

HRA key messages

September 2022

What we do and why it matters

- Our **vision** is for high quality health and social care research today, which improves everyone's health and wellbeing tomorrow. We help realise this by **making it easy to do research that people can trust**.
- Our guiding principles are
 - **to include**, so that health and social care research is done with and for everyone, and
 - **to accelerate**, so that research findings improve care faster because the UK is the easiest place in the world to do research that people can trust.

How to use these messages

- Everyone who is part of the HRA should be able to explain what the organisation does and why it's important. This document will help you speak with confidence when asked about the HRA, its impact and our current priorities.
- This isn't a script and we don't expect you to learn it off by heart. Read it, know where to find it and check back regularly. It's updated every four weeks. These messages are a useful starting point for conversations about the HRA, make them your own.
- Slide 7 sets out some of the current issues we're managing. If you get difficult questions about the work of the HRA that you're not sure how to answer, the [communications team](#) can help.
- **Don't email this document to anyone outside the organisation, it's to support you.**

How are we doing?

- Our ethics committees in England have reviewed over 1,300 new studies so far this year, almost 96% were given permission to start (1)
- Confidentiality Advisory Group (CAG) has completed 40 studies in this financial year to date (2)
- 80% of applicants to the HRA are very satisfied with the service that they receive from us. When asked about the best bit of the process, our staff consistently come out top. In August 91% are very satisfied, and 41% score them ten out of ten (3)

Did you hear that we..?

- Have reviewed and approved two monkeypox studies, using our fast-track process for urgent public health research. The PLATINUM study is from the team behind the RECOVERY trial of COVID-19 treatments, and will look at whether antivirals can help people with monkeypox recover more quickly. The trial was given an opinion in 11 days through expedited review.
- Are working with a group of research participants and people affected by research to make sure that our strategy makes the change we want to see. The group helped to write [Making it easy to do research that people can trust](#), helped to launch the strategy, and is now supporting the HRA Board to make sure that we're held to account on our ambition to include, so that health and social care research is done with and for everyone.
- Have worked with NIHR and Health and Care Research Wales to launch guidance to help make sure that public contributors to research are always paid quickly and fairly for their time, lived experience and contribution. The guidance aims to remove barriers to make sure that anyone who wants to can get involved.

Coming soon

- New regulations for clinical trials. We're working with MHRA to support changes enabled by Brexit that will make it easy to apply to start trials of new medicines that people can trust.
- National Contract Value Review. From October, NCVR, a new, standardised, national approach to costing for commercial contract research will increase the speed and efficiency of research set up and capacity for research in the NHS. The [The Life science competitiveness indicators](#) show the UK has the third highest research spend but is seventh out of ten nations for study set up time.
- Health Data Research's global data conference. We're partnering with the event which aims to help build the knowledge, collaborations and public trust needed to enable data-driven discoveries which improve peoples' lives. December 2022 in Birmingham.

Talk to us about

- Public involvement in research. Our data shows that many sponsors still don't understand what effective, meaningful public involvement looks like. Public involvement is always expected and possible, and we're working with sponsors to understand how we can better support them to involve people with relevant lived experience in their studies, ahead of the launch of new clinical trials regulations.
- Data driven research. We've created a prototype data decision tool to help people who develop AI and data driven technologies for health and social care to decide what data and approvals they might need. We're also working on guidance to improve understanding of the different processes and stakeholders that may be involved, helping developers to plan ahead.
- People centred clinical research. We're leading a project to improve the way clinical research happens, and make it easier for people to take part. Our steering group of researchers and research participants is looking at how we know if research is people-centred, what 'good' research looks like and what might be making it difficult. It will make recommendations to help improve the way clinical research happens in the UK

Current issues

- We've paused our research systems programme. We've reviewed work done so far on IRAS, listened to feedback and need to make some changes. We want to build on the benefits of combined review to develop a future system that supports a simpler and more co-ordinated research journey for all types of study. In the meantime, we have support available for users including guidance, webinars and a helpful service desk. For more information (and, if needed, more detailed messaging on this) contact Angela Marciano.
- We've brought together a specialist REC to review a research proposal that uses health data from people treated at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust's gender identity clinic. The study was informed by [the Cass Review](#). A number of charities and organisations that support trans people have written to us with concerns about the proposal.
- We've been asked to re-open an investigation into research misconduct that we completed in 2019. We requested changes to make it clear when research studies had ethics approval, but they've not been made. The studies involved people with ME or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. For more information on both of the above contact Eve Hart (Head of Communications)

References

- (1) 1324 studies were approved by a REC in England between April and August 2022. 1324 were given Favourable Opinion (95.6% of the total). 60 were given Unfavourable Opinion.
- (2) Confidentiality Advisory Group has completed 40 studies between April and August 2022. 31 of these were via full review and 9 via precedent set.
- (3) This data comes from the HRA user feedback survey in August 2022. Overall satisfaction with the HRA was 80% (measured by respondents scoring their experience 7 out of 10 or higher) and 91% of respondents scored our staff 7 out of 10 or higher. 41% scored staff 10 out of 10, the highest score of all aspects respondents are asked to comment on.