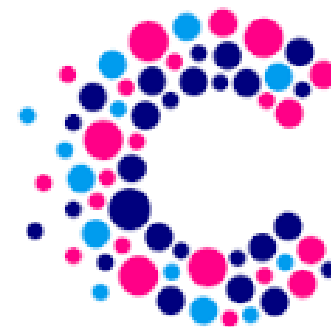


Rebecca Weston-Thomas
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Health and Care Research Wales

A United Wales: Fostering Effective
Collaboration Between Clinical and
Research Teams to Promote a
Patient-Centered Research Culture
in the NHS



Ymchwil Iechyd
a Gofal **Cymru**
Health and Care
Research **Wales**



**CANCER
RESEARCH
UK**

Introduction

- Becky, CRUK Lead Nurse for Wales
- In post since November 2024
- Previously a Lung Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialist with a dual role as a Mesothelioma Clinical Nurse Specialist for Wales
- Poor outcomes for these cancers
- This is where my interest in research came from



This workshop draws on my experience as a Clinical Nurse Specialist. While some of you may be seasoned researchers, my time in the clinical field taught me that research isn't always accessible to everyone, and many professionals aren't aware of how it connects to their roles. My goal today is to bridge that gap, create space for discussion, and show that research is not just for academics, but for anyone curious about improving practice and outcomes.





Icebreaker

- What is your current role?
- Pick an emoji that shows how you feel about research today:

Setting the Scene: Research in the Welsh NHS

- Wales has a vibrant research community with improved treatments only becoming available due to research innovation.
- Numerous strategies exist in Wales to promote and facilitate research.
- Used in conjunction with Health and Care Research Wales delivery strategies, e.g., 'One Wales Approach'
- Tackling Cancer initiative



Role of Clinical and Research Teams in NHS Research

- Improved collaboration between the clinical and research worlds is an effective way to increase patient engagement in research.
- As a previous CNS, these professionals are the core of every patient's pathway.
- Doncaster and Bassetlaw Trust published research evidence regarding CNS engagement in research in 2019, increasing the number of patients participating in trials (Lancaster 2019).
- VPAG fellowships.
- By working together, we can improve patient outcomes and the future of research.



Strategies to bridge the clinical and research world

Examples of what is currently being done to bridge the gap are:

- Research champions
- Newsletters
- Lunch and learn
- Protected research time



What does your trust do to bridge the clinical and research world?

- What examples can you think of from your trust?
- What's working and what's not?
- What would you want to implement?
- Is there something you would take back to your trust/team?



MDTs

- A crucial way patients are highlighted for research trials is via the MDT.
- My experience of this is that the past has been variable.
- AI in MDTs.



What happens in your MDT?

What's your role in the MDT?

Has anyone ever highlighted a patient for a trial?

Who in the MDT highlights research opportunities?

What works well and what doesn't?

What recommendations would you make to improve research uptake in your MDTs?

Research quiz

Q1: The primary barrier to embedding research in clinical teams is a lack of funding.

- A. True
- B. False

Q2: Research involvement improves staff retention in NHS Trusts.

- A. True
- B. False



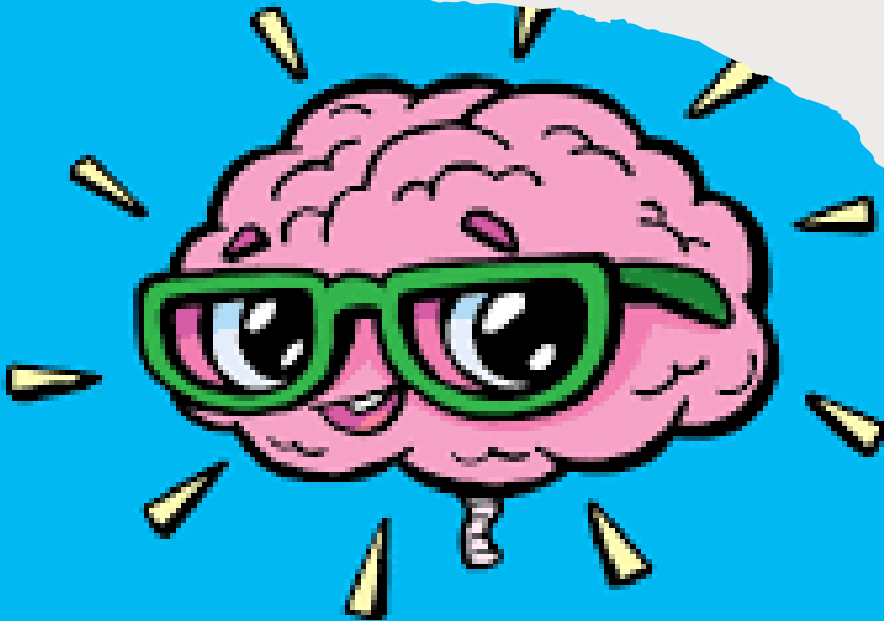
Research quiz

Q3: If a patient lacks capacity, is it always inappropriate to enrol them in a research study?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Only in emergency care

Q4: Is speed the greatest challenge to research implementation in the NHS?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Only in acute settings




Lastly some weird and wonderful research facts

1. Dogs can smell diseases—literally.

- Clinical trials have shown that dogs can detect prostate cancer from urine and COVID-19 from sweat samples, with high accuracy.

2. There's a peer-reviewed study on the "Kiss Transmission" of bacteria.

- A Dutch study found that a 10-second kiss can transfer 80 million bacteria between partners.



**DID
YOU
KNOW?**

🍺 3. Moderate beer intake can increase bone density.

- A study in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that the silicon in beer may help build stronger bones.
👉 Sadly, moderation really is key.

🎵 4. Listening to music can improve surgical performance.

- One study found that surgeons who listened to classical music while operating performed better and faster

💡 5. People in clinical trials often get better—even on placebo.

- The placebo effect is so powerful that in some cases, patients improve even when they know they're taking a placebo—this is called open-label placebo.



Thank you for
listening

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Becky

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