

Minutes
Public Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee
Velindre University NHS Trust

Date 04/09/2025
Time 10.00-12.00pm
Location Trust Headquarters, 2 Charnwood Court, Parc Nantgarw, Cardiff
Chair Andrew Westwell, Independent Member

| MEMBERS | | |
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| Andrew Westwell | Independent Member and Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Chair | AW |
| Vicky Morris | Independent Member | VM |
| ATTENDEES | | |
| Jacinta Abraham | Executive Medical Director and R&D Lead | JA |
| Matthew Bunce | Executive Director of Finance | MB |
| Christopher Cotterill-Jones | Research Delivery Manager | CCJ |
| Amie Garwood-Pask | Deputy Head of Finance Business Partnering | AGP |
| Non Gwilym | Director of Corporate Governance (Interim) | NG |
| Sian James | Head of RD&I, Welsh Blood Service | SJ |
| Jennet Holmes | Head of Innovation | JH |
| Robert Jones | Associate Medical Director for RD&I | RJ |
| Llinos Madeley | Head of Corporate Governance (Interim) | LM |
| Edwin Massey | Medical Director, Welsh Blood Service | |
| Rhydian Owen | Cancer R&D Strategy Lead | RO |
| Richard Skone | Deputy Medical Director | RS |
| Emma Williams | Senior Research Nurse Manager | EW |
| SECRETARIAT | | |
| Sandra Cusack | Business Support Officer | SMC |

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| 1.0 | PRELIMINARY MATTERS | |
| 1.1 | <p>Welcome and Introduction <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Chair</i></p> <p>The Chair welcomed attendees to the Public Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee meeting.</p> | |
| 1.2 | <p>Apologies received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Donegan, Chief Executive • Chloe George, Head of Component Development • Sara Moseley, Trust Chair • Sarah Townsend, Head of Research & Development • Nicola Williams, Director of Nursing, AHP's & Health Science | |
| 1.3 | <p>In Attendance</p> <p>The Chair extended a warm welcome to the following in support of specific agenda items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Magdalena Meissner, Medical Oncology Consultant (<i>Item 3.1</i>) | |
| 1.4 | <p>Declarations of Interest <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Chair</i></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest noted in respect of today's agenda.</p> | |
| 2.0 | STANDARD BUSINESS | |
| 2.1 | <p>Minutes from the Public Research, Development & Innovation Committee held on the 16th June 2025 <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Chair of the Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee</i></p> <p>The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee APPROVED the Minutes of the Public Meeting held on 16th June 2025 as an accurate reflection of proceedings.</p> | |
| 2.2 | <p>Review of Action Log <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Chair</i></p> <p>The Committee reviewed the action log and confirmed assurance that all actions marked as 'propose to close' had been fully completed and could be formally closed.</p> | |

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| | The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee APPROVED the closure of actions from June's 2025 Committee Meeting. | |
| 2.3 | <p>Matters Arising <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Chair of the Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee</i></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p> | |
| 3.0 | PRESENTATION AND GUEST ATTENDEES | |
| 3.1 | <p>Velindre Cancer Service RD&I Guest Presentation - The QuicDNA and QuicDNA Max Studies <i>Led by Dr Magdalena Meissner, Medical Oncology Consultant, Velindre University NHS Trust</i></p> <p>Dr Magda Meissner presented on the Quick DNA and Quick DNA Max research initiatives, highlighting their focus on integrating liquid biopsies (circulating tumour DNA blood tests) into cancer diagnostic pathways to accelerate genomic profiling and treatment decisions. The Quick DNA study, which involved over 700 patients, demonstrated that early blood-based genomic testing could identify actionable mutations faster than traditional tissue biopsies, enabling earlier access to targeted therapies, especially for lung cancer patients. The presentation included a patient story illustrating the life-changing impact of the new diagnostic approach, with patients able to access targeted therapies more quickly. The study also benefited from significant charitable support, notably from Craig Maxwell, and highlighted the importance of patient and public involvement. Dr Meissner outlined plans for Quick DNA Max, which will expand liquid biopsy diagnostics to additional cancer types (cancer of unknown primary, colorectal, prostate) and treatment resistance monitoring. The program aligns with Welsh Government initiatives and aims to attract industry collaboration and further innovation.</p> <p>The Committee asked about funding sources, with Dr Meissner explaining ongoing applications to UK and Welsh funding bodies, industry partners, and charitable foundations. She clarified that industry funding does not influence study results, and that the program is seeking sustainable public sector support for long-term implementation. The Committee discussed challenges in multi-source funding, project management, and mainstreaming genomics. Lessons from Quick DNA are informing the setup of Quick DNA Max, with a focus on robust project teams, contract management, and stakeholder education. The Committee noted the need for Welsh Government to support core costs for ongoing delivery.</p> <p>The Committee found the presentation to be very informative and extended their gratitude to Dr Meissner. The presentation was</p> | SC |

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| | scheduled to be distributed to the Committee members after the meeting. | |
| 4.0 | KEY REPORT(S) | |
| 4.1 | <p>Executive Medical Director Briefing <i>Led by Dr Jacinta Abraham, Executive Medical Director and R&D Lead</i></p> <p>JA provided the Committee with a comprehensive briefing on recent regulatory and policy changes affecting research. Key highlights included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCC Consultation on Excess Treatment Costs: The Joint Commissioning Committee's consultation on a new commissioning policy for excess treatment costs in non-commercial studies, emphasising that referrals for trial assessment should not be delayed pending funding approval. The policy proposes that Health and Care Research Wales will cover excess treatment costs and post-trial funding must be agreed before enrolment. MB raised questions about the process, and JA clarified that previously, commissioners picked up post-trial costs by default, but the new process requires explicit agreement before enrolment, which could introduce additional administrative steps. • New Clinical Trials Regulations: JA outlined the implementation of the Medicines for Human Use Clinical Trials Regulations, which were signed into law in April and will take effect the following year. The regulations focus on oversight, transparency and site responsibility, with a pilot program to streamline substantial modifications in studies. Velindre is participating in the pilot, aiming to learn from early experiences and strengthen its leadership and competitive position as a research sponsor. • Measuring Economic Value of Research: JA and LF discussed the importance of articulating the economic value of research within the NHS, referencing the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act and ongoing work led by Health and Care Research Wales. LF highlighted the need to embed the Act's goals, such as a prosperous Wales, into research impact measurement. JA noted that the Swansea Health Economic Centre is coordinating an academic-led project to develop metrics and case studies, with Rob Jones and others expected to contribute examples. • OECI Accreditation Ambitions: JA described Velindre's ambition to achieve Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) accreditation, joining only two other UK centres. Achieving this will require increased student numbers, publications, and strong academic partnerships, particularly with the Cardiff Cancer Research Partnership. The Committee discussed the need for a partnership bid to meet capacity metrics and agreed to focus on OECI requirements in a future meeting, with Nicola Williams identified as a key contributor. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitisation of Clinical Trial Records: JA reported on the rollout of digitisation for clinical trial records, funded through VPAG, which will allow secure electronic storage and reduce reliance on paper files. VM supported the initiative, noting its positive impact on record retention and efficiency. <p>The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED the Medical Director briefing.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCJ to forward the JCC Consultation to all research active principal investigators asking for input by the 24/09/25, to collate and submit responses by the national deadline. | CCJ |
| 5.0 | QUALITY, SAFETY AND PERFORMANCE / PLANNING AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT | |
| 5.1 | <p>Research, Development & Innovation Performance Report, Quarter 1, Financial Year 2025-26 <i>Led by Christopher Cotterill-Jones, Research Delivery Manager</i></p> <p>CCJ co-ordinated the Quarter 1 Performance Report in Sarah Townsend’s absence, with contributions from the RD&I Team, covering research activity, recruitment challenges, innovation progress, financial risks, and actions to improve performance and reporting clarity. Key highlights included:</p> <p>Cardiff Cancer Research Partnership Progress: RO updated the Committee on the transition from the Cardiff Cancer Research Hub to the Cardiff Cancer Research Partnership, reflecting expanded activity across organisations. The partnership is moving from setup to a fully operational phase, with a growing trials portfolio, discovery and translational research functions, and upcoming strategic reviews to align with evolving priorities.</p> <p>Nursing and Interdisciplinary Research: CCJ reported on the departure of Tess Watts and highlighted Fran Brown's Trust-funded research, which will inform future scientific work. The nursing and interdisciplinary research community program has brought together national and local leaders, with plans to restart once future hosting decisions are made.</p> <p>Recruitment and Study Performance: The Committee reviewed recruitment metrics, noting an increase in active studies but a slight decline in recruitment, attributed to pauses in large studies and operational pressures. Actions to improve performance include enhanced communication, revised setup processes, digital dashboards, and benchmarking visits to Clatterbridge Cancer Centre. VM and JA emphasised the need for clear action summaries and assurance in reporting.</p> | |

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| | <p>Welsh Blood Service Research and Innovation: EM and SJ reported progress in transplantation and component development, with expansion into blood donation research and international collaborations. The Committee discussed challenges in communications staffing, the ambition to lead a pre-hospital platelets trial, and the need for contingency support for comms outputs. Innovation KPIs are progressing, with leadership from Sian Richards and plans to embed innovation in operational areas.</p> <p>Innovation Portfolio and ISO Accreditation: The Innovation Team reported strong progress, including the launch of an innovation module on ESR, collaboration with Trinity University on a master's module, and implementation of ISO 56001 standards. Velindre aims to be the first UK health organisation to achieve this accreditation, aligning with OECl ambitions. The Committee discussed promotion, training, and upcoming innovation awards.</p> <p>Financial and Risk Management: The Finance Update highlighted a Q1 overspend, due to non-recurrent costs and pay, with risks around income targets and savings delivery. The Committee was informed of increased scrutiny from Welsh Government due to NHS Wales deficits, and the need for robust action plans. VM raised concerns about risk reporting clarity, and the Committee agreed to update and align risk presentation with the Trust risk register.</p> <p>The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED the RDI Performance Report, Quarter 1, 2025-26.</p> <p>ACTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a lead for the OECl accreditation work and schedule a future committee agenda item to provide a clearer understanding of requirements and progress. • Discuss and implement suggestions to restructure the performance report summary to better address actions, risks, and assurance, with help and support from VM. • Update the risk section in the performance report to reflect recent discussions, scrutiny, and active management, ensuring consistency with the Trust risk register for the next meeting. • Obtain approval and proceed with agency recruitment for a communications officer post, extending timing as needed due to previous unsuccessful placements. | <p>JA</p> <p>JA/ST/ VM</p> <p>JA/ST/ NG/MF</p> <p>NG</p> |
| <p>5.2</p> | <p>Update on the Cardiff Health Partners including Cardiff Cancer Research Hub <i>Led by Lauren Fear, Executive Director of Transformation</i></p> <p>LF provided an update to the Committee on the Cardiff Health Partners (CHP) Group which is a newly established strategic partnership between Velindre University NHS Trust, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and Cardiff University, designed to drive collaborative</p> | |

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| | <p>innovation in health and life sciences across the region. Key highlights included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flagship Projects: The Cardiff Cancer Research Partnership (CCRP) previously the (Cardiff Cancer Research Hub CCRH) is the flagship project, alongside initiatives in intracranial therapies, children and young people’s strategy, and enabling projects in data/sample sharing and JRO development. • Governance & Next Steps: CHP prospectus to be finalised and reviewed in November governance cycle, with a launch event scheduled for September. Partnership agreement for CCRP to be signed and brought through governance, with engagement of independent members ahead of formal review. • Strategic Alignment: CHP is linked to the Cardiff Innovation District and UK Modern Industrial Strategy, aiming to leverage regional innovation funding and investment opportunities. • Partnership Culture: Regular executive-level meetings are strengthening relationships and fostering a collaborative culture across organisations. • Operational Transition: CCRP has transitioned from setup to fully-fledged partnership, with expanding trial and translational research portfolios, coordinated large bids, and visible partnership activities. • Resource Sharing: Progress made in discussions on resource use and management reporting across CHP projects, with CCRP providing a leadership model for future collaborations. • Launch Events: Internal launch for CCRP scheduled for September, with external launch to follow post-signing of the partnership agreement. <p>The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED the Update on the Cardiff Health Partners including Cardiff Cancer Research Hub.</p> | |
| 6.0 | INTEGRATED GOVERNANCE | |
| 6.1 | <p>Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Cycle of Business 2025-26 and Terms of Reference 2025-26 <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Chair</i></p> <p>The RD&I Terms of Reference were reviewed and updated to reflect recent discussions and ensure alignment with committee responsibilities. Key changes include clarifying the committee’s oversight of the duty of quality, specifying reporting lines to both the Strategic Development Committee (SDC) and the Quality, Safety, and Performance (QSP) Committee, and confirming the requirement for three independent members (including the chair) to ensure quorum and continuity. The revised terms also integrate the R&D component of the clinical and scientific strategy, addressing the cycle of business timing, and incorporate feedback to improve clarity and governance.</p> <p>The Committee:</p> | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APPROVED the RD&I Cycle of Business 2025-26 • ENDORSED FOR APPROVAL the RD&I Terms of Reference 2025-26 for onward submission to Trust Board, subject to minor amendments discussed in the meeting. | SC |
| 6.2 / 6.3 | <p>Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Effectiveness Survey and Committee Annual Report 2024-2025 <i>Oral Update Non Gwilym, Director of Corporate Governance</i></p> <p>NG informed the Committee that 10 out of 20 survey responses had been received, an improvement on last year, though still not optimal. The Committee agreed to keep the survey open for an additional week to boost participation. Analysis of the results and drafting of the annual report would follow promptly, with summaries to be circulated outside of the Committee, if necessary, to prevent delays.</p> <p>The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED the update.</p> | NG/SC |
| 7.0 | CONSENT AGENDA | |
| 7.1 | Consent - For Approval / Endorsement | |
| | The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED there were no items for approval / endorsement. | |
| 7.2 | Consent - For Information / Noting | |
| 7.2.1 | <p>Summary from the Private Research, Development & Innovation Committee Meeting held on the 16th June 2025 <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Chair</i></p> <p>The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee APPROVED the Summary of the Private RD&I Sub-Committee minutes from the 16th June 2025.</p> | |
| 7.2.2 | <p>Health and Care Research Wales : Publication of the Strategic action plan for building research capability for nursing, midwifery and allied health professions in Wales <i>Led by Nicola Williams, Executive Director of Nursing, Allied Health Professionals and Health Science</i></p> <p>The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED the publication of the strategic action plan for building research capability for nursing, midwifery and allied health professions in Wales.</p> | |
| 8.0 | ANY OTHER BUSINESS <i>(Prior Agreement by the Committee Chair required)</i> | |

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| | The Chair did not receive any prior requests for items to be considered under Any Other Business for today's meeting and did not propose to take any. | |
| 9.0 | MEETING REFLECTIONS | |
| | <p>Members to determine items for inclusion in the Highlight / Assurance Report to the Quality, Safety and Performance Committee and Strategic Development Committee under the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Escalation • For Assurance • For Advising • For Information <p>Action: AW/ST to confirm which items will be submitted to QSP and SDC in due course.</p> | AW/ST |
| 10.0 | DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING | |
| | The next meeting of the Public Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee is scheduled for Thursday, 11th December 2025, 10.00-12.00pm at Trust Headquarters, 2 Charnwood Court, Parc Nantgarw, Cardiff. | |
| 11.0 | CLOSE | |
| | <p>The Research, Development and Innovation Sub-Committee is asked to adopt the following resolution:</p> <p><i>That representatives of the press and other members of the public be excluded from the remainder of this meeting having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, publicity on which would be prejudicial to the public interest in accordance with Section 1(2) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (c.67).</i></p> | |
| 12.0 | PRIVATE / PART B SESSION | |
| | <p>The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED that the following items would be discussed at the Private / Part B Session of the Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes from the Private Research, Development & Innovation Committee held on the 16th June 2025 • Business Case: DRAGON QA: Data driven Radiotherapy Assessment and Governance through Ongoing National Quality Assessment | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business Case: Clinical Fellowship to Support Development of SRS Service• Business Case: POWERING DISCOVERY, DELIVERING HOPE: Sustaining and expanding world class cancer research at Velindre University NHS Trust through charitable investment 2026 to 2029• FAKTION Investment Plan• ARC Approved Projects from July Board Meeting | |
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