

# **A Research, Evaluation and Audit Strategy for Gloucestershire Integrated Care System**

*Delivering evidence-based Prevention, Care and  
Treatment for our people and communities*

**2024 - 2027**



## 1. Purpose

This Strategy describes our vision for health and care Research, Evaluation and Audit in Gloucestershire. It outlines the aspirations for Research 4 Gloucestershire (R4G) and makes recommendations for actions to achieve our vision. This strategy will demonstrate an integrated approach across all providers and commissioners of health and care services and communities across the county for people of all ages. The delivery of this strategy will be done in partnership with the University of Gloucestershire and led by the Integrated Care Board (ICB).

## 2. Background

Population health is driven by wider determinants such as education, work, health behaviours, the environment – as well as health and social care. Recognising this, the strategy will seek to support Research, Evaluation and Audit which focusses on all these determinants.

Health and social care research has a fundamental role to play in helping to reduce the inequalities that exist in health outcomes caused by socio-economic factors, geography, age and ethnicity. Investment in health and care Research, Evaluation and Audit, can therefore translate into improving health and wellbeing outcomes and addressing health inequalities. Indirectly, it may also have co-benefits for wider societal outcomes, such as best start in life, education, economic growth, and healthy ageing.

Organisations within Gloucestershire have much in common and are committed to working together to support the development of Research, Evaluation and Audit activity in the county. Research has been identified as a strategic priority for all organisations, with the evidence that people and communities, staff and student experience is enriched by working in, or being cared for in, an environment that is underpinned by research.

In 2016, Health and Care organisations in Gloucestershire in conjunction with the University of Gloucestershire (UoG) formed a collaborative partnership - **Research4Gloucestershire (R4G)**, culminating in a signed and formalised joint Statement of Intent.

The Gloucestershire health and care community has had a long history of working together as the Gloucestershire Research and Development Consortium (now known as Research4Gloucestershire). The Consortium has provided the overview for health and care research in the county for many years, from both a strategic and governance perspective. It has allowed for productive networking and sharing of good practice. With changes to the organisation of health and care services in 2022 and the development of the Integrated Care System, it was considered timely to refresh our collective approach to Research, Evaluation and Audit.

This strategy has also taken into consideration the publication of other relevant documents and research strategies published recently. This includes:

- Maximising the benefits of research : Guidance for Integrated Care Systems (March 2023)
- Gloucestershire Integrated Care System Strategy (2022) strategic priorities:
- Research and Innovation Strategy 2023-2028; Gloucestershire Health & Care NHSFT (March 2023) [Interim-Integrated-Care-Strategy-v1.1.pdf \(onegloucestershire.net\)](#)
- Making Research Matter: Chief Nursing Officer for England's strategic plan for research (November 2021)

- Chief Midwifery Officer for England’s strategic plan for research (May 2023)
- Allied Health Professions’ Research and Innovation Strategy for England (January 2022)
- Chief Medical Officer’s Annual Report 2023 - Health in an Ageing Society (November 2023)
- NIHR – Clinical Research Network, West of England ; Regional Research Strategy (March 2023)
- HEE Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice (October 2017)
- Commercial clinical trials in the UK: the Lord O’Shaughnessy review (May 2023)
- Full government response to the Lord O’Shaughnessy review into commercial clinical trials (Dec 2023)
- Saving and Improving Lives: The Future of UK Clinical Research Delivery (March 2021)
- The National Clinical Audit and Patient Outcomes Programme (NCAPOP)
- Public Health England Strategy 2020-2025
- Creative Health Toolkit 2024 The National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) in partnership with NHS England (NHSE) Personalised Care Team and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) (including Gloucestershire)

In implementing this strategy, partners will abide by the legal policies and frameworks set out for undertaking research, Evaluation and Audit. It will also ensure people and communities are informed of their rights in how their data can be used in research, including the National Data Opt Out Policy, General Data Protection Regulation, etc.

### **3. Our Vision**

**Research4Gloucestershire will be recognised as a dynamic and forward-thinking collaboration of a wide range of partners which develops and delivers world-class health and care Research, Evaluation and Audit that benefits the people of Gloucestershire and beyond to help people build resilience, to thrive and live a good life.**

**Our vision encourages and supports an open, curious and caring approach by health and care practitioners to use research and evidence effectively to improve individual professional practice and wider community services.**

We will achieve the vision by focussing on 4 key aims:

- a. Being centred on people and communities
- b. Providing a capable and enabled workforce
- c. Working in collaboration and in partnership and to co-ordinate
- d. Sharing the learning across the system

To support in the delivery of this strategy there will be a number of key enablers to success:

- a. Communication, engagement and co-production
- b. Data and insights
- c. Digital and information communication and technology
- d. Investment and savings
- e. Organisational development
- f. Systemwide working

## Centred on People & Communities

- To develop a joined-up approach to Research, Evaluation and Audit through the Integrated Care System (ICS) to improve the health, well-being, social care and treatment of the people and communities of Gloucestershire. Services delivered will be evidence based and evaluated for their effectiveness, sustainability and value for money.
- To promote to people and communities the benefits of their involvement in research and evaluation both as participants and in the codesign and delivery of research and so increase the diversity in research participation rates in all sectors of the system.
- To acknowledge that diverse communities have previously had mixed experiences of involvement in research and evaluation, by maintaining a sustainable and evolving Research Engagement Network (REN) reaching all people and communities in Gloucestershire who want to be involved in health and care research. Minoritised and underrepresented groups from diverse communities are often excluded from involvement in, or the subsequent benefits of, Research, Evaluation and Audit. This is despite professional awareness of poorer health and care outcomes. The REN aims to highlight and promote the needs of those with protected characteristics and to maintain attention to racism and discrimination within its activities.
- To encourage a Multi-agency and Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT) approach to Research, Evaluation and Audit that is focused on people and communities.
- To develop principles underpinning research, evaluation and audit which reflect the priorities of the people and communities of Gloucestershire. Some of these priorities were captured in the development of the ICS Integrated Care Strategy and include the need to shift to prevention, address inequalities, and promote population mental health and wellbeing.

## Capable & Enabled Workforce

- To encourage people at all stages of their career and working in any sector, including Voluntary, Community and Enterprise (VCSE) partners to undertake or participate in Research, Evaluation and Audit activities, whether they are national studies or locally initiated.
- To develop colleagues and partners Research, Evaluation and Audit skills and capacity to undertake their own research, evaluation and audit activities.
- To ensure consistent and co-ordinated research governance infrastructure (e.g. local ethics committees), policies and other arrangements are in place.
- To support colleagues to undertake post graduate masters. doctoral and post-doctoral research into fields of practice that are a priority for the ICS.

## Collaboration and Co-ordination

- To share the research vision and strategy developed by R4G across the ICS community and obtain support from partners.
- To facilitate joint learning, skill-sharing and capacity building amongst research partners, people and communities across the ICS.
- To apply for grants to support research activity and for the ICS to be involved in research activities locally, regionally and nationally. By this, achieving a portfolio of research that can demonstrate income generation to ensure future sustainability of research and development in Gloucestershire.
- To work with the NIHR Regional Research Delivery Network South West Central (previously known as the CRN West of England), ARC West and the National Institute for Health and Care Research, increasing the profile of R4G and learn from other systems.
- To expand on commercial research to increase access to cutting edge treatments for people and communities, along with generating income for partners which allows further expansion of research infrastructure. By focussing on certain areas of the county to invest and develop, this can create opportunities for further growth.
- To identify areas that are local priorities for research and evaluation activities.
- To use audits as a quality Improvement process to measure current health and care and improve outcomes against agreed standards of evidence-based practice. It should be noted that not all 'audit' is clinical audit.

## Sharing & Learning

- To develop and align existing repositories of research and evaluations undertaken by staff and community partners across the ICS, this will enable the sharing and implementation of evidence-based practice, policy development and identification of potential future research.
- To support the publication and application of local research and evaluation findings, so raising the profile of research in the county.
- To undertake the sharing of research and evaluation findings that brings benefits to people and communities, staff and the wider economy of the county, while also supporting the delivery of the long-term strategic vision of the One Gloucestershire Health and Well-being Partnership. So, making Gloucestershire the healthiest place to live and work – championing equity in life chances and the best health and care outcomes for all.
- To develop a systematic process through which research, evaluation and audit findings are shared within the system.

#### 4. Delivery of the Strategy A-Z

To realise the vision for research in the ICS, the following actions will be taken forwards by R4G and the ICS partner organisations:

##### Centred on People & Communities

- A. Building on the ICS Integrated Care Strategy identify the priority areas for Research, Evaluation and Audit each year.
- B. Develop a communication and engagement plan to promote this strategy's aims. Work with the NIHR Regional Research Delivery Network (RRDN) South West Central (previously CRN West of England) to access publicity materials.
- C. Continue to develop the research awareness activities with Inclusion Gloucestershire; Music Works, The Friendship Café and University of Gloucestershire and deliver on the 'Sharing the Power - Get Involved in Research in Gloucestershire' initiative.
- D. Develop accessible resources to support diversity in research co-creation and co-production.

##### Capable & Enabled Workforce

- E. Recruit dedicated staff to support the work of R4G.
- F. Map the educational activities available across the ICS to support the skills and capabilities necessary for Research, Evaluation and Audit.
- G. Establish research skills programmes of study in UoG and Hartbury University for access by all ICS staff as appropriate.
- H. Recruit Doctoral students to undertake research in priority areas.

##### Collaboration and Co-ordination

- I. Develop and take into consideration existing ICS research governance processes and operational structures that support the sustainable growth of research activity in the county.
- J. Establish a working budget to support the start-up and running costs of R4G support.
- K. Build on the individual organisations' research strategies recognising the research activity already being undertaken in Gloucestershire.
- L. Map VCSE partner research strategies, skills and capacity.
- M. Ensure that the R4G plans reflect the national research strategies and can demonstrate their delivery. E.g. Public Health Strategy, Life Sciences Vision, Nursing, Midwifery, AHP strategies and Social Care (NIHR).
- N. Identify and map parallels across research activity in health and social care and explore further collaborative approaches to help support and fund future research in the county. To work with Health Innovation West of England to help speed up innovation, identify and pilot new innovations.
- O. Map the potential future funding opportunities available.
- P. Work with the research grants team at UoG, RDN and research services at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHSFT and Gloucestershire Health & Care NHSFT to identify funding opportunities and develop and submit grant applications.

- Q. Identify and explore opportunities to work with commercial and Not For Profit organisations where these align with the priorities and interests of the people and communities in Gloucestershire.
- R. Explore the opportunity for the establishment of a One Gloucestershire Integrated Research, Evaluation & Audit academy. Linking Evaluation, Research and Audit into one unified function.
- S. Develop links with other universities to enable wider research activities.

## Sharing & Learning

- T. Develop an ICS research hub utilising the new Arts, Health and Wellbeing Centre City Campus facility in UoG.
- U. With the UoG, develop and coordinate publicly accessible repositories of all local research activity taking place across the ICS, making this widely accessible to staff, people and communities.
- V. Develop a directory of all colleagues currently involved in any research activity.
- W. Use local expertise across the ICS to assist colleagues to write research papers for publication and present at conferences.
- X. Deliver an annual programme of research events.
- Y. Develop and maintain the website for R4G, raising the profile of R4G and research in Gloucestershire via social media and other activities.
- Z. Share the ICS research strategy and action plan with partners and provide regular reports on progress to R4G board and annually to the ICB System Quality Committee to which it reports.

### 5. Next Steps:

This strategy is the next step of our Research, Evaluation and Audit journey for Gloucestershire ICS. We want to celebrate all the diverse research activities that have already taken place in the county and harness the enthusiasm. Now is our chance to build on these as a system rather than individual organisations so the actions to deliver the strategy are a collaboration.

Our priorities are focused on our workforce, people and communities, the actions identified above to deliver our vision will now be developed into an operational plan with some clear timescales. Our plan will need to be agile to ensure we identify and respond to the views and needs of our communities, reflect the priorities of the ICS and respond to national direction and policy.

Success of this Research, Evaluation and Audit strategy will be measured against the delivery of the plan which will be monitored through R4G and the ICS. Communication on progress will be provided by periodic updates and an annual report and presentation to the ICS executive and other stakeholders.

We are looking forward to working with all our partners and stakeholders to make sure Research, Evaluation and Audit are core to how we improve services and the lives of the people in Gloucestershire.

This strategy will be shared for comment with members of Inclusion Gloucestershire, R4G, Audit and Evaluation stakeholders and the ICB Quality Committee as well as other stakeholders.

Over the next 12 months, the ICS will engage with our extended stakeholders to further develop this strategy and will include people and communities, VCSE, Districts and County Council, Fire and Rescue Service and the Police.

June 2024



## Glossary

### **Integrated Care System**

For the purposes of this strategy, this includes NHS providers, Integrated Care Board, Adult Social Care, Childrens Social Care, Primary Care, VCSE, social care providers, community care providers and University of Gloucestershire

## Appendix A – Organogram Research Structure – Local, Regional and National

