Positioning Wales as a key player in the COVID-19 research effort

Felicity Waters
Head of Communications, Engagement and Involvement
Health and Care Research Wales
114 COVID-19 Studies in Wales, 32 of these are urgent public health Studies.
Key message at the heart of the collaboration:
Wales plays a major role in the UK-wide effort against Covid-19
On behalf of PHW, Health and Care Research Wales has so far led the communications for 3 vaccine trials in Wales:

- **Oxford/Astrazeneca** - Newport
- **Novavax** - Wrexham
- **Janssen** – Cardiff

About to get underway:
- **Medicago** – Swansea
- **Valneva** - Llantrisant
- Developed a **communications plan** for each trial
- **Communications** working groups chaired by Health and Care Research Wales
- Liaison with trial sponsors, WG comms and devolved nation comms leads to agree **key messaging**
- Developed formal **media handling** protocol
- Led on media relations and press **interviews**
- Liaison with Welsh Government on ministerial **briefings**
Challenges

- Ensuring Wales and the devolved nations are reflected equally in UK-wide comms

- Timings - awaiting the green light and translation turnaround!

- Filming and messaging restrictions
Collaborative comms approach also used to promote other COVID-19 research:
Impact of the co-ordinated communications approach

Great to see @DrNickyWilliams and @orodosanlou on @BBCWalesNews tonight on the Welsh research effort into #COVID19 including 3 vaccine trials and multiple pioneering research studies. Thanks to everyone for your ongoing contribution @ResearchWales @PublicHealthW

644 PM · Feb 2, 2021 · Twitter for Android

14 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 50 Likes

Dr Emma Thomas-Jones @emma_tj1 · 17h
Replying to @ResearchWales @DrNickyWilliams and 3 others
Well done both, great reflection on the capability of the research infrastructure in Wales to deliver on these trials. 🌈
Great news from a trial led by Dr Orod Osanlou, @PublicHealthW principal investigator for the #Novavax trial, & also a senior clinical lecturer @medicalbangor @BangorUni @ResearchWales @BetsiCadwaladr COVID19 CovidVaccine

Via @BBCNews

New Covid vaccine shows 89% efficacy in UK trials
Covid-19 vaccine Novavax - of which the British government will procure 130 million doses - proves 89.3% effective in large-scale US trials.

The Novavax jab is the first to show it is effective against the new strain of the virus. The BBC's medical editor Dr Fergal Walsh said:

The new treatments that are successfully fighting coronavirus
Wales has played a ‘vital’ role in these breakthroughs.
I think Wales has really faced into the requirements for Research with regards Coronavirus. Let's lock that in and develop Wales as a real powerhouse in terms of Research.

@BetsiResearch · Jan 29
So proud of the @BetsiResearch team for their contribution to the Novavax trial and thank you to all our volunteers @ThompsonMelanie @arpan_liverpool @ResearchWales @Carys_Thomas @PublicHealthW @twitter.com/betsicadwaladr4...

1 Retweet 2 Quote Tweets 19 Likes

Rhian Thomas Turner @Rhian_Thomas1 · Jan 30
Replying to @CAV_LenRichards @CV_UHB and @ResearchWales
Definitely! @CV_UHB has set an example in how it has invested in paediatric support with CVARU. The right funding model will help us do more and more.

Dinesh Bhavnani (NHS Pension Specialist) @DB_Wales · Jan 30
Replying to @CAV_LenRichards @CV_UHB and @ResearchWales
Well spoken Len today at Bapio and signing the MOU

Anurin Bevan University Health Board
30 December 2020 at 19:44
Great news! We are so proud to have been a part of the Oxford Vaccine study in Wales #COVID19

Health and Care Research Wales
30 December 2020 at 19:20
More fantastic news from COVID-19 research!
We're so proud to have worked with Anurin Bevan University Health Board, Public Health Wales and the Centre for Trials Research to facilitate the set-up and delivery of the Oxford Vaccine study in Wales.
https://healthandcarenetworks.org/wales/plans-key-covid-19-

#vaccine research in

Health and Care Research Wales
30 December 2020 at 19:18
From public volunteers, research leads, nurses, scientists, those working in the background to bring trials to Wales across: @PHR_Wales @PublicHealthW @BCUHBBest @ResearchWales @D_RickyWilliams

#COVID19
“I enjoyed seeing “cwtches” in a press release!” – Dr Tonia Thomas, Vaccine Knowledge Manager, Oxford University
The Future of UK Clinical Research Delivery

Saving and improving lives
What now?

• The pandemic has put health and care research at the forefront of all our minds – we now want to keep ALL research in the **public eye**

• Raise awareness of the **value** of all research in Wales

• Reach and engage more people from **under-represented communities**

• Showcase the value and importance of research by sharing **human interest** stories to inspire others

• Celebrate the **existing research** happening in Wales and its impact in improving treatment and care

• Champion the **key players** in the health and care research industry in Wales to demonstrate trust and expertise
Key messages for the future….

• Research and science have been our **salvation** in this pandemic and will be again

• Health and social care research will touch **every single person** at some point in their lives

• Wales is **punching** above its weight on the UK and global research stage

• Role of the public is vital to **drive improvements** in care by ensuring they are part of the whole research process

Research improves **lives**
diolch yn fawr