team is committed to delivering, reflecting on and continually evolving this strategy to create a more equal, diverse and inclusive research environment.

Objectives:

Aim 1: Widen access and participation for greater diversity and inclusion

Objectives:

- 1.1 Understand the socio-demographics of Greater Manchester and our participants.
- 1.2 Through existing and new networks the NIHR HRC in Emergency and Acute Care will actively engage with under-served populations (identified in 1.1) to examine the barriers to participation in research in emergency and acute care settings.
- 1.3 Increase opportunities for inclusion in research through co-production and engagement.
- 1.4 Ensure HealthTech we develop is co-developed with relevant groups.

Aim 2: Improve and invest in the NIHR talent pipeline

Objectives:

- 2.1 Increase knowledge of Inclusive Research in HealthTech development and evaluation across sectors.
- 2.1 Ensure fair and equitable access to opportunities to build capacity in HealthTech Research.
- 2.3 Equip researchers with the tools to conduct inclusive research.

Aim 3: Embed evidence-led diversity and inclusion approaches

Objectives:

- 3.1 Embed our inclusive research strategy across the centre.

- 3.2 Build a diverse public contributor group to help us to understand the perspectives of local communities. promoting a research-confident population involved in co-development and production of fit-for-purpose HealthTech.
- 3.2 Promote inclusive research principles in all aspects of our HealthTech evidence generation pipeline.
- 3.3 Develop a framework of best practices.

Aim 4: Collaborate with partners for impact and sustainability

Objectives:

- 4.1 Leverage our existing partnerships with other regional NIHR infrastructure to maximise the impact of our research.
- 4.2 Ensure the sustainability of an inclusive, patient centred research environment.
- 4.3 Work with industry colleagues to identify areas of joint working for mutual benefit around inclusive research.
- 4.4 Collaborate with public contributors to co-develop HealthTech and for maximum impact.

Collaboration:

Other parts of the NIHR Infrastructure

The NIHR HRC in Emergency and Acute Care will collaborate extensively with other NIHR infrastructure in Manchester through the Greater Manchester NIHR Oversight Board, co-chaired by the MFT CEO and the Dean and Vice-President of the Faculty of Biology, Medicine, and Health at The University of Manchester.

This collaboration aims to ensure strategic alignment and foster strong partnerships between NIHR investments and NHS partners in Greater Manchester, such as the NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre (BRC), Manchester Clinical Research Facility (CRF), and the Greater Manchester Applied Research Collaboration (ARC-GM), Health Determinants Research Collaboration Manchester (HDRC), alongside key NHS Trusts including the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust, The Christie NHS Foundation Trust, and the Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust.

Joint working with Manchester BRC and Manchester CRF for EDI, inclusive research and Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) will be embedded throughout the HRC in Emergency and Acute Care, with shared representation across the governance boards to ensure alignment of the Centre's activities with broader regional research initiatives. The collaborative ethos at the HRC emphasises co-development, building on existing strengths and best practices across the region's research infrastructure to foster new initiatives and amplify the impact of all partners involved.

Key areas of collaboration will include:

1. Development of Best Practice Guidelines
2. Co-Investment in EDI Leadership
3. Regular Evaluations and Strategy Refinement

4. Inclusive Innovator Training Programs

By fostering this collaborative environment, the HRC in Emergency and Acute Care will align its goals with other Manchester-based NIHR infrastructure, ensuring the sustainability of initiatives, the maximisation of resources, and the creation of an inclusive and impactful research ecosystem across Greater Manchester.

Industry

The NIHR HRC in Emergency and Acute Care will lever strategic partnerships with industry to link the HRC EDI/ inclusive research activity with work ongoing in the social value teams within commercial organisations. We will learn from community engagement activities already undertaken by companies to engage the Greater Manchester population specifically, recognising the diversity and health inequalities locally.