

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT

Date of last meeting: 11 October 2024

Quoracy: Met

Report by: Mark Henwood, Chair

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS AND MATTERS TO BE ESCALATED FROM THE DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING:

Alert¹ (may require discussion)

The Research and Innovation Sub-Committee have no items of which to alert the People, Organisational Development and Culture Committee (PODCC) on.

Advise² (to monitor)

The Research and Innovation Sub-Committee wish to advise members of the PODCC of a report that was presented to share current plans for oncology clinical trials. The proposal is to develop and implement a South West Wales plan to increase the access to, and uptake of, cancer clinical trials. Currently, patients living in Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB), with more common cancers, have a greater opportunity to enter interventional drug trails than those living in Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB). SBUHB and HDdUHB hope to develop a situation whereby there is equity of access to cancer clinical trials across the region. Liaison with SBUHB is ongoing to work through the details of the report and agree on a preferred option for progression. The report was noted and accepted. A further update will be presented when discussions have taken place with SBUHB.

The Research and Innovation Sub-Committee (R&ISC) wish to advise members of the PODCC on the positive progress being made with the Pentre Awel project, in light of the Board signing the lease agreement, and the intention to locate research and innovation activities at the scheme. However, the R&ISC noted that the Department does not have the funds to off-set the costs of the scheme, should it be asked to contribute to the lease costs.

Assure³ (to note)

The Research and Innovation Sub-Committee wish to assure members of the PODCC on:

- R&D site activity performance, noting a challenging position, but a focussed approached to recovery.
- Progress against the R&D Strategy (2021-2024), including plans to develop the next strategy and an aim to publish this around February 2025.
- Activities of the Research Quality and Sponsorship Group (RQSG).

¹ There is a lack of confidence that any action in place is sufficient to address the issue satisfactorily and/or within the scope of the operational team or executive to resolve. Engagement, action or intervention required.

² There are areas of concern where assurance has been taken on actions in place but requires close monitoring. An early warning of an emerging and potentially serious concern.

³ There is confidence that actions are robust and will be sufficient to address the issue or generally operating effectively. Routine monitoring.

- An update on the Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing, Access and Growth (VPAG) scheme that is a five-year investment agreed by the Government, NHS England and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI). The programme is set to drive forward the NHS's capacity to deliver commercial clinical research. A call for ideas on the types of expenditure will be initiated and the results of which will be used to form an appropriate spending plan across Wales.
- University partnership activities. Representatives from University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD), Swansea University and Aberystwyth University were unable to attend. Discussions will take place to explore if R&ISC is the most appropriate forum for university updates. The R&ISC also noted that objectives going forward for each university partner have been set and continue to be monitored, at present, through R&ISC meetings.
- The financial position of the TriTech and Innovation division.
- Progress against the Board approved TriTech Business Plan.
- National Innovation developments and increasing interest in understanding the wider potential of the TriTech model.
- Proposals to support the Health Board's capability and capacity to support social innovation.
- A partnership project with the National Botanic Gardens to create spaces for rest and recuperation across hospital sites.

Review of Risks

The R&ISC reviewed the three Research & Development risks (two service level, one directorate level) that are aligned to it. The outcome of the discussions is below:

- Risk 1036 – Research space in Withybush General Hospital (WGH): The team have a moving date of 11 November 2024. Once the move has taken place, the risk can be closed.
- Risk 1492 – Research Delivery Funding: An Organisational Change Process (OCP) has been initiated to mitigate this risk of reduced funding from that of 2023/24 and, as such, the risk score will remain the same, but the description has been amended to reflect the delivery funding being one of the drivers for the OCP.
- Risk 1160 – Lack of research leads: R&ISC members agreed an engagement plan should be developed to cover all levels; corporate, executive and site levels as there is much support that can be offered to encourage staff to undertake research.

The R&ISC also reviewed the two TriTech and Innovation risks (service level) that are aligned to it. The outcome of the discussions is below:

- No changes to the scores for risk 1511 (regulatory climate) and risk 1508 (lack of clinical leadership).

R&ISC members took assurance from the reports and consequent discussions and decisions.

Sharing of learning

N/A

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- Note the items the Committee is advising them of
- Be assured on the items that the Committee is providing assurance on.

Agenda, papers and minutes are available on request.