



Joint UK Clinical Trials Taskforce Launches to Support O’Shaughnessy’s Ambition for “exceptional best practice” to become the norm

Maidenhead & Wantage, United Kingdom, 16 August 2023 – The UK Clinical Trials Talent Taskforce has launched today to support the development of a best-in-class holistic ecosystem for talent attraction, development, professional recognition and retention to support the UK’s desire to be a world-class destination for clinical research. The collaboration between the [NHS R&D Forum](#) and [IAOCR](#) is a direct response to the recently published Lord O’Shaughnessy’s review on [Commercial Clinical Trials in the UK](#) which called for “exceptional best practice” to become the norm so that patients, the NHS and the UK as a whole can benefit.

Lord O’Shaughnessy’s report has called for the UK Government to double the number of people taking part in commercial clinical trials in the next two years, and double it again by 2027. The taskforce, comprised of trailblazers and key stakeholders, aims to survey the whole of the UK clinical trials talent ecosystem, to identify existing best practice and then recommend a holistic solution to grow both established talent and the future talent needed for the UK to be a global leader in commercial clinical research trials.

“To exponentially increase participation in clinical trials the UK will need a dedicated, best-in-class workforce.” explains Jacqueline Johnson North, CEO, IAOCR and GCSA. “Whilst the UK possesses a plethora of talent solutions across the private and public sector, the current offering is fragmented. Lord O’Shaughnessy’s call for “exceptional best practice” will require an exceptional workforce enabled by exceptional education, career development and professional recognition.”

The centrepiece of this ambition is to attract, develop, recognise and retain a world-class clinical trials workforce. The industry has experienced a talent crisis for many years and addressing this is integral to the UK’s success as a global leader. Therefore the Taskforce will focus on gateways into the industry as well as supporting the navigation of professional career pathways. Professor Dame Angela McLean’s Pro-Innovation Regulation of Technologies Review, Life Sciences states: “The government recognises that in recent years there has been a loss of in-house talent out into the private sector... [and] will look to convene a similar network [to the CERSI model in the United States]... building on the UK’s outstanding academic science base and building a sustainable pipeline of talent for the future.”

“Both the O’Shaughnessy and McLean reviews have recognised that the design, delivery and implementation of clinical research is complex and multi-disciplinary. This is why we need a systems-wide approach to ensure that we have career pathways which support and nurture our clinical research talent to benefit the UK as a whole,” says Angela Topping, NHS R&D Forum Executive Member and Head of the Newcastle Joint Research Office (NJRO). “For the NHS R&D Forum, the opportunity to partner with IAOCR to lead this taskforce and work with key opinion leaders from the UK R&D System is really important to us, to help increase opportunities for patients, participants, and the public to take part in research.”

The taskforce will utilise existing products and services from the UK’s expert provider network to “grow our own” talent; leveraging and supporting high-quality solutions from both UK commercial and non-commercial solutions to best service the community’s needs. The taskforce will focus purely on the roles of clinical trial site staff working in the NHS and commercial sector in the UK.

To learn more about the Clinical Trials Talent Taskforce please [click here](#). To learn more about IAOCR please visit [iaocr.com](#) and if you have any questions please contact us on: info@iaocr.com or call us



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To learn more about the NHS R&D Forum, please visit rdforum.nhs.uk/ and if you have any questions please contact is on info@rdforum.org.uk or call us on UK/International :+44 1235 770 652.

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Notes to editors

About IAOCR

IAOCR is the international accrediting organisation for clinical research. We are the only organisation in the world to qualify Clinical Research Professionals to international standards. Through robustly accrediting competence IAOCR reduces risk - to patients, clinical research and professional reputations - whilst improving compliance and bringing valuable new treatments to market quicker.

IAOCR business processes and accreditations have been built specifically for the clinical research industry. They provide a quality standards and visible professional certification marks to organisations committed to globally consistent, high quality clinical trials workforces.

We believe that clinical trial patients anywhere in the world deserve the best protection in terms of rights and wellbeing. Therefore, in addition to providing accreditation and consultancy services, IAOCR works with industry leaders and regulators around the globe to develop best practice guidelines and models. To find out more visit: iaocr.com/resources/

About NHS R&D Forum

The NHS R&D Forum is the UK professional network for the research management, support and leadership community in health and care.

The NHS R&D Forum connects, supports, and represents those in R&D roles who are working to benefit patients and the public by enabling healthcare research and innovation to happen in the UK. We host the UK directory for all R&D offices and non-commercial sponsors and the NHS R&D Forum resources exchange.

We want to see improvement in health and care through inclusive and impactful quality research that is rooted in our organisations and systems, enabled by an effective and valued R&D Professional workforce.

Working to advance our practice, we share and develop resources, create standards, support colleagues, and provide a quality learning and development programme that includes training, symposia, networking opportunities, events and roundtable discussions. To find out more visit: rdforum.nhs.uk/