

# Cork University Hospital Research & Innovation Strategy 2025 - 2028



# Our Strategic Priorities

- 1 Increase High Quality Research & Innovation Activity
- 2 Infrastructure
- 3 Communication, Engagement & Empowerment
- 4 Funding
- 5 Transparent Governance & Oversight



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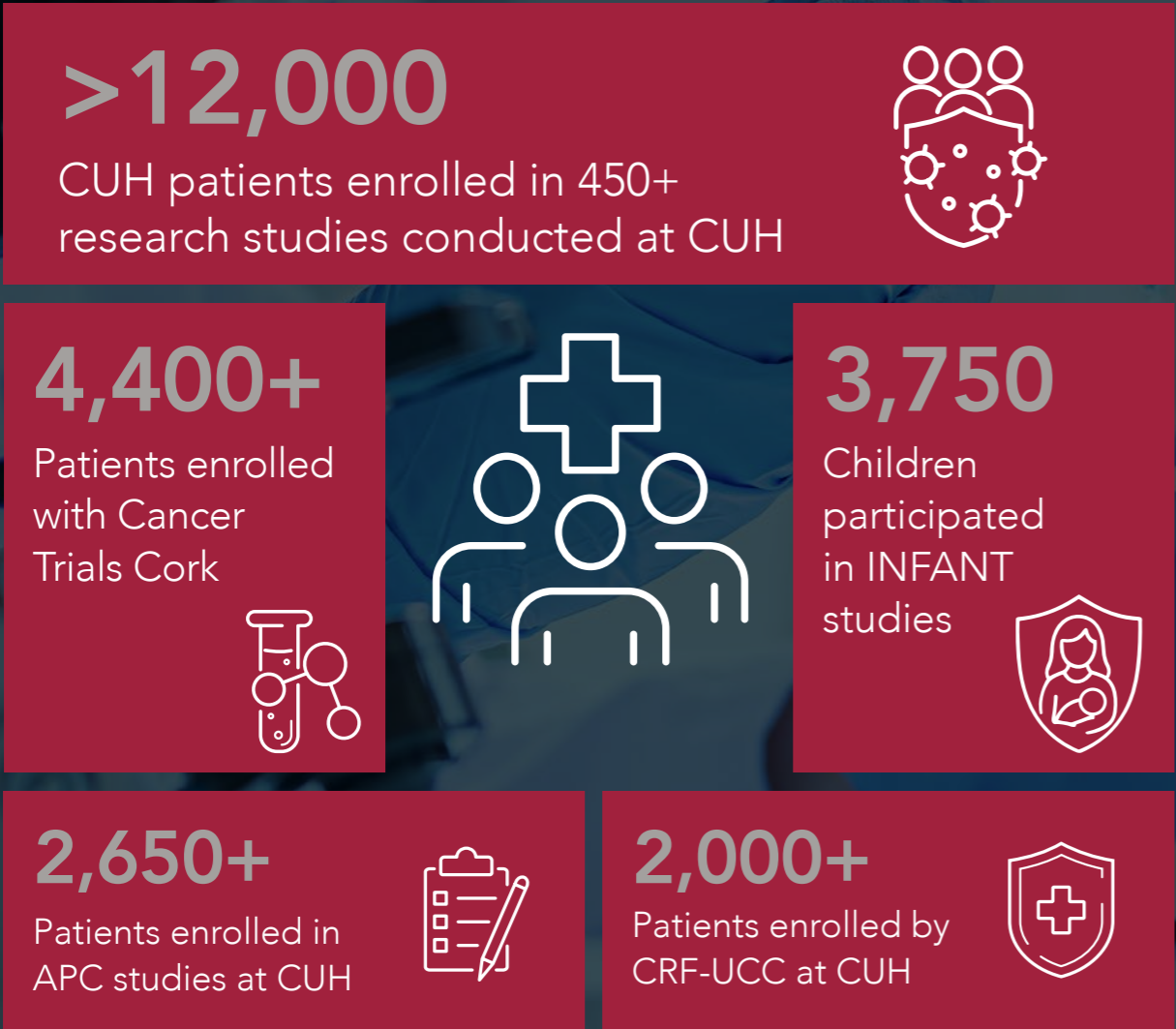
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# Overview

## CUH Research Activity in Numbers



# Foreword

As CEO of Cork University Hospital, I am proud to introduce our Research & Innovation Strategy 2025-2028 a landmark document that reflects both the ambition and the responsibility we carry as Ireland’s largest and most complex hospital. Every day, our teams deliver exceptional care across adult, paediatric, maternity, and mental health services, and this strategy sets out how we will strengthen that care through a deeper, more embedded culture of research and innovation.



Ms Jennifer Kearney, CEO

Research is not an optional extra in a modern health service; it is a core component of safe, high-quality, evidence-based care. At CUH, we have long understood this. Our clinicians, researchers, partners, and patients already contribute to a remarkable breadth of studies that advance treatment, improve outcomes, and shape the future of healthcare nationally and internationally. This strategy builds on that foundation and sets a clear roadmap for progressing even further.

The priorities outlined in this document; expanding research activity, strengthening infrastructure, enhancing engagement, securing sustainable funding, and embedding transparent governance, will ensure that research and innovation are not parallel activities but integral to how we deliver care. They reflect the voices of our staff, the needs of our patients, and the national direction set out in Sláintecare, Impact 2030, and the HSE’s evolving research and innovation frameworks.

I want to acknowledge the considerable work that has gone into developing this

strategy. I extend my sincere thanks to the CUH Research & Innovation Committee, the dedicated subcommittee, and the many staff and stakeholders who contributed their time, insights, and experience. I am particularly grateful for the leadership shown in shaping a strategy that is ambitious, inclusive, and practical.

Most importantly, this strategy is about people, those who work in CUH and those who rely on us for care. By strengthening our research and innovation ecosystem, we ensure that patients across our region have access to the most advanced, evidence-driven treatments and that CUH continues to attract, develop, and retain exceptional talent.

I look forward to supporting its implementation and to working with our staff, our academic and industry partners, and our community to deliver on its vision. Together, we will ensure that CUH continues to be a centre of excellence where research, innovation, and patient-centred care thrive side by side.

# Introduction



As Chair of the Research & Innovation (R&I) Committee at CUH I firmly believe that excellence in clinical research is a prerequisite for high quality clinical care. We must always seek to be at the forefront of improvements in patient care through participation in clinical research.

I believe that CUH is very well positioned to become a national leader in clinical research given the excellence of our clinical & research staff, the co-location of all major specialties on one campus, our strong history of collaboration with the UCC College of Medicine and Health (CoMH) and the large and diverse patient population that we serve.

I am very grateful to Dr Fiona Byrne, (PhD, RD, CUH Dietitian Manager in Charge III, Co-Chair of the CUH Research & Innovation (R&I) Committee) for leading the CUH Research Subcommittee for Strategy Development. Together with the CUH subcommittee members<sup>1</sup>, she has worked tirelessly to develop this important document. This strategy represents an important milestone for CUH and will establish a strong foundation to ensure that clinical research and innovation is a core component of patient care in CUH.

**Professor Michael Clarkson.**  
Chair Research & Innovation (R&I) Committee and Consultant Nephrologist, CUH.

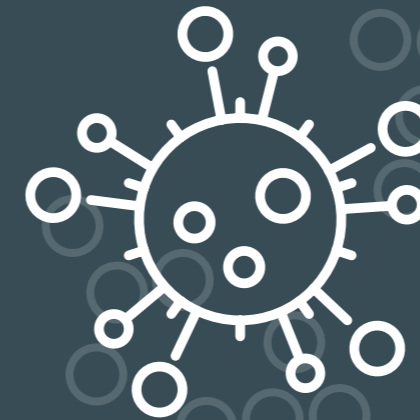


I am very grateful for the opportunity to lead the development of this strategy. CUH's proven research excellence, its prioritisation of research in our hospital strategy, and positive staff and management engagement including survey feedback, highlight its strong commitment to integrating research into patient care. This research and innovation strategy aims to build on this commitment by focusing on five strategic priorities and providing a clear roadmap for achieving significant progress in the coming years.

Engaging with the highly motivated and invested staff across CUH and our valued stakeholders and partners has been an inspiring experience. My sincere thanks go to Dr Claire Brady, Research Manager, Professor Michael Clarkson, Chair of the Research & Innovation (R&I) Committee and the entire Research Strategy Subcommittee for their invaluable time and contributions. Finally, I want to extend my gratitude to Professor Joe Eustace for his mentorship during the development of this strategy.

We look forward to working with you all to implement it.

**Dr Fiona Byrne.**  
Co-Chair of the CUH Research & Innovation (R&I) Committee and Dietitian Manager in Charge III



"I am very grateful for the opportunity to lead the development of this strategy. Engaging with the highly motivated and invested staff across CUH and our valued stakeholders and partners has been an inspiring experience."



<sup>1</sup> \* Subcommittee members: Dr Fiona Byrne, RD, PhD, Dietitian Manager in Charge III, CUH, CUMH & SFRU, Lead of Research Strategy Subcommittee and Vice Chair of Research & Innovation (R&I) Committee, Dr Claire Brady, CUH Research Manager, Joanne Crowley Walsh, Interim Director of CRF-UCC, Debra O'Hare, Cancer Trials Cork Operational Director, Jane Shanahan, Assistant Director of Nursing, Prof Corinna Sadler, Consultant in Infectious Diseases, Dr Sarah Moran, Consultant Nephrologist, Rafaela Carapeto, HSE SW Research Manager, Dr Virginia Silvani, Pharmacist, PhD, Brendan O'Reilly, Operations Manager, CUH. Invited member: Prof Roisin Connolly, Professor Gerald O'Sullivan Chair in Cancer Research at UCC and CUH, and Medical Oncologist, CUH.

# Background & Process

## Background

CUH is the largest HSE Model 4 hospital in the state and uniquely provides fully integrated adult, paediatric, maternity and mental health services on a single campus. Through active participation in research and innovation, we can ensure that our patients have early access to cutting edge, life enhancing and lifesaving treatments. Our combination of scale, experience, service integration and academic alignment places CUH in a strong position to lead nationally in health research and innovation.

We have a long-standing track record of conducting and contributing to high quality research across all clinical directorates and specialities. This activity is underpinned by robust governance and oversight provided by our Research Office and the essential support of our research units; Cancer Trials Cork (HRB funded UCC Cancer Trials Group site), HRB Clinical Research Facility at UCC (CRF-UCC), The Irish Centre for Maternal and Child Health Research (INFANT) and APC Microbiome Ireland (APC). CUH takes great pride in serving as the primary teaching hospital for University College Cork, which is supported by a deep and enduring academic relationship underpinning our commitment to research, innovation and education.

## Strategic Context

We are committed to aligning our strategic priorities with Sláintecare through the promotion of integrated research and innovation within clinical care pathways. We will also ensure our strategy reflects the priorities and frameworks set out in Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy and HSE Research and Development Action Plan for Health Research 2019-29.

Guided by Sláintecare, our strategy also reflects the vision and strategic priorities of our academic partner, UCC as outlined in their Strategic Plan, 'Securing Our Future: UCC Strategic Plan 2023-2028'. This alignment is already well established as evidenced by the fact that UCC Futures research prioritisation programme areas complement CUH's clinical specialities and capabilities. The recently signed Memorandum of Agreement for the establishment of an aligned Academic Health Science Research and Development Office between UCC and HSE South West is further evidence of our joint commitment to co-produce high-quality research, accelerate innovation and translation of bench side discoveries to bedside outcomes and back again.

Our research governance structure is explicitly modelled on the HSE Research Governance, Management and Support (RGMS) Framework. This ensures that our research activity adheres to HSE national standards, supports the safe and ethical conduct of research and facilitates high-quality, service-relevant studies that contribute to improvements in patient outcomes. We welcome the forthcoming publication of the HSE's first Framework for Health Innovation and are committed to embedding its implementation within our innovation function.

These strategic alignments will help CUH establish a cohesive and forward-looking research and innovation environment that reflects national priorities and promotes academic excellence. This will allow us to foster impactful multi-disciplinary clinical research and innovation.

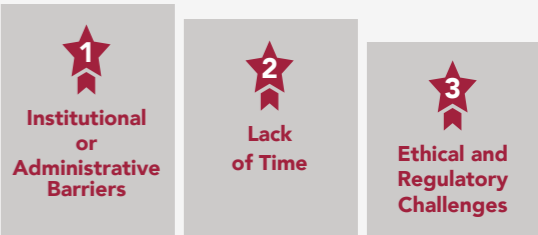
## Strategy Development Process

This strategy was developed through an iterative process involving a dedicated Research & Innovation subcommittee conducting workshops followed by staff engagement and surveys. We are very grateful to all who attended our stakeholder engagement meetings and to the 236 staff members who completed the online survey. The responses reflected broad representation across disciplines of medical, nursing, health and social care professionals. However, we acknowledge the limited participation from students and recognise the importance of addressing this gap.



Participants were asked to rank 10 statements, according to what they considered were the main barriers hindering their involvement in clinical research (see Appendix 1). The top 3 were institutional or administrative barriers, lack of time and ethical and regulatory challenges. These valuable insights were used to shape this strategy.

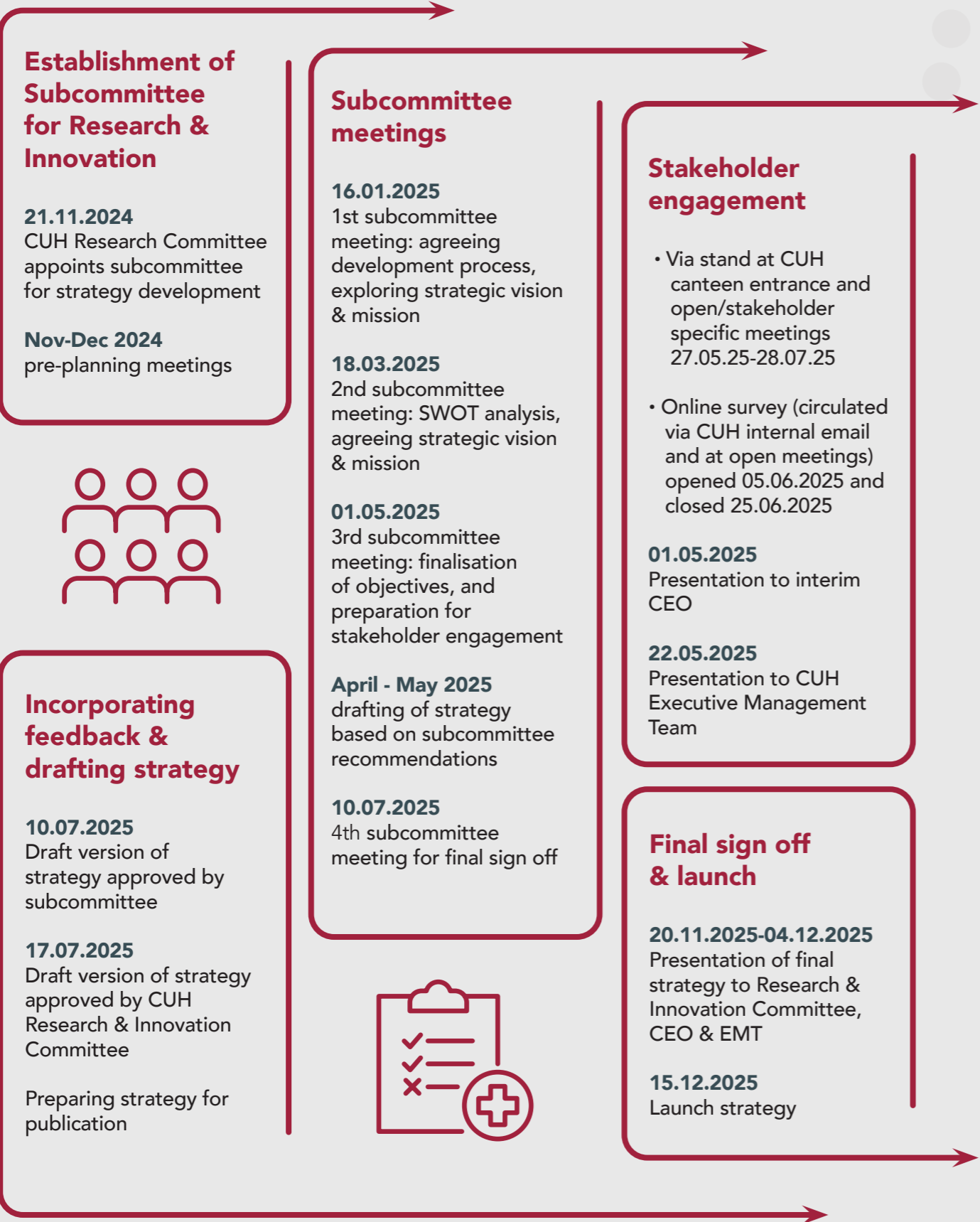
Please rank the main barriers preventing you from participating in research putting the greatest barrier at the top?



Subcommittee discussions and stakeholder engagements identified two key unmet needs specifically in relation to PPI involvement and innovation. While formal patient and public involvement (PPI) structures are not yet embedded in our research and innovation activities, we recognise this as a significant limitation. We are committed to implementing a structured and effective PPI strategy - drawing on the expertise of UCC and the PPI Ignite Network - to ensure that research and innovation at CUH are meaningfully co-designed and, where possible, co-led by patients and the public.

This strategy was initially conceived with a focus on research; however, through staff engagement and consultation, a clear unmet need for structured support for innovation emerged. Recognising that research and innovation are intrinsically linked yet governed by distinct frameworks, we have expanded the strategy to include both domains—while committing to the development of a dedicated innovation model and governance structure that reflects this distinction.





Key Milestones in Research & Development Landscape

YEAR	LOCATION	MILESTONE
1986	Nationally	Establishment of Health Research Board (HRB)
2003	CUH/UCC	Cancer Trials Cork (formerly Oncology Clinical Trials Unit) established APC Microbiome established
2011	CUH/UCC	CRF-UCC established
2013	CUH/UCC Nationally	INFANT established Health Innovation Hub established in 2013 and UCC selected as Ireland's National Health Innovation Hub in 2016
2017	Nationally Nationally Nationally Nationally	Sláintecare Report – Committee on the Future of Healthcare published Appointment of Dr Ana Terres, Head of Research and Evidence, Assistant National Director at HSE HSE Spark Innovation Programme PPI Ignite Awards (2017-2021)
2018	Legislation CUH	Health Research Regulations CUH Research Committee established
2019	Nationally Nationally	Sláintecare Implementation Strategy published HSE Research & Development Action Plan for Health Research 2019-2029 published
2021	Legislation Regionally Nationally Nationally	Amendment to Health Research Regulations HSE SSWHG & UCC Integrated Research Group established HSE Research & Development RGMS framework published PPI National Network launched
2022	Nationally Regionally Nationally	HSE Research & Development – HSE Roadmap for the Reform of Health and Social Care Research Ethics Committees HSE SW (formerly HSE SSWHG) Research Manager Appointed Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation strategy published
2023	CUH Nationally	Acting 0.5 WTE CUH Research Manager appointed Public Only Consultant Contract 2023 Innovation Fund
2024	CUH Nationally Nationally Nationally	CUH Fit for Fifty 2024-2028 strategy launched HSE National Consent Policy for Consent in Health and Social Care Research published Establishment of Research Ireland National Clinical Trials Oversight Group - Interim Recommendations
2025	Regionally CUH	HSE SW Director of Research Appointed 1 WTE CUH Research Manager Appointed



## Our Vision & Mission

### Vision

To be a **centre of excellence**, seamlessly integrating **patient-centred research** and **innovation** into clinical practice to **deliver the highest quality of care** and **improve patient outcomes**.



### Mission

We are **dedicated to embedding research and innovation** into every aspect of care, **empowering our staff** with supportive infrastructure and **fostering a positive research culture**. By providing accessible opportunities for patients and staff to participate in high quality research, **we aim to attract top talent, secure funding partnerships**, and **drive transformative improvements in patient care**.





## Our Strategic Priorities



①  
Increase High  
Quality Research  
& Innovation Activity

②  
Infrastructure

③  
Communication,  
Engagement &  
Empowerment

④  
Funding

⑤  
Transparent  
Governance &  
Oversight



1

Increase High Quality Research & Innovation Activity

Core objectives:

Fostering & facilitating staff to make R&I part of their every day practice	Efficient hospital governance and approval process	Recognise and value R&I activity	Measure and monitor activity	Grow R&I office to support more activity
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Key actions:

Establish a regular R&I Support Clinic	Creating, enabling & streamlining the research environment	Establishing an annual CUH R&I conference.	Annual CUH report of R&I activity targeting a 20% increase in activity	Conduct benchmarking assessment of R&I resourcing in other Irish hospitals.
Develop supports such as guidance documents, educational opportunities, mentorships, R&I champions	Defined timelines for hospital approval process	Create funded post-graduate research opportunities for CUH staff	Advocate for standardised national metrics for R&I activity	Develop business case to support enhanced supports for R&I

Why this is important for us:

We want to enhance patient outcomes by fostering a research active hospital where research and innovation are embedded in routine clinical practice and monitor this as core key performance indicator for CUH.

2

Infrastructure

Core objectives:

Establishment of R&I Office	Define existing R&I footprint in CUH (including critical ancillary infrastructure)	Increase, enhance and consolidate R&I footprint in CUH
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Key actions:

Dedicated research & innovation hub with high visibility to promote R&I activity	Map current R&I footprint at CUH	Define capital infrastructure needs for R&I in any new builds as well as for a dedicated centralised research unit
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Why this is important for us:

Adequate fit for purpose space is a key enabler to grow more research and innovation



What our staff told us

"I think most staff are broadly supportive of undertaking high quality research. The organisation as a whole needs to prioritize research participation by all - not just designated researchers"

"The willingness and motivation is there, the means and organisational cooperation is not"

"Research provides the evidence for tomorrows healthcare so it should be supported"

3

Communication, Engagement and Empowerment

Core objectives:		
With patients as co-partners with R&I	With staff/academic partner by increasing engagement	Increase engagement with QPS
Key actions:		
Training of staff to develop meaningful Public Patient Involvement Forum for R&I	<b>CUH:</b> Through research support clinic, newsletters and dedicated online resource and content for R&I	Develop an 'Opportunities Register' to identify and develop projects that are clinically important based on needs and clinical risk identified in our local region.
Scoping and development of R&I Public Patient Involvement Forum at CUH	<b>UCC Research centres and infrastructure partners:</b> Ensure continued close integration and collaboration with our valued academic partner	
Why this is important for us:		

Engaging with key stakeholders including patients, staff, academic and industry colleagues is essential to co-designing research and innovation that is ethical, inclusive, and is aligned with real world needs.

What our staff told us

"More patient voice in research that is being undertaken"

"Barriers include overburdened staff trying to manage clinical work with reduced resources. No buffer to allow staff to even consider engaging in conducting research"

"lack of infrastructure is a major issue"

4

Funding

Core objectives:		
Generation & management of income from externally funded research	Scope capacity for internal funding	Optimisation of internal HSE funding (SPARK, Public Only Consultant Contract (POCC) Innovation Fund)
Key actions:		
Identify potential sources of funding for R&I at CUH	Exploration of CUH capacity to provide dedicated funding for R&I (e.g. protected time, resource funding)	Develop supports to: maximise use of Public Only Consultant Contract Innovation Fund & all staff to optimise SPARK applications
Development of dedicated research fund, consensus on how it should be used with clear oversight		Annual report of applications/ short listing/awards and outputs
Why this is important for us:		

Funding and protected time is essential to conduct high quality research which meaningfully improves outcomes for patients in our region.



5

Transparent Governance & Oversight

Core objectives:			
Clear process of hospital approval process & reporting structures	Governance of patients enrolled in research	Transparent roles & responsibilities for external partners	Implementation of OECl/ JCI Research standards
Key actions:			
Hospital accountability to meeting agreed hospital review timelines	Quality oversight function with standardised SOPs at an hospital level	Agreed defined roles and responsibilities with clear accountability	Compliance with JCI/ OECl research standards
Defined reporting line directly into CUH EMT	Regular reports from trials units of monitoring/auditing and ensuring any potential issues are addressed at a hospital wide level		Publication of CUH Research & Innovation Conflict of Interest (COI), research integrity/ misconduct policy
Why this is important for us:			
Clear governance is essential to ensure that patients’ rights, safety and interests are protected.			

Strategy Implementation

	2025	2026				2027				2028			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
PRIORITY 1: Increase high quality research and innovation activity													
Establish working group for priority 1	●												
Publish guidance document on conducting research at CUH	●												
Publish guidance document on innovation at CUH			●										
Publish SOP on defined hospital approval processes & timelines	●												
Establish Research & Innovation Support Clinic	●												
Determine key benchmarking metrics	●												
Appoint internal research and innovation champions		●											
Appoint external research & innovation champions				●									
Annual report of research & innovation activity at CUH		●				●				●			
Establish CUH Research & Innovation Conference & Awards			●										
Produce business case for enhanced staffing of Research & Innovation Office			●										
Exploring and advocate for data capture and management that would aid research				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Work with and align with AHSS strategy and UCC Futures	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Increase CUH research activity and publications by 20%													●
PRIORITY 2: Infrastructure													
Establish working group for priority 2	●												
Establishment of R&I office	●												
Creation of joint UCC/CUH taskforce for capital planning for research & innovation	●												
Formal agreement of medium term plan/ long term plan for integrated research & innovation footprint at CUH					●								



# Strategy Implementation

	2025	2026				2027				2028			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
PRIORITY 3: Communication, Engagement and Empowerment													
Establish working group for priority 3	●												
Establishment of research and innovation PPI group				●									
CUH research & innovation page on website			●										
Regular research and innovation newsletters			●										
Formal engagement with QPS to link audit/qi outcomes with research opportunities				●									
CUH Library Support Services	●												
Expand the CUH staff research satisfaction survey to UCC staff/students			●										
PRIORITY 4: Funding													
Establish working group for priority 4	●												
Development of dedicated research account and associated SOP for governance and oversight	●												
Identify and generate dedicated research funds for CUH	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Establish & maintain register of funds utilised from POCC Innovation Fund for research		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Establish & maintain register of SPARK funding received			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Engagement with CUH re potential to provide dedicated research & innovation funding/supports		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

# Strategy Implementation

	2025	2026				2027				2028			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
PRIORITY 5: Transparent governance and oversight													
Defined reporting structures for research and innovation	●												
Agreed defined roles and responsibilities with clear accountability for external partners	●												
Implementation of OECl and JCI related research and innovation standards	●	●	●										
Monitoring of OECl & JCI related research and innovation standards				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Publication of CUH Research & Innovation Policy on Conflict of Interest/ misconduct			●										
“Regular reports from trials units of monitoring/auditing and ensuring any potential issues are addressed at a hospital wide level.”	●		●		●		●		●		●		●
As a clarification Cancer Trials Cork will be reporting up also through cancer centre governance structures to Exec Committee and Board of the Cancer Centre. We envision that HSE Research reps will be sitting on these Committees. Any reports can also be shared with Research Office as needed.													
Appoint an innovation representative on the CUH Research & Innovation Committee	●												
Establish a dedicated innovation subcommittee	●												
Develop TOR for innovation subcommittee		●											
Formal reporting structure of innovation subcommittee to Research & Innovation Committee			●										
Mechanism to enable identification of patients involved in clinical trials using PIMS				●									

# CUH Governance Structure for Research



## Acknowledgments

We are very grateful for input and contribution of all stakeholders including:

- All CUH patients and families who participated in our research studies
- CUH Subcommittee for Research & Innovation Strategy Development
- CUH Research & Innovation Committee
- CUH Researchers Forum Members
- CUH Staff
- CUH Executive Management Team
- CUH Library
- HSE SW Research Office
- HSE SW HSCP Regional Practice Coordinator
- HSE Spark Innovation Programme
- Research centres: APC, Cancer Research @UCC, Cancer Trials Cork, CRF-UCC, INFANT
- College of Medicine and Health, UCC
- Office of the Vice-President for Research and Innovation, UCC Representatives for HSCP, COMH
- Office of Vice-President for Research and Innovation, UCC
- UCC Representatives for HSCP, College of Medicine and Health, UCC

# Appendix 1



## Research Opportunities at CUH: Online Staff Satisfaction Survey

**Q1. What is your job role?**

- o Doctor
- o Health& Social Care Professional (HSCP)
- o Nurse
- o Student
- o Other

**Q2. How long have you been at CUH?**

- o Less than 1 year
- o 1-5 years
- o More than 5 years

**Q3. Do you think it is important that health research is conducted in CUH?**

- o Yes
- o No
- o Maybe

**Q4. Are you currently involved in conducting research at CUH?**

- o Yes
- o No

**Q5. Have you ever been involved in research in CUH or elsewhere?**

- o Yes
- o No

**Q6. Overall, how satisfied are you with research opportunities available to you at CUH?**

- o Very satisfied
- o Somewhat satisfied
- o Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- o Somewhat dissatisfied
- o Very dissatisfied

**Q7. Please rank the main barriers preventing you from participating in research putting the greatest barrier at the top?**

- Ethical and Regulatory Challenges: Complex approval processes, bureaucratic red tape, or lack of organisational encouragement
- Institutional or Administrative Barriers – Complex approval processes, bureaucratic red tape, or lack of organisational encouragement

- Insufficient Research Training – Lack of training in research methodologies, statistical analysis or study design.
- Insufficient Research Supports – access to experts in research methodologies, statistical analysis, or study design
- Lack of Funding – Limited financial support for research projects, grants or stipends.
- Lack of Interest or Motivation – Some healthcare professionals may not have a personal interest in conducting research
- Lack of Mentorship or Guidance – Difficulty finding experienced researchers to provide mentorship and collaboration
- Lack of Time – Clinical and administrative duties take priority, leaving little time for research activities
- Limited Access to Research Resources – Inadequate access to research tools, databases or institutional support
- Workplace Culture – If research is not valued or prioritised, staff may feel from discouraged from engaging in it.

**Q8. Are you aware of the role of:**

	No	Somewhat	Very Familiar	Have worked with them
HRB Clinical Research Facility - UCC	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
UCC Cancer Trials Group & Cancer Trials Cork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
INFANT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q9. Any other feedback you would like to provide:**

# Appendix 2: Research Units at CUH

## Highlights on dedicated trials units



**APC Microbiome Ireland, a world-leading Research Ireland Centre based at University College Cork was established in 2003, with the mission to elucidate the complex interactions between the human microbiome and health.**

Over the last two decades, APC has developed into a centre of excellence encompassing >250 researchers and clinicians, who generate groundbreaking insights into how the trillions of microorganisms inhabiting the human body influence disease susceptibility, progression, and treatment response. APC Microbiome Ireland has secured over €375 million in competitive and R&D funding from industry, enabling diverse scientific and clinical projects. The Centre has published more than 3,000 peer-reviewed articles, reflecting its global impact.

Central to APC’s success is its close partnership with Cork University Hospital (CUH), which has enabled the translation of fundamental microbiome science into meaningful clinical applications. The Human Studies Platform at APC, staffed by 16 multidisciplinary professionals including 13 principal investigators, underpins this research collaboration. It facilitates participant recruitment, sample collection, and clinical data acquisition across hospital departments, ensuring seamless integration of microbiome research into CUH’s clinical environment. To date, APC has conducted 32 clinical trials at CUH, enrolling over 2,650 participants, addressing drug-microbiome interactions, dietary effects, immune modulation, inflammation, and disease dynamics identification of novel microbial biomarkers predictive of disease activity and response to therapies. Artificial intelligence and advanced endoscopic imaging are also being leveraged to forecast post-operative complications in Crohn’s disease, improving precision in clinical decision-making and surgical outcomes.

From predictive diagnostics to probiotic interventions, microbiome science is increasingly integrated into care pathways at CUH, establishing the APC-CUH partnership as a national leader in microbiome-focused translational research and patient-centred clinical studies.



**The mission of HRB Clinical Research Facility at UCC (CRF-UCC) is to design, deliver and support meaningful clinical research through collaboration, education and innovation.**

The CRF is funded by the Health Research Board and the UCC College of Medicine and Health and comprises circa 55 staff members, including a Director, Director of Operations and Clinical Trials, Centre Manager, Research Nurses and Research assistants experienced in the coordination of regulated and non-regulated interventional Trials, a finance analyst, a biorepository technician as well as Quality, Trial methodology, Statistics and Data Management experts. CRF-UCC also hosts the Irish European Correspondent (EuCo) for ECRIN (European Clinical Research Infrastructure Network)

CRF-UCC operates under a rigorous quality system meeting international standards and has successfully undergone multiple regulatory inspections from competent authorities like the HPRA. It offers individualized services (support with study design and grant writing, data/statistics, budgeting, regulatory/ethics submission, clinical trials education, study feasibilities, study set up and recruitment, study co-ordination etc.) or comprehensive end to end study support. Various formats of patient-focused research are accommodated including regulated academic clinical trials, commercial clinical trials, and other well-designed studies. Studies covering a broad range of clinical interventions including Investigational Medicinal Products, Generics & Biosimilars, Class 2-3 Medical Devices, standalone software, complex interventions and advanced therapeutic products have been supported. The CRF has supported over 116 studies in CUH including 80 Commercial Clinical Trials and 36 Observational and academic studies. Approximately 2,071 patients have been enrolled in CRF-UCC supported trials in CUH. In 2023 & 2024, the CRF supported the recruitment of 883 patients and conducted 2231 patient visits. With the support of the CRF-UCC, HSE clinicians can provide access to the latest clinical trials to their patients and help scientists better understand patient's disease or condition in the hope of advancing treatments and ways to prevent it in the future.



**Cancer Trials Cork in CUH is one of three clinical trial sites of the UCC Cancer Trials Group (UCC CTG), a cancer trials network housed in Cancer Research @UCC with the goal of providing patients in the South of Ireland with access to cutting-edge cancer care and a diverse portfolio of clinical trials.**

The UCC CTG is a Health Research Board (HRB) and Health Service Executive (HSE) supported cancer trials network, which brings together oncology clinical trials units at Cork University Hospital, University Hospital Waterford and the Bon Secours Cork Cancer Centre, in partnership with the HRB Clinical Research Facility UCC and University College Cork.

With a goal to reach patient participation in clinical trials to the national benchmark (6%) and further to 10% in line with international centres of excellence, UCC CTG emphasises local and international trial development, training opportunities and a strong Patient & Public Involvement focus.

Cancer Trials Cork at CUH has over 20 Principal Investigators across various cancer disciplines; supported by a dedicated and multidisciplinary clinical trials team. To date, more than 200 trials have been made available to patients, with close to 4,000 individuals enrolled in translational and therapeutic clinical trials.

In 2025 CUH/UCC Cancer Centre received OEI European accreditation recognising excellence in cancer care, research, education and training.



**The Irish Centre for Maternal and Child Health Research (INFANT), at University College Cork (UCC), and co-located at Cork University Hospital and Cork University Maternity Hospital, is a hub of world-leading research and innovation, working to provide better outcomes in pregnancy, newborn period and early childhood.**

Established in 2013, INFANT has grown from a team of 8 founding principal investigators to a multidisciplinary powerhouse, now comprising over 120 dedicated professionals, including healthcare practitioners, research scientists, engineers, and support staff. The team currently comprises 13 Principal Investigators, 7 Lead Investigators, 16 Associate Investigators, 40 core support staff, 14 postdocs and research fellows, 32 postgraduate students and 6 Visiting Researchers. The Centre's expertise spans diverse fields including obstetrics, paediatrics, neonatology, neuroscience, nutrition, biomedical engineering, informatics, and artificial intelligence. INFANT's research is powered by unique and extensive birth cohorts, biobanks and physiological datasets gathered at scale across the clinical continuum, which are significant differentiators. INFANT has in-house expertise in clinical study management and has accrued extensive experience of all types of clinical studies ranging from cohort studies to definitive interventions in the perinatal space including the international coordination of clinical trials. Today, the Centre has secured almost €80m in funding, collaborates with over 35 countries and maintains alliances with more than 45 industry partners, has graduated 53 PhD students, has spun out 3 companies and published over 1,000 papers, driving forward its mission to improve outcomes for mothers, babies and families.

INFANT has achieved some remarkable milestones, developing innovative technologies to detect brain injuries, and a pioneering device to measure cognitive function in children. It has contributed to groundbreaking therapies for peanut allergies, led the creation of Ireland's first children's clinical trial network (in4kids), supported the establishment of the national bereavement standards within Ireland's maternity services, and contributed to the iCOMP study, improving outcomes for preterm infants through deferred cord clamping.

To date, INFANT has conducted more than 150 studies between CUMH and CUH. INFANT has approximately 50 research studies ongoing at any one time both nationally and internationally. INFANT has conducted more than 25 studies at CUH involving more than 3750 children. These multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary studies have covered a broad range across all clinical directorates

