

Minutes

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

Date 09/06/2026
Time 10.00-12.00pm
Location Trust Headquarters, 2 Charnwood Court, Parc Nantgarw, Cardiff
Chair Andrew Westwell, Independent Member

MEMBERS		
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
Chloë George	Consultant Clinical Scientist, Welsh Blood Service	CG
Jolene Dalton	Head of Corporate Governance (Interim)	JD
Annie Evans	Deputy Director of Nursing, Quality & Patient Experience	AE
Non Gwilym	Director of Corporate Governance (Interim)	NG
Sian James	Head of RD&I, Welsh Blood Service	SJ
Robert Jones	Associate Medical Director for RD&I	RJ
Ross McLeish	Advancing Radiotherapy Cymru Programme Manager	RMcL
Rhydian Owen	Cancer R&D Strategy Lead	RO
Shea Palmer	Professor of Interdisciplinary Cancer Care, Cancer Care Research Collaboration	SP
Richard Skone	Deputy Medical Director	RS
Sarah Townsend	Head of Research & Development	ST
Emma Williams	Senior Research Nurse Manager	EW
SECRETARIAT		
Sandra Cusack	Business Support Officer	SMC

1.0	PRELIMINARY MATTERS	
1.1	Welcome and Introductions <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Chair</i> The Chair welcomed attendees to the Public Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee meeting.	
1.2	Apologies Apologies were received from: • Jennet Holmes, Head of Innovation • Gillian Knight, Executive Director of Nursing, Allied Health Professionals and Health Science • Edwin Massey, Medical Director WBS • Carys Morgan, Clinical Director VCS • Sara Moseley, Trust Chair • David Osborne, Head of Finance Business Development	
1.3	In Attendance The Chair extended a warm welcome to the following in support of specific agenda items: • Dr Chloë George, Consultant Clinical Scientist, Welsh Blood Service (Agenda Item 3.1) • Ross McLeish, Advancing Radiotherapy Cymru (ARC) Programme Manager (Agenda Item 5.1) • Jolene Dalton, Interim Head of Corporate Governance (Observer) • Annie Evans, Deputy Director of Nursing, Quality & Patient Experience (Deputising for Gillian Knight)	
1.4	Declarations of Interest <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Chair</i> The Chair invited declarations of interest. No declarations were made beyond the standing declarations recorded in the Trust's Register of Interests.	
2.0	STANDARD BUSINESS	
2.1	Minutes from the Public Research, Development & Innovation Committee held on the 10th February 2026 <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Chair of the Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee</i>	

	The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee APPROVED the Minutes of the Public Meeting held on 10 th February 2026 as an accurate reflection of proceedings.	
2.2	Review of Action Log <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee Chair</i> The Sub-Committee reviewed the action log, and the following points were noted: - Three actions were proposed for closure, with the respective narratives in the action log explaining their status for closure. As no comments or objections were raised, the Sub-Committee agreed to CLOSE the actions. - Two actions remain open: 5.1 OECD Accreditation Programme (Action 5.1): Progress on appointing the Executive and Operational Leads has been delayed while governance arrangements and reporting structures are finalised. Job descriptions are complete, but decisions are still required regarding where the roles will sit within the organisation. An update is expected by the end of June, and members will be informed by email once decisions have been made. 4.1b Leveraging R&D for Commercial and Financial Benefit (Action 4.1.0B): Further discussion and proposals regarding commercial opportunities and maximising the value of RD&I activity are scheduled for the next Sub-Committee meeting. The Sub-Committee agreed to keep the two open actions under review and to update progress at the next meeting. The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee APPROVED the action log and the updates provided.	Secretariat
2.3	Matters Arising <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Chair of the Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee</i> There were no matters arising from the minutes.	
3.0	PRESENTATION AND GUEST ATTENDEES	
3.1	COLD-FIRST (COLD-stored platelets for Initial Resuscitation in Shock and Trauma study) <i>Led by Dr Chloë George, Consultant Clinical Scientist, Welsh Blood Service</i>	

	Dr Chloë George, Consultant Clinical Scientist and Head of Blood Component Development and Research at the Welsh Blood Service, presented the Cold First (Cold Stored Platelets for Initial Resuscitation in Shock and Trauma) Trial. The presentation highlighted over six years of research and development leading to the successful award of £2.9 million funding from UK Defence and Innovation to deliver the trial. The study represents a significant milestone for the Welsh Blood Service, Velindre, and NHS Wales. • Background and Rationale: Outlined the Welsh Blood Service's decade-long journey in research, focusing on platelet transfusion challenges, such as short shelf life and complex storage, and the potential of cold stored platelets to improve logistics, safety, and accessibility, especially in pre-hospital and military settings. • Trial Design and Funding: The Cold First trial, funded with £2.9 million from UK Defence and Innovation, will be the first of its kind to test cold stored platelets in pre-hospital trauma care across 10 air ambulances in Wales and England. The trial will assess clinical and cost effectiveness, with Velindre receiving over £1.3 million for staff, transport, and setup costs. • Collaborative Partnerships: The trial involves multiple partners, including Defence Medical Services, Swansea Trials Unit, Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service, and clinicians from the air ambulance and Navy. The governance structure includes operational groups, a steering group, and an independent monitoring committee, with around 30 sites participating. • Regulatory and IP Considerations: Approval for cold stored platelets as a blood component is pending with the UK regulator, and discussions are ongoing with the MHRA regarding trial classification. Intellectual property and commercialisation strategies are being reviewed, with the understanding that while the manufacturing process is not unique, the trial's outcomes could have significant impact. • Committee Oversight and Communication: The committee agreed to receive regular updates on the trial's progress through performance reporting and emphasised the importance of strategic communication, especially given the military partnership and potential PR opportunities. The need for expert advice on intellectual property and commercialisation was also highlighted. JA summarised that the Cold First is a landmark study for Welsh Blood Service and Velindre, bringing significant reputational, research and partnership opportunities. The Trust should ensure strong communications, carefully consider intellectual property and commercial	
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	issues, and use the study as a learning opportunity to build future research capability. The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee thanked Dr George and NOTED the informative presentation and discussion. It was agreed that further updates would be provided through routine RD&I performance reporting as key milestones are achieved. The Sub-Committee was highly supportive of the trial but emphasised that the next phase should focus on robust governance, regulatory compliance, contractual completion, communications planning and regular oversight reporting to ensure successful delivery.	
4.0	KEY REPORT(S)	
4.1	Executive Medical Director Briefing <i>Led by Dr Jacinta Abraham, Executive Medical Director and R&D Lead</i> JA provided the Sub-Committee with a comprehensive briefing on recent regulatory and policy changes affecting research. Key points highlighted: NHS Wales R&D Framework Assessment • The Trust has submitted its NHS Wales Research & Development Framework Assessment to Welsh Government. • A review meeting with Welsh Government is scheduled, providing an opportunity to demonstrate progress, showcase achievements and discuss future ambitions. • The meeting is particularly important given that a significant proportion of research funding is provided through Health and Care Research Wales and may influence future investment opportunities. VPAG Funding Update • Discussions continue with Health and Care Research Wales regarding the Trust's revised proposal for the next phase of VPAG funding. • While funding has not been secured in the manner originally proposed, there remains a commitment to investment in cancer research. • The team is revising and resubmitting proposals following feedback that the initial submission was overly ambitious and could be improved by presenting more defined work packages. Embedding Research within Cancer Services • A workshop has been held between the RD&I team and Velindre Cancer Centre leadership to strengthen integration between research and operational services.	

	• The aim is to ensure research becomes increasingly embedded within routine service delivery, with shared accountability for performance and growth. • Future reporting and governance arrangements may evolve as integration develops. Cold First Trial Success • The briefing highlighted the Welsh Blood Service's successful £2.9 million funding award for the Cold First platelet study. • This was recognised as a major achievement for both the Welsh Blood Service and Velindre's wider research portfolio. Collaborative Centre Development • Work is progressing on the development of the Collaborative Centre, supported by PwC. • The centre is intended to bring together research, innovation, education, learning and partnership activities across the Trust. • Further proposals and outputs from the development work will be brought back to a future committee meeting. Future Research Capability and New Treatments • Discussion focused on organisational readiness to support increasingly complex and innovative treatments and clinical trials. • Work is underway to ensure appropriate governance, clinical pathways, enhanced care arrangements and collaboration with partner organisations are in place. • Research is being used as a mechanism to safely introduce and support new models of care. The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED the Executive Medical Director's briefing, which summarised Research, Development & Innovation activity for FY2025/26, Quarter 4, and highlighted noteworthy developments since the Sub-Committee's previous meeting. The briefing provided assurance that research activity continues to grow and remains aligned with strategic priorities, while recognising the need for further work in relation to funding sustainability, service integration, governance, and organisational readiness for future innovative treatments and trials. **ACTIONS** • Prepare for the Welsh Government R&D Framework Assessment review meeting, including key organisational messages and evidence of progress. • Resubmit revised VPAG funding proposals following discussions with Health and Care Research Wales. • Continue integrating research activity within the Cancer Service and develop future reporting arrangements for research performance and accountability.	JA
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	• Develop plans and governance arrangements that support delivery of increasingly complex and innovative clinical trials and treatments. • Complete PwC-supported work on the Collaborative Centre and report proposals to the Committee.	
5.0	QUALITY, SAFETY AND PERFORMANCE / PLANNING AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT	
5.1	Research, Development & Innovation Performance Report, Financial Year 2025/26, Annual Report incorporating Quarter 4 <i>Led by Sarah Townsend, Head of Research & Development and relevant leads as follows :</i> • <i>Rhydian Owen, Research & Development Cancer Strategy Lead</i> • <i>Professor Shea Palmer, Nursing and Interdisciplinary Cancer Care</i> • <i>Christopher Cotterill-Jones, Research Delivery Manager</i> • <i>Sian James, Head of RD&I, Welsh Blood Service</i> • <i>Ross McLeish, Advancing Radiotherapy Cymru (ARC) Programme Manager (On behalf of Jennet Holmes, Head of Innovation)</i> • <i>Matt Bunce, Executive Director of Finance</i> Cancer Research Strategy and Cardiff Cancer Research Partnership (CCRP) <i>RO provided an update on the RD&I strategic transformation programme and research sustainability. Key points highlighted:</i> • RD&I funding is currently supported by three principal income streams: charitable funding, commercial research income and Health and Care Research Wales delivery funding. • Velindre has secured £7 million of charitable funding over the next three years, with an expectation that commercial research income will increase over time. • A transformation plan is being implemented focusing on: - o Increasing external and commercial income. - o Reprofile the research portfolio towards a greater proportion of cancer research activity. - o Improving efficiency and reducing delays in research processes. • The Cardiff Cancer Research Partnership (CCRP) is now operational with: - o Eight studies open. - o Approximately eight further studies in set-up. - o The programme moving from implementation to business-as-usual delivery and growth. • A notable achievement highlighted by the Chair was the recruitment of the first patient into Allan Parker's precision viral therapy trial, a Cardiff-developed research programme Nursing, Allied Health and Academic Research <i>SP reported on research capacity-building and academic programme activity. Key points highlighted:</i>	

	• Research community meetings continue to attract strong engagement. • A successful collaboration event with Cardiff University attracted almost 30 participants and generated several new research ideas. • Research advice clinics remain active and continue to support staff developing research proposals. • The next round of Healthcare Cancer Research Fellowships is being launched, supported by workshops to help applicants develop competitive submissions. • Work on the Inclusive Prehabilitation study has concluded successfully, with: - o Educational resources launched. - o Multiple publications submitted and accepted. - o Plans being developed for a follow-on study examining impact on participation and patient outcomes. Research Delivery and Portfolio Performance <i>CCJ presented the Trust's research portfolio and national performance indicators. Key points highlighted:</i> • At year-end the portfolio contained: - o 207 studies across the research lifecycle. - o 69 active studies. - o 65 actively recruiting studies. - o 80 studies in follow-up. - o 13 studies in set-up. • During the year: - o 30 studies opened. - o 263 participants were recruited. • Recruitment numbers were lower than previous years due to closure of several large recruiting studies. • Velindre remains: - o Top UK recruiter for five studies. - o Second-highest recruiter for ten studies. • New UK research performance expectations now require: - o 60 days from sponsor submission to regulatory approval. - o 60 days for NHS capacity and capability approval. - o 30 days to recruit the first participant. • Work is underway to streamline local processes to meet the new 150-day target. Current Risk Register (Open Risks) – From 01 April 2025 CCJ reported that: • Two existing RD&I risks remain on the risk register and continue to be monitored. • A new risk had been included in error within the report because it had not yet been considered by the Operational Management Group and therefore was not ready for formal reporting.	
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Research Participation and Workforce Engagement

EW contributed to discussion regarding future research opportunities. Key points highlighted:

- Highlighted development of the CO-Clarity study, which could be delivered across multiple tumour sites.
- Discussed increasing involvement of multidisciplinary professionals, including nurses and pharmacists, within research leadership roles.
- Identified opportunities to increase recruitment and broaden participation by involving wider clinical groups in study delivery

Welsh Blood Service

SJ provided an overview of research performance across Welsh Blood Service. Key points highlighted:

- Recognised success of early-career researchers, including award-winning staff members.
- Reported sustained growth in research activity following implementation of the Welsh Blood Service research strategy.
- Highlighted increasing levels of collaboration with external partners, creating research opportunities but also increasing complexity in contracting and study set-up arrangements.
- Reported growth in the innovation and service-improvement workstream, which has now achieved its performance targets and moved to a green rating.
- Noted that research-related KPIs are becoming increasingly embedded within divisional performance management arrangements

Innovation Programme

RMcL presented the annual review of innovation performance. Key points highlighted:

- Velindre has become the first healthcare organisation globally to hold both:
 - ISO 56001 certification.
 - BSI Innovation Management Kitemark.
- The innovation infrastructure is now fully established, with mechanisms in place to support ideas from concept through to implementation.
- Key programmes include:
 - Bright Ideas platform.
 - Innovation Small Award Scheme.
 - Advanced Radiotherapy Academy.
 - Collaborative Centre development.
- Staff awareness and engagement with innovation continues to grow through training, induction and structured support mechanisms.
- The programme is increasingly demonstrating measurable clinical and service improvements, particularly through Advancing Radiotherapy Cymru (ARC).

	Financial Performance MB reported that RD&I closed the 2025/26 financial year with an overspend of approximately £232k. The variance was attributed mainly to staffing pressures, non-pay expenditure and challenges in delivering planned savings, although several of the expenditure pressures were considered non-recurrent. Positively, commercial income overachievement helped offset some of the financial pressures, demonstrating the growing importance of commercial research activity to the overall RD&I financial position. The Sub-Committee: • NOTED the content of the Trust's Research, Development, and Innovation Integrated Performance Report, Financial Year 2025/26, Annual Report incorporating Quarter 4. • NOTED the current 2026/27 position is reporting as broadly balanced at this early stage of the year. • NOTED further work is required to strengthen financial forecasting and understand the recurring cost base. • NOTED performance against invoice payment targets remains below expectation and requires ongoing improvement, particularly given potential scrutiny from external stakeholders and funders. The Committee identified the following key follow-up actions. These actions will be progressed through routine RD&I governance and performance reporting arrangements, with updates provided to future Sub-Committee meetings. • Strengthen performance reporting and forecasting by providing clearer information on recruitment trends, study pipelines, commercial activity and future income projections. • Monitor compliance with the new UK 150-day study set-up target and continue work to streamline research approval and delivery processes. • Progress the commercial research growth strategy, including increasing commercial studies and embedding research activity within clinical services. • Further develop multidisciplinary research opportunities, including expanded involvement of nurses, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals in study leadership and delivery. • Implement an updated RD&I performance reporting framework in line with revised Health and Care Research Wales guidance. • Improve financial management processes, particularly around invoice payment performance and financial forecasting. • Continue monitoring growth and sustainability of the Cardiff Cancer Research Partnership, Welsh Blood Service research portfolio and innovation programmes to ensure resources, governance and infrastructure remain aligned with increasing activity levels.	
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6.0	INTEGRATED GOVERNANCE	
6.1	WHC/2026/004 - Refreshed Intellectual Property Guidance and Template Policy for NHS Wales Organisations <i>Led by Ross McLeish, Advancing Radiotherapy Cymru (ARC) Programme Manager</i> The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee DISCUSSED the content of the report and NOTED the Welsh Health Circular on the Refreshed Intellectual Property Guidance and Template Policy for NHS Wales Organisations and agreed to review Velindre's existing policy against the new requirements. **ACTION** Mapping out governance implications, responding to the checklist, and ensuring compliance by the September cycle.	
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	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> The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED the Summary from the Private Session of the RD&I Sub-Committee held on the 16th June 2025.	
7.2.2	NHS Wales Research & Development Framework Assessment 2026 - Velindre University NHS Trust – Final Submission to Welsh Government <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Sub-Committee Chair and Independent Member</i> The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED the NHS Wales Research & Development Framework Assessment 2026 - Velindre University NHS Trust – Final Submission to Welsh Government.	
8.0	ANY OTHER BUSINESS <i>(Prior Agreement by the Committee Chair required)</i>	

8.1	Celebrate excellence: Apply or nominate for the Health and Care Research Wales National Awards <i>Led by Jacinta Abraham, Executive Medical Director and Research & Development Lead</i> The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee was reminded of the upcoming deadline for award applications and discussed the potential for the new communications officer to coordinate and support future submissions, possibly through a dedicated subgroup to monitor award opportunities. The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee NOTED the call for applications for the Health and Care Research Wales National Awards.	
8.2	Committee Reporting Changes <i>Led by Professor Andrew Westwell, Chair of the Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee</i> The Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee was informed that the Committee's reporting lines and terms of reference are under review as part of a broader governance restructuring, with further updates expected at the next meeting.	
9.0	MEETING REFLECTIONS	
	The Chair invited brief reflections on items to be included in the highlight reporting and overall impressions of the meeting's effectiveness. Members agreed that the following should be highlighted and escalated through governance reporting: • Cold First Platelet Trial – the award of £2.9 million funding and the strategic significance of the study for Welsh Blood Service, Velindre and NHS Wales. • VPAG Funding Discussions – ongoing engagement with Health and Care Research Wales regarding revised funding proposals and future investment opportunities. • NHS Wales R&D Framework Assessment – preparations for the forthcoming Welsh Government review and the opportunity to demonstrate progress and future ambitions. • Collaborative Centre Development – progress in defining the Trust-wide research, innovation, education and partnership model. • RD&I Financial Position – the year-end overspend and actions to improve financial management and forecasting. • Invoice Payment Performance – continued focus on improving performance against payment targets. The Sub-Committee acknowledged that this was Andrew Westwell's final RD&I Sub-Committee meeting prior to his departure from the Trust.	Secretariat

	Members formally thanked Andrew for his leadership of the Committee and his significant contribution to key initiatives, including CCRP and ARC, recognising his important role in supporting the development and success of the RD&I agenda.	
10.0	DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING	
	The next meeting of the Public Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, 8th September 2026, 10.00-12.00pm at Trust Headquarters, 2 Charnwood Court, Parc Nantgarw, Cardiff.	
11.0	CLOSE	
	The Research, Development and Innovation Sub-Committee is asked to adopt the following resolution: <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>	
12.0	PRIVATE / PART B SESSION	
	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: The following item (s) will be discussed at the Private / Part B Session of the Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee: • Minutes from the Private Research, Development & Innovation Sub-Committee held on 10th February 2026 • Review of Action Log • ARC Approved Projects from April 2026 Board Meeting	