

2024-25

ANNUAL REPORT



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REFLECTIONS FROM THE LHP BOARD CHAIR

Dear Partners,

I am delighted to introduce the Annual Report 2024/2025 for Liverpool Health Partners, covering an exciting period for Life Sciences in the city region and illustrating the impact that can be made through collaborative working and speaking with one voice.

The changing landscape within which we work presents challenges. Often these challenges require us to act at scale and have a mature offer in place to respond quickly. There is strong evidence throughout this report that LHP has been a significant force for good over the last year in achieving this city-wide offer. The relationships between partners are deepening and high levels of trust and cooperation are being noticed by the outside world.

As Board Chair I am acutely aware that the trust and support of our partner organisations is a powerful mandate. There is a strong sense of collective responsibility and shared opportunity, and these are beginning to play out in many different dimensions. We are seeing convening programmes, such as Life Course Bioresource work, which are seeking to establish broad capabilities and scale where previously our offer has been fragmented. We are also seeing advocacy, by and on behalf of Team Liverpool, such as: our presence at the Labour Party Conference; the imminent delegation to HLTH 2025 in Amsterdam; and a presence at the National R&D Forum and NHS Expo. There are many other examples in this report of Team Liverpool at its best and there are many more to come.

This cohesiveness backs up and amplifies the city's excellence in Life Sciences, and that cohesiveness is being noticed. We are working with major HealthTech and Pharmaceutical companies in new ways and at greater scale than we have been previously; when national calls come at short notice such as the NIHR Commercial Research Delivery Centre, we have the structures and relationships in place to respond. All this is encouraging. It is also essential if we are to meet the challenges of NHS transformation, citizen engagement and economic growth that will define our success as a city in the coming years.

Excellence and leadership within individual organisations remain a pre-requisite. However, the big societal challenges require scale and cooperation. LHP is, in essence, the partners coming together to do that and, on behalf of the Board, I commend Séamus and the core team for the way they are facilitating this.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and equally that you will stay with us on this journey. These are exciting times for Liverpool and the partnership we are building is a really important component of the future of Life Sciences in the city.



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”

Professor Tim Jones
Chair of the LHP Board

INTRODUCTION FROM OUR MANAGING DIRECTOR

I am grateful to Tim for his kind words of introduction and to all the Board for their support and engagement over the last year. The level of commitment from senior leadership to this endeavour is remarkable. It is also profoundly important for the success of the partnership as it is the mandate that allows us to convene and advocate on behalf of the partnership. Increasingly, our interactions with our partner organisations are defined by a sense of it being LHP collectively rather than any feeling of “us and them”. We will build on that in the coming months and years.

I want to thank our core team of staff in the LHP office for their hard work over the last 12 months. They are highly skilled at the work they do; bringing people together and creating an environment that is conducive to collaboration and partnership working. We work hard to ensure that LHP is understood, not just as a core team, but including all of our partners and the wonderful communities across the city who make this happen.

You can read many of the outputs of this approach in the pages that follow. In reading it I am struck by the long-term value of the relationships being built. You will see evidence of an effective city-wide Joint Research Office that is valued and owned by its partners. You will also see efforts to understand the requirements of partnership working with industry and steps being taken to address these. There is evidence too of training and development work that contributes to a transformation of the culture of collaboration across the city.

Our role is to support, celebrate and amplify the great work that goes on in Liverpool. It is also to make sure that we get better at the things that need to be done at scale. I think that the content of this annual report would suggest that we are collectively on track, and it has been my privilege to play a part in that.

Séamus O'Neill
Managing Director
Liverpool Health Partners



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Our role is to support, celebrate and amplify the great work that goes on in Liverpool.

”

Séamus O'Neill
LHP Managing Director



A YEAR IN REVIEW

Early last year we committed in our strategy document to supporting work across a number of high priority areas. These have delivered in a number of important strategic areas for the partners. You can see in the examples from the bioresource, Commercial Research Delivery Centre, advocacy and engagement, training and development and the Joint Research Office the added value that LHP is providing for members.

BIORESOURCE



The Life-Course Bioresource project represents a strategic and partner-mandated initiative to create a connected biodata repository across the lifespan for the Liverpool City Region (LCR). Its aim is to integrate the region's considerable assets in biobanking, imaging, and 'omics, underpinned by high-quality data, expert analytics, and a strong civic engagement approach.

LHP has led the convening of key stakeholders and supported leadership across tissue banks, resulting in a well-attended stakeholder biobank event.

Since then, a steering group—with representation from all LHP member organisations—was launched in January 2025, following extensive engagement across the partnership. We have also established an Asset and Sample Working Group and a Governance Working Group to identify enablers, barriers, and opportunities for more joined-up working.

A strategic map is currently in development to guide our next steps, while an industry-focused questionnaire has been issued to better understand commercial needs and expectations. As we work through the final governance and operational mechanisms needed to support this collaborative model, we are preparing for a formal launch later this year to introduce the Life-Course Bioresource offer to regional and national stakeholders.

“

Thanks to the collaborative and collective efforts of our partners, we've begun shaping what a unified life-course bioresource for the Liverpool City Region can truly look like.

”

Jenny Crooks

LHP Deputy Managing Director



COMMERCIAL RESEARCH DELIVERY CENTRE



£5,637,735.00
OF FUNDING AWARDED

Liverpool Health Partners (LHP) played a pivotal role in supporting a successful collaborative application to the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) for a Commercial Research Delivery Centre (CRDC). This collaborative bid brought together a wide range of organisations across the Cheshire and Merseyside footprint and resulted in a bold, distinctive proposal aimed at enhancing the region's commercial research offer. The initiative firmly positions Cheshire and Merseyside as a leading destination for commercial research delivery in the UK.

The application was awarded full funding of £5,637,735.00. Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LUHFT) has been appointed as the host organisation, operating under a hub-and-spoke model, with Professor Terry Jones named as Director. With funding now secured, LHP will continue to play a central role in the delivery of the CRDC, ensuring timely turnaround of expressions of interest (EOIs) and drawing on the expertise of the Civic Health Innovation Lab (CHIL) at the University of Liverpool. This collaboration will support research delivery closer to communities and people's homes.

The Liverpool CRDC, funded through a £72 million government and private investment initiative, is designed to accelerate the set-up of commercial studies—enabling patients to access new treatments through clinical trials as early as possible. The CRDC will significantly expand opportunities for research and innovation across areas such as cancer, respiratory illness, obesity, and infectious diseases. Importantly, this initiative aligns with the government's wider ambition to shift the health system's focus from treatment to prevention. The CRDC will support vital research into preventative vaccines and medicines, contributing to improved population health and longer, healthier lives.

The strength of LHP's convening role and coordination was a key factor in being asked to support a second, equally ambitious application for the Primary Care CRDC, which has now been submitted and is currently awaiting a funding decision.

ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT



METRO MAYORS BACK A STRONG LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR FOR THE NORTH WEST

The Metro Mayors of Liverpool and Manchester spoke at an 'Audience With' event at the Health Business and Technical Park in Runcorn in XX (month), discussing their book 'Head North: A Rallying Cry for a More Equal Britain'

In response to a question from Liverpool Health Partners, both mayors said the life sciences sector is crucial to Liverpool and Manchester to create jobs and help fight the crippling health inequalities the region faces.

LHP MEMBERS GATHER TO SHARE IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE

Members of Liverpool Health Partners (LHP) gathered for a Board away day in (Month) to share ideas and a vision for the future of an academic health science system for Liverpool City Region.

Representatives from all 10 partner organisations were present at the event which was led by LHP Managing Director Dr Séamus O'Neill and Board Chairman Prof Tim Jones. There was also representation from NHS Cheshire and Merseyside and from industry.



OUR PARTNERS JOINED POLITICIANS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS FOR A DISCUSSION AT LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Liverpool Health Partners took the opportunity to gather with politicians, community and charity campaigners and recognised experts in the field, to discuss the issues of deprivation in our region and ask if the NHS has the power to influence local economic and health outcomes through skills training and employment. The round table participants discussed what, if anything, the NHS could and should do to help address issues of unemployment, deprivation and exclusion in areas local to hospital trusts.



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Liverpool Health Partners has always been highly involved in the development of our partners' members. This refreshed version of the partnership continues to support these activities aiming to close the gap in skills amongst our members. Members of the Board asked LHP to deliver specific training to replace the previous offer from the NIHR Clinical Research Network, as this has morphed into the Research Delivery Network and has removed some of their educational offer. LHP has delivered the following during the last year:

PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE PROGRAMME

This is a Master-level programme to provide R&D leaders and teams from our partners with new skills and knowledge for system working. It has concentrated on the following areas:



Strategic Thinking



Strategic Planning



Change Management



Dealing with Complexity



System Leadership



Organisational Resilience

The programme has included participants from all our partners. One of the main benefits of this programme has been bringing together teams from different partners and helping to establish new relationships.

HANDBOOK FOR PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

The Directors and Senior managers of R&D asked LHP to work on a guide for new Principal Investigators. Although what has been developed is a simple guide taking researchers through the process of clinical research and responsibilities of the principal investigator, it acts as a single point of information easily accessible to all. It has been shared with our partners via the JRO Operational Board and posted on the LHP website for ease of access.

JRO WORKSHOPS

The JRO team members have been running several workshops focused on the different functions offered by the JRO. The workshops have been delivered either at the LHP offices or at partners' sites. These are a great way to educate colleagues on the activities carried out by the JRO and any specific issues that might be of interest to them. The workshops have been very well received and have acted as another way to support system-wide working and collaboration.

ONE-TO-ONE TRAINING

This is offered on an ad hoc model to anyone from our partners who requires new training; it could be on the systems used or the processes followed. Usually, it is done face-to-face but at times has been delivered by Microsoft Teams, depending on partner preference.

THE RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

One of the main educational activities that LHP has supported this year was the development of the new Researcher Development Programme. This is a continuation of the previous Early Research Career programme provided by CRN with NHS Research and Development North West (R&D NW). We have worked with colleagues from NHS R&D NW to customise the programme to our partners and those organisations in the Cheshire and Merseyside regions. The programme was launched in March 2025 and will run from October 2025 following the academic year.

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We will be launching our first cohort in October 2025 and I am really excited to be part of this new development of training for the region.

”

Dr Marga Perez-Casal
**Deputy Managing Director
Head of Joint Research Office**



JOINT RESEARCH OFFICE

LHP Joint Research Office (JRO) is dedicated to support our partners to facilitate the initiation of new research studies by providing expert knowledge, advice and support for grant applications, sponsorship, and contracts. For the financial year 2024-25, highlights of JRO supported activities were:

- **Registrations and Partner Activity** – systemwide figures where JRO notified of the initiation of new research studies at NHS partner sites.
- **Sponsorship** – studies reviewed through JRO convened sponsorship committees, where partner organisation is approached for sponsorship.
- **Grants** – JRO facilitated grant applications requiring partner NHS activities or expertise costing.

REGISTRATIONS AND PARTNER ACTIVITY

Studies registered in set up

442 

Studies opened to recruitment

301 

50

Studies where LHP organisation is lead NHS site



151

Observational



150

Interventional



Studies opened where the Chief Investigator is from a LHP organisation

22

SPONSORSHIP

105 
Recommendations of sponsorships

 **123**
Studies reviewed by sponsorship committee

100
Non-interventional



23
Interventional



GRANTS

126

Applications supported



£129.5M

Total value of submitted grant applications



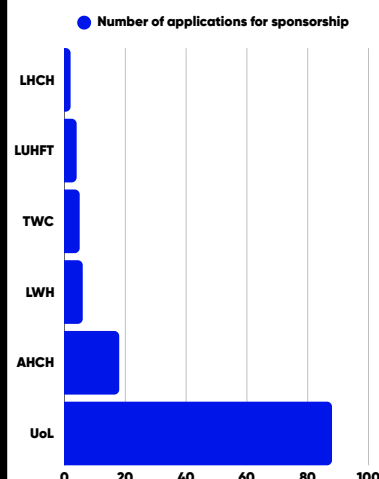
39

Grants applied for by first-time investigators



30%

increase from 2023/24



OUR FUNCTIONS



BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

The JRO Business Intelligence team acts as a conduit for data across the partnership by demonstrating activity in the setup of health research and JRO supported functions. In 2024/25, a new iteration of the LHP Partner Dashboard was introduced across the system, displaying data captured through the JRO BI team for use by partners at both strategic and operational level. JRO specific datasets and data from activity across the partnership is captured and analysed, providing evidence and support to partners for system and region-wide reporting. As part of this dataset, the team also records research study involvement of service support departments such as radiology. This will offer partners further insight on organisational impact of research across the system.



GRANTS

The JRO Grants service assist Investigators and Research Support Personnel across the partnership with identifying and acquiring costings for research grant applications involving partner NHS activities or expertise. This includes sharing of knowledge and drafting Schedule of Events Cost Attribution Templates (SoECAT) for identifying and attributing prospective NHS research costs, in addition to arranging pre-submission partner approvals and NIHR validations. The team have also worked on processes and timelines to provide clear pathways for service access and local required approvals. They have been proactive in meeting with partners and Investigator groups to showcase the JRO Grants service and promote greater engagement, as well as establishing a new grants newsletter to notify prospective investigators of upcoming funding opportunities.



CONTRACTS

The JRO has been supporting our partners with contractual support for research and innovation projects since its refresh. The new team is part of the LUHFT R&D Business Development, which has provided excellent knowledge and advice to those working with them.

Some of the activities have not been captured through the LHP Partner dashboard given their ad hoc nature. However, there is a record of specific projects supported by the contracts team.



SPONSORSHIP

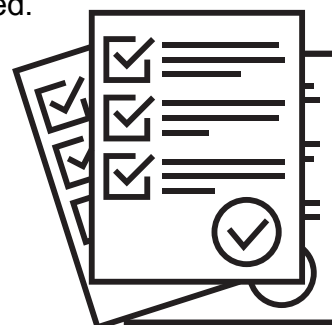
This is one of the most valued functions offered by the JRO. It is delivered through the Sponsorship Committee constituted by academic and clinical members from our partner organisations. It provides a peer-review service for new studies and a risk assessment approach to sponsorship of clinical research. The outcome of the committee and any feedback is shared with the applicant, ensuring there is a process for learning and improving.

360 REVIEW

At the end of 2024 we asked our partners to give us feedback on the new version of the JRO following the changes that were implemented and embedded.

We developed a short questionnaire to ascertain:

- **Are we meeting our customers' expectations?**
- **Do we need to improve any of our offerings?**
- **How do we ensure continued engagement from partners?**



Responses received had a balanced split between NHS and academia, and with similar representation from R&D staff, senior managers and researchers.

The overall results were very positive with a general good level of satisfaction across the respondents.

There was a clear distinction between HEI and NHS, with our academic partners praising the support received from the Grants team, their responsiveness and the consistency of approach, whilst NHS partners were highly complimentary of the sponsorship function as well as grants and contracts.

We identified a few of areas for improvement, such as raising awareness of the JRO and its functions particularly across our academic partners. We also have some work to do to promote the JRO Dashboard and to address some misconceptions around the sponsorship function. We have started working on these and look forward to updating you further.

Thank you for your feedback.

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The LHP dashboard has been a key element of information provision to see a snapshot of ongoing work and enables me to forward plan. It is also very useful to see the level of work that the JRO is undertaking to improve research in the Liverpool region and further afield.

**Karen Jennings-Wilding
University of Liverpool**

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DELIVERING FOR LIVERPOOL; through Research & Innovation in Health, Care & Life Sciences



OUR PARTNERS' HIGHLIGHTS

One of the great joys of our work within LHP is that we have a mandate to highlight and amplify the great work that goes on across our partner organisations. Looking back through our newsletter and social media over the last year we are struck by both the breadth and depth of activity in the partnership. Here are a few of the highlights.



UNIVERSITY AND ROCHE FORMALISE PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE LIVES FOR ALL

The University of Liverpool signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Roche Diagnostics UK and Ireland to advance research and innovation for improved health and community prosperity.

LJMU HOSTS CITY REGION INNOVATION SUMMIT

Experts from a range of sectors across the UK and globally visited LJMU's Student Life Building for a day-long Innovation Investment Summit, with discussions about stimulating growth, encouraging innovation and building global life sciences.



LSTM DEVELOPS THE WORLD'S FIRST RAPID TEST THAT DETECTS CRIMEAN-CONGO HAEMORRHAGIC FEVER

The development of the test was funded by NIHR and The Pandemic Institute with research carried out by LSTM, Global Access Diagnostics (GADx) led by Dr Emily Adams and clinicians and academics in Turkey and Iraq, the countries most affected by CCHF.

OVER £4M SECURED TO DRIVE INNOVATION AND IMPROVE CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust is set to receive over £4million in funding to boost the Liverpool City Region's position as a leader in children's healthcare innovation. The investment by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority is part of a £9.44million initiative known as the Paediatric Open Innovation Zone (POIZ).



HOSPITALS IN LIVERPOOL LAUNCH A MOBILE HEALTH AND RESEARCH HUB TO BRING RESEARCH CLOSER TO COMMUNITIES

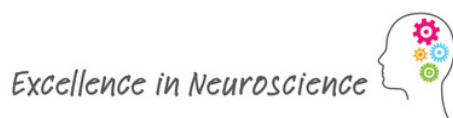
The mobile hub will bring services directly to communities and make it easier for residents to take part in health research, removing traditional barriers to involvement. It will also provide essential health services, including bowel cancer screening, ensuring a comprehensive approach to health and well-being for people across Merseyside.



**University Hospitals
of Liverpool**
Group



The Walton Centre
NHS Foundation Trust



SUTCLIFFE KERR MEETING 2025: CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

The Walton Centre incorporated their Sutcliffe Kerr meeting into the programme of the International Festival of Neuroscience and announced the inauguration of the Liverpool Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Centre at the University of Liverpool. They welcomed eight distinguished speakers to discuss challenges in clinical science and practice that go beyond 'localising the lesion'.

TIME TO TALK EVENT EMPHASISES THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION IN MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH

The Mental Health Research for Innovation Centre (M-RIC), in partnership with Sefton CVS, held an event for Time to Talk Day. The day brought service users, carers, academics and Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations together to discuss the future of mental health research.



Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

Community and Mental Health Services



**The Clatterbridge
Cancer Centre**
NHS Foundation Trust

HUGE BOOST FOR CLATTERBRIDGE RESEARCH WITH £786,000 GRANT

The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre (CCC) were awarded a grant from the National Institute for Health and Care Research of £786,000. The money was given after a bid which outlined how the money could enhance capability and capacity to carry out innovative research, including plans for ensuring the long-term sustainability of the investment.

liverpoolhealthpartners.org.uk

