



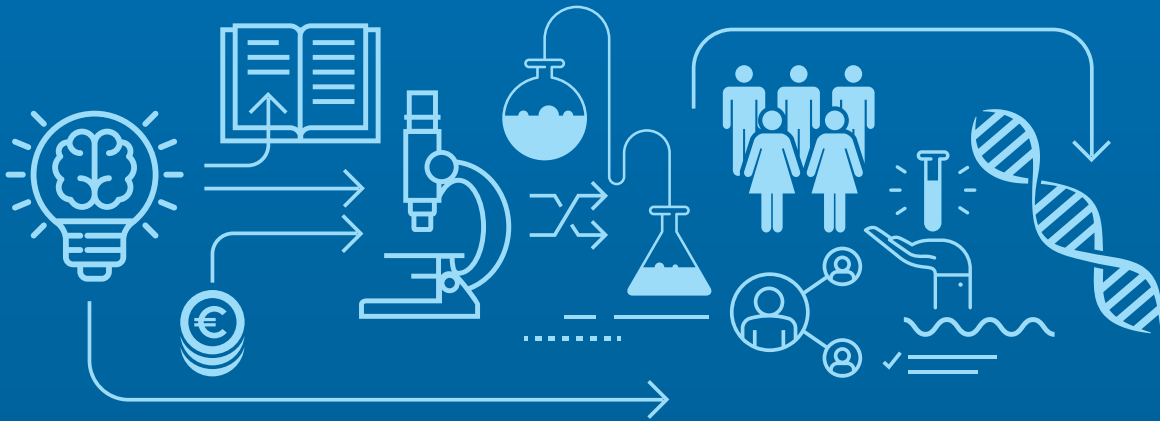
Tallaght  
University  
Hospital

Ospidéal  
Ollscoile  
Thamhlachta

An Academic Partner of Trinity College Dublin

# Hospital Research Strategy 2020 – 2024





People Caring for People  
to Live Better Lives  
through collaborative  
research, creative  
thinking & healthcare  
innovation

# Contents

1.	Foreword	2
2.	Background & Process	4
3.	Strategic Context	6
4.	Our Vision and Mission	7
5.	Strategic Priorities & Objectives	8
6.	Strategy Implementation	12
7.	Acknowledgements	15

“

Research lies at the heart of Tallaght University Hospital’s drive to deliver improved patient care and enhance the health and well being of our population”

# 1

# Foreword



*Lucy Nugent*  
CEO



*Liam Dowdall*  
Chairman

**On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Executive Management Team we are delighted to introduce Tallaght University Hospital’s first hospital wide research strategy.**

The strategy builds on the strong tradition of clinical research established in our founding hospitals of the Meath Hospital, Adelaide Hospital and National Children’s Hospital. These hospitals were established in the 1700’s to provide healthcare to the poor of Dublin and attracted talented physicians and surgeons who engaged in research. Conditions such as Graves’ Disease (Sir Robert Graves), Stokes Adam Syndrome (Sir William Stokes), Burkitt’s Lymphoma (Sir Denis Burkitt) were first described by physicians of these hospitals.

This rich heritage is honoured by the ongoing work of the Meath Foundation through funding Healthcare Research and Quality Improvement projects as well as funding the Meath Foundation Clinical Research Laboratory. The Adelaide Health Foundation which funds hospital and community patient initiatives. Both institutions enshrine the principle of better patient care through research. They have been recently joined by the TUH Foundation whose objective is to support patient care through technological innovation. Research lies at the heart of Tallaght University Hospital’s drive to deliver improved patient care and enhance the health and wellbeing of our population.

The Hospital’s strategic plan 2019-24 outlines the six priorities one of which is Research and Innovation and the process undertaken to develop this strategy is outlined in Section II of this document.

We see an important link between research and innovation and strive to be at the forefront of translational research that adds value to patient care. Our initial focus is on building structures and systems that direct, encourage and sustain impactful research.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Research Strategy Group (ref section 7) ably chaired by Mr. John Kelly Deputy CEO for their time, vision and commitment to this process and congratulate them on formulating this research strategic plan.

“

We see an important link between research and innovation and strive to be at the forefront of translational research that adds value to patient care.”

As an academic teaching hospital and partner of Trinity College, Dublin, we recognise our role in supporting research and instilling the need for enquiring minds in our staff and in the healthcare staff of the future. We value all our academic and industry partners reflected in our CARE values of Collaboration, Achievement, Respect and Equity.

In these turbulent times, it is important that our research efforts are underpinned by a clear strategy which is also adaptive and dynamic in response to the unforeseen such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Such events also present opportunities to contribute to emerging bodies of evidence and understanding.

The Hospital's commitment to research is very much matched by our patients willingness and enthusiasm to partake in clinical studies for which we are most grateful.

Best wishes



**Lucy Nugent**  
Executive Officer



**Liam Dowdall**  
Chairman Chief



**The Meath Foundation**



This rich heritage is honoured by the ongoing work of the **Meath Foundation** which funds the Meath Laboratory and Quality Improvement Research and the **Adelaide Health Foundation** which funds hospital and community patient initiatives.




Both institutions enshrine the principle of better patient care through research.

# 2

## Background & Process

The Hospital's strategic priorities include Research and Innovation (see Figure 1). Following the publication of the five year hospital strategy last year, the Hospital set itself the aim of devising and publishing a research strategy over a short number of months with a deadline of completion of October 2020.

Figure 1 – TUH Corporate Strategy Objectives

-  **1. Good Access** – TUH will be a leader in patient flow improvement and will significantly improve waiting times for patients across all service areas
-  **2. Highly Integrated Care** – We will redesign models of care from a patient perspective to ensure they receive high quality care and a positive experience in the right place, delivered by the right people at the right time
-  **3. Enhanced infrastructure** – We will develop the capacity and infrastructure to deliver excellent care to all our patients
-  **4. Digital Enablement** – We will transform the way we deliver care through programmes of digital enablement
-  **5. Research & Innovation** – We aim to build a reputation for translational research, implementation science and innovation to underpin safer, better and more integrated care
-  **6. People** – We will become a 'magnet' organisation that attracts, develops and retains top talent as an employer of choice

A workshop-based approach was adopted in the creation of the strategy as outlined in Figure 2 below. Once the context for the strategy was set in early workshops, significant emphasis was put on engaging internal stakeholders.

**Figure 2 – Research Strategy Process**



Many of the objectives and actions in this strategy relate to that stakeholder feedback. Section 3 describes the strategic context established in the earlier strategy development workshops.



# 3

## Strategic Context

**Numerous topics arose during the situational analysis that helped set the context for this research strategy. Some of the more important and recurring topics are listed below.**

- **Solid foundations for research growth** – extensive internal stakeholder feedback reinforced the need for TUH to put in place enhanced governance, supports, processes and infrastructure to ensure a solid foundation for research direction, participation and growth.
- **Primary importance of improved patient care and community health needs** – research should be primarily focused on improving patient care and the lives of the people TUH serves. Research must align with our community’s needs in the years ahead.
- **Build on clinical research strengths and reward effort** – recognise where TUH is already clinically and academically strong and ensure future investment in research is aligned with those strengths and individual research efforts.
- **Technology and innovation research** – the urgent need for more integrated care that sees people treated at the lowest level of complexity safely possible has been brought into sharper focus with the COVID-19 pandemic. There will continue to be dramatic effects on healthcare capacity and care delivery must change. TUH has an exciting opportunity to develop further research focused on supporting integrated care aims through the effective deployment of new technologies.
- **Strengthening academic, industry and healthcare partnerships** – TUH should fully leverage and strengthen its academic partnership with Trinity College Dublin and enhance partnerships with other institutions. There is further opportunity for the Hospital to build relationships with industry partners, developing a reputation as an institution where industry enjoys doing research. Collaborative research that spans the care continuum involving other hospitals and community partners should also be encouraged.
- **Research that delivers economic value** – securing funding is a critical aspect of any research strategy. The COVID-19 pandemic is having severe economic impact and TUH will need to develop a targeted approach to funding with an emphasis on delivering improvements in patient care and economic value.
- **Build the TUH research brand** – stakeholder feedback emphasised the need to build and market the Hospital’s research brand more effectively.

These topics helped as the basis for defining TUH’s research strategic priorities and informed debate about the Hospital’s research vision and mission.



# 4

## Our Vision and Mission



**TUH’s research Vision and Mission are closely aligned to that of the Hospital’s corporate strategy.**

It is important that research undertaken at TUH will have a measurable positive impact on the lives of those we serve. To achieve this, we need to create an environment where collaborative research is highly valued, encouraged and supported. Working closely with Trinity College Dublin and other partners will be central to achieving this vision.

Section 5 describes the strategic priorities identified following completion of the strategy situational analysis.

# 5

# Strategic Priorities & Objectives

The context for this strategy described in Section 3 helped define five priority areas described in Figure 3.

Figure 3 – TUH Research Priority Areas



Specific and measurable objectives were then defined under these priority area headings. These are defined further below.



### Leadership & Governance

1. Publish a research organisation and governance structure by Q3 2020 that delivers the strategy.
2. Appoint Research and Innovation Managers by Q1 2021.
3. Establish an office of Clinical Research by Q4 2020 under the governance of the Deputy CEO.
4. Develop a detailed strategy implementation plan by Q4 2020 including timing of delivery and accountability.
5. Develop and publish clear standard operating procedures for approving, conducting and funding research in TUH by Q1 2021.

The enhanced governance structures will help ensure a consolidation of TUH’s research efforts and delivery of the strategy. A research forum will be established with hospital management and clinical representation to ensure progress is monitored and research direction agreed.

The TUH research office will play a pivotal multi-functional role in ensuring research registration, approval and monitoring processes are streamlined; researchers are fully supported; and a comprehensive repository of research is maintained.



### Research Impact & Community Engagement

1. Establish a community research forum to guide research priorities by Q2 2021.
2. In partnership with TCD, launch an accredited Clinical Research Facility by Q4 2024.
3. Build and continue to manage a comprehensive TUH research database with related workflows and reporting by Q1 2021.
4. Develop a set of research output KPIs that reflect national healthcare priorities by Q1 2021.
5. Increase patient participation in clinical research by 50% by end of Q4 2022.

The TUH Clinical Research Facility (CRF) in collaboration with Trinity College Dublin will be specially designed to facilitate high quality research activities. In addition to state-of-the-art facilities and equipment, the CRF will employ highly trained staff to facilitate the safe conduct of clinical research, early phase clinical trials and other experimental medicine research involving patients and healthy volunteers.

The aims of the CRF are to provide the infrastructure, physical space and facilities, experienced research and specialist support staff and the necessary quality and oversight programs that are critical for the successful conduct of world class patient focused research.



## Staff Participation & Talent

1. Conduct a research staff survey by Q2 2021 to understand experience of research in TUH and identify improvement ideas.
2. Complete a research workforce and output plan by Q3 2021.
3. Agree a model of co-funding for research supported by TUH and the DMHG by end of 2021.
4. Increase participation in TCD clinical research training in TUH to 100% for new full time researchers by Q4 2021.

Difficulties finding adequate protected time to conduct research was amongst the most consistent feedback from staff during internal stakeholder workshops. TUH will conduct a research workforce planning exercise and staff survey to understand this further and put necessary improvement actions in place to ensure we facilitate research and foster talent. The Hospital's Research Office (see Section 6) will play a pivotal role in supporting new and experienced researchers. The aim is to ensure there is parity between clinical research and clinical care time recognising that high quality research will lead to better outcomes for our patients. Building a research capable workforce will include protecting dedicated research time and putting in place posts with dedicated research time where needed.



## Research Partnerships

1. Working with TCD to develop academic leadership in trauma (2021), healthcare innovation and further develop critical mass in other healthcare disciplines.
2. Develop a clinical academic promotion track for Health and Social Care Professionals and Nursing by December 2021.
3. Maximise links with Academic Partners, Community Healthcare Partners, South Dublin County Council and Enterprise Ireland and deliver at least three joint research and innovation projects by December 2024.
4. Establish TUH as a national centre for health research and innovation for technology/bio-technology companies with at least five early stage technologies evaluated per year.
5. Build closer clinical care, education and research links with other hospitals in the Dublin Midlands Hospital Group and our community partners (to be defined).

TUH will work with TCD to ensure any required alignment between the Hospital's clinical priorities and required research resources. The Hospital has already combined research and innovation in its corporate strategy objectives. We will work with TCD and other academic and industry partners to build our reputation as a national centre for health research and innovation.



## Funding, Economic Value & Branding

1. Develop a research funding plan by Q4 2020 identifying future funding opportunities and clear targets for increased funding over the course of the strategy.
2. Develop a research marketing plan by Q3 2021 to include website, social media, annual reports and symposium.

The Hospital will adopt a more structured and consolidated approach to targeting research funding. The first step in that process will be the development of a research funding plan. We must also do more to recognise and promote the research currently happening in TUH. A regularly refreshed marketing plan will detail the steps we will take to build our research brand.



# 6

# Strategy Implementation

The Deputy CEO will take responsibility for leading implementation of this strategy supported by a steering group represented by Executive Management, Clinical Research Leadership, the Research Office and Innovation Management. Figure 4 below provides an outline strategy implementation plan which will be developed in more detail in the weeks ahead.

**Figure 4 – Research Strategy Summary Implementation Plan**

ID	TUH RESEARCH STRATEGY	2020	2021				2022				2023				2024			
		Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>1</b>	<b>LEADERSHIP &amp; GOVERNANCE</b>	▼																
2	Publish research organisation structure	■																
3	Appoint Research and Innovation Managers	■																
4	Establish research office	■																
5	Strategy implementation plan	■																
6	Research SoPs	■																
<b>7</b>	<b>RESEARCH IMPACT &amp; COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b>	▼																
8	Community research forum	■																
9	Launch accredited CRF	■																
10	Infonetica database and workflows	■																
11	Research KPIs and monitoring	■																
12	Increase patient participation by 50%	■																
<b>13</b>	<b>STAFF PARTICIPATION &amp; TALENT</b>	▼																
14	Research workforce and output plan	■																
15	Research staff survey	■																
16	Research co-funding model	■																
<b>17</b>	<b>RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS</b>	▼																
18	Academic Trauma & Innovation Leadership	■																
19	Clinical academic promotion track AHP and Nursing	■																
20	TUD, SDCC, EI Joint Innovation Projects	■																
21	TUH National Centre Healthcare Innovation	■																
<b>22</b>	<b>FUNDING, ECONOMIC VALUE &amp; BRANDING</b>	▼																
23	Research funding plan	■																
24	Research marketing plan	■																

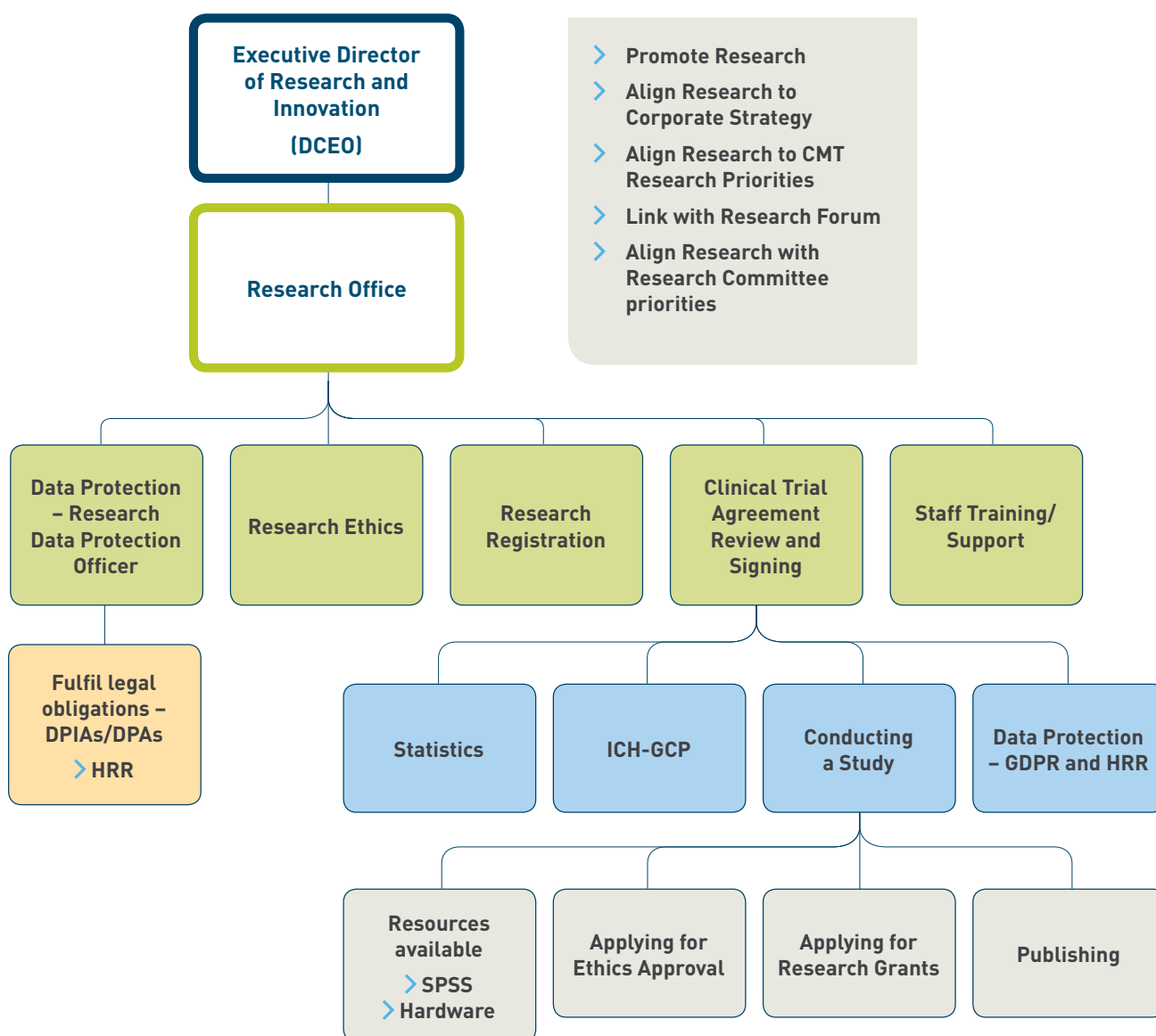
**The Hospital is determined to see this plan implemented in full. Some tangible examples of actions are provided below.**

### Research Office

A fundamental requirement for successful research within a healthcare organisation is support and resources aimed at encouraging staff of all levels to take part in research, whether it be in clinical or non-clinical areas. Over the course of the process, it has become clear that staff require these building blocks in order to pursue research as part of their role.

TUH will establish a Research Office. The function of this office will be as a 'one-stop-shop' for research needs. The office will cater for all levels of experience of researcher offering advice, support and resources as required by the researcher. Figure 5 outlines the main functions of the Research Office which will adapt to the needs of researchers and also to the changing landscape of research in Ireland over time.

**Figure 5 – Research Office Governance and Role**



## Research Process Streamlining and Repository

The St James's Hospital/TUH Joint Research Ethics Committee (JREC) will implement a research ethics review management online software (Infonetica) to manage the full life cycle of all research applications. The software will have multiple functions, namely

- 1) The application process will move to an online solution. Researchers will complete a user profile and use this for all applications to the JREC. This process will also ensure high quality; complete, verified applications are submitted to the JREC. Researchers can track the progress of their submission through their user profile in the system.
- 2) The system will enable complete online communication with all committee members. This will remove the requirement for paper-based communication. Committee members can review applications online and comment online, enabling the amalgamation of all comments for distribution to the researcher.
- 3) The system is also a cloud-based storage system and repository of all applications and links all study submissions to one application code.
- 4) The system facilitates detailed reporting of all aspects of the research ethics committee functions that take place through the system.
- 5) Due to the increased efficiency this system will support an increase in the capacity of the JREC leading to increased revenue.

## Clinical Research Facility

A CRF provides the infrastructure, physical space and facilities, experienced research and specialist support staff and the necessary quality and oversight that is required to conduct patient focused research and clinical trials.

TUH will launch an accredited CRF in partnership with TCD and under the directorship of a TUH clinical leader. The TUH CRF will be launched on a phased basis and will function in conjunction with the Research Office. Some of the research supports associated with a CRF will be run through the Research Office.

To be successful the CRF will be located centrally on TUH campus and will aim to join the network of seven CRFs in Ireland. The purpose of launching a CRF in TUH is to improve patient outcomes through participation in clinical trials not available to organisations without a CRF. The CRF will allow for research visits to be held separately to clinical outpatient appointments. This is important in the era of COVID-19.





# 7

# Acknowledgements

**TUH would like to acknowledge the contribution made by the members of the Research Strategy Group to complete this strategy over a short period of time. The contributions of all who participated in several stakeholder workshops is also greatly appreciated.**

**Table 1 – Research Strategy Group Membership**

<b>Mr. John Kelly</b>	Deputy CEO
<b>Prof. Seamas Donnelly</b>	Consultant, Respiratory and Interstitial Lung Professor of Medicine, TCD
<b>Prof. Kevin Conlon</b>	Consultant, General Surgery/ Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary (HPB) Surgery Professor of Surgery, TCD
<b>Prof. Anne-Marie Tobin</b>	Consultant Dermatologist
<b>Prof. Catherine Wall</b>	Consultant Nephrologist
<b>Ms. Christina Lydon</b>	Assistant Director of Nursing, Nurse Practice Development
<b>Ms. Maeve Murphy</b>	Health & Social Care Professions Manager
<b>Dr. Sadhbh O’Neill</b>	Ethics & Clinical Trials Officer
<b>Dr. Catherine Darker</b>	Interim Head of Discipline, Assoc. Prof. in Health Services Research, Assoc. Dir. Postgrad Teaching and Learning, TCD
<b>Mr. Déaglán MagFhloinn</b>	CEO, MedModus Strategy Process Facilitator





Tallaght University Hospital  
Tallaght, Dublin 24  
D24 NR0A Ireland

[www.tuh.ie](http://www.tuh.ie)



Tallaght  
University  
Hospital

Ospidéal  
Ollscoile  
Thamhlachta

An Academic Partner of Trinity College Dublin