

National Institute for Health Research

Public give resounding “Yes” to commercial research in the NHS

A new survey conducted on behalf of the National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network (NIHR CRN) shows that 94% of people say it is important for them that the NHS is a place where the life-sciences industry can carry out clinical research.

The survey also revealed that 92% of people say it is important to them to be offered new treatments by their healthcare professional. The results are announced as a national industry event hosted by the Network takes place in London. George Freeman MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Life Sciences and Jonathan Sheffield, Chief Executive Officer of the Network, amongst other keynote speakers, are set to discuss how the quality of delivery in the NHS makes the UK an attractive place to carry out research for the life-sciences industry.

Last year over 25,000 patients took part in commercial contract studies (up 26% on the previous year). The growing importance of clinical research to the general public and their enthusiasm for new treatments suggests that this number is set to rise.

Commenting on the findings of the survey, the NIHR Clinical Research Network's chief executive officer, Jonathan Sheffield, said:

“These results show that clinical research is important to people and that they value the NHS's commitment to providing an environment where the life-sciences industry can develop new treatments. The NIHR Clinical Research Network is dedicated to making sure we add value to this environment and ensuring that commercial companies continue to choose to carry out their research in the UK and within the NHS. This will enable us to continue to increase the number of opportunities for patients to take part in research and ultimately improve patient care.

“Our statistics for 2013/14 show that the Network was supporting more than 900 commercial contract studies in the NHS; a 31% increase on the previous year and nearly ten times the number in 2008/09. I hope that today's event will inform more companies about the services the Network can offer and open up debate about how we can do things even better.”

Minister for Life Sciences George Freeman said:

“Patients clearly value the NHS as a place where innovations can be developed to help create and develop new treatments. It's vitally important that the NHS, academics and industry work closely together to continue our world leading research. There is huge growth potential in the life sciences and our commitment to this sector will not only benefit patients but also boost the economy by bringing in new investment opportunities.”

The survey also revealed that 95% of people think that the clinical research industry is important to the UK economy. The industry provides around 165,000 jobs nationwide.

Interested parties can visit: www.supportmystudy.nihr.ac.uk to find out more about the services the Clinical Research Network offers to the life-sciences industry.