

Patient and Public Involvement Focus

Welcome to our PPI newsletter!

Welcome to our summer issue of the King's Clinical Research Facility (CRF) Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) newsletter.

In this newsletter, we will continue to keep you updated on our work, which includes working towards our goals in both our PPI and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategies. We are delighted that we have held several community engagement events with local schools in February and March, and hosted EDI training for staff in May. We have included updates on these events in this issue.

We are so grateful for all the innovative ideas you have brought to us so far this year. It is always so great to work alongside each other, and for us to learn from you and improve our ways of working at the CRF. We wish you a happy summer and look forward to the rest of 2025 with you!

The Public Involvement Team, on behalf of the King's CRF

In this issue:

Spotlight on our studies – Page 1

Meet the team at King's CRF – Page 1-2

International Clinical Trials Day Event – Page 2

Community Engagement with Local Schools – Pages 3-4

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Staff Training – Page 4-5

King's CRF PPI Strategy Refresh – Page 5

Meet the team at King's CRF!

Each newsletter, we will introduce you to a member of the King's CRF staff and a member of our PPI group. We hope you enjoy getting to know a little bit more about these individuals and why they enjoy their roles.

Ongoing website Maintenance

The King's CRF website is currently undergoing some maintenance. This means, at times, you may not be able to access the website or the PPI pages. Our new website should be up and running by August 2025.

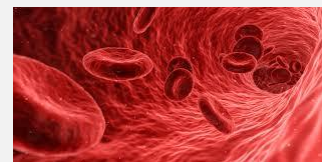


We are sorry for the inconvenience!

Please get in touch if you need information or support that you would have normally found on the website, by emailing: kingscrf@kcl.ac.uk or phoning 020 3299 1851

Spotlight on our studies:

At King's CRF, we support a range of studies looking into treatments for haematological (blood) disorders, including Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria (PNH). PNH is a rare condition where the body's immune system mistakenly attacks and destroys red blood cells.



A participant kindly shared their experience of a PNH trial at the CRF. You can listen to Kate's story [here](#).

To read more about PNH and to get support, please click [here](#).

Jerry – Administrator

Jerry is an Administrator at the CRF, and his role is vital as he is one of the first people study teams and research participants meet. His role involves making sure there is good communication between these study teams and participants, and that all research visits run as smoothly as possible. Jerry finds his job very enjoyable, and he's always ready to extend a helping hand!



Emily – PPI member



Emily is pleased to be an active member of the King's CRF PPI Group. It has provided her a valued opportunity to learn and share her views in health research. Emily feels it is a great platform for anyone with an interest to contribute their input into health research and help everyone move towards living a better life informed by science.

International Clinical Trials Day

International Clinical Trials Day (ICTD) is celebrated on 20th May each year to recognise the first clinical trial run by James Lind, a surgeon on HMS Salisbury, who randomised 12 men to understand possible causes of scurvy. At King's CRF, we took part in an event in honour of this day:

Pint of Science Event

Pint of Science is an annual worldwide science festival that brings researchers to local pubs, cafes, and spaces to share their work with members of the public. For the event on ICTD, two researchers from King's CRF went to London Bridge to speak about their trials in neurology (brain) and haematology (blood). The researchers were introduced by the CRF Manager, Elka, who gave everyone an overview of the amazing work that goes on at our facility. Dr Mubasher Qamar, a neurology clinical and academic fellow, is one of the researchers who spoke on the day. He said the following about his experience:

"Bringing research to the public—where it truly belongs—helps build trust, transparency, and shared ownership of science. These conversations are just as vital as the research itself. The attendees were engaged and interested in our amazing work at King's and reaffirmed why I love research. I hope we get more opportunities like this to engage with the community".

Dr Mubasher Qamar, Speaker at the Pint of Science Event

June awareness events

Pride Month 01/06 – 30/06

Pride Month is traditionally celebrated in June around the world, and is dedicated to celebrating the contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer culture and community.

Diabetes Week 10/06 – 16/06

This is a week to raise awareness about the things that matter to people with diabetes and to highlight what it is like to live with it.

Read more [here](#)

Learning Disability Week 16/06 – 23/06

This week is all about making sure everyone hears what life is like if you have a learning disability. The theme for this year is 'Do you see me?', making sure people with a learning disability are seen, heard, and valued.

Read more [here](#)

Love Your Lungs Week 21/06 – 27/06

This week is an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of good lung health and to fundraise to change the future of lung conditions in the UK.

Read more [here](#).

We'd like to feature blogs on our website with your stories to honour and celebrate these awareness events.

If you're interested in sharing your experiences with us, please email catherine.harvey15@nhs.net

You can read some of the excellent blogs written by PPI members [here](#)

Community Engagement with Local Schools

School Open Day

In February 2025, we hosted our second School Open Day for 40 Year 10 and Year 12 students from a local school. The day consisted of a tour of the CRF, including an introduction to commonly used lab equipment, such as the **centrifuge**. The students then split into smaller groups to hear career talks from researchers in Neurology and Psychedelics, and they also had the chance to do some hands-on activities with our research nurses during Cardiology and Basic Life Support (BLS) sessions.

Overall, the day was a success, with 70% of the students rating the day as 'very good' and 27% of the students now considering a new career after attending the sessions.

In addition, we have recently distributed an online impact survey to the first cohort of students who came to a CRF School Open Day back in 2024. This is so we can understand whether the day had a lasting impact on their subject choices for A-Levels, or their plans for further education. We will keep you all updated with the survey responses!

School Outreach Day



King's CRF staff and a public member at the Ursuline School (Left to Right: Tatenda, Savia, Elka, Cat, and Johnna).

Just a month later, in March 2025, we went to the Ursuline School in Wimbledon to deliver a workshop for 30 Year 7 students. The workshop consisted of short talks about research and bizarre research projects, and a quiz for the children to see if they knew of any famous researchers. The content of the talks and the presentation slides were co-produced with two public members over many months. The public members also helped us come up with the interactive activity for the children, where we asked them to design their own mini-clinical trial, answering the question, 'Does eating broccoli make you more intelligent?' For this, the students designed posters in a comic-book style in small groups. They then presented their posters in front of their peers, taking questions from the audience.

The interactive activity was the most popular element of the day, with 90% of the students rating it as a 'very interesting' or 'interesting' task. The workshop also helped to increase the students' knowledge about research, as the percentage of students who reported knowing 'a lot' about research went up from 49% to 69%.

What is a centrifuge?

A centrifuge is a mechanical device that spins at a very high speed. In clinical research, we often use it to separate the different components of blood. Below is an illustration of a centrifuge, and a photo of Amy, our Lab Technician, showing the students a blood sample after it has been processed in the machine.



We will learn from the students' feedback and refine the workshop based on their responses. We aim to deliver this in other schools in our local area. In particular, we would like to focus on diverse schools, which may not have the opportunity to regularly take part in initiatives like this.

"The students enjoyed their time with the CRF team – they discovered new information about clinical research, and more importantly, had an opportunity to work on their own research idea and deliver a presentation. The skills they learned will be useful in their futures, and some of them may even go on to pursue a career in clinical research. It's been such an inspiring workshop, and I hope that more students all over the country have a chance to take part in it".

Evgeny Vvedenskiy, Ursuline School Careers Lead

Thank you so much to the public members involved in this project, Manos and Savia, and to the staff who delivered the workshop on the day!

School Engagement National Working Group

We are feeding all our work about engaging with local schools into the National UKCRF Network School Engagement Working Group. The UKCRF Network is made up of 54 CRFs across the UK and Ireland. The Network aims to provide support and share good practice in clinical research. By sharing our experience engaging with local schools, as well as sharing materials such as presentation slides and evaluation forms, we hope to help the Network produce a standardised hub of resources for everyone who wishes to engage and impact school-aged children.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

We have continued with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) staff training, successfully delivering sessions on Health Inequalities in May 2025. Our wonderful EDI working group, comprised of four public members, CRF staff, and EDI staff from the Trust, met in April 2025 to decide what should be included in the training. The key areas we agreed the training should cover were:



- ✓ The **barriers to participating in research**, and how to build **trust** with participants who may only come to the CRF for one research visit
- ✓ An understanding of **comorbidities** (two or more conditions in the same individual), and how to make sure everyone feels **genuine respect and care** at the CRF
- ✓ That we should allow staff to **feel 'uncomfortable'** in the session, and encourage everyone to make the training personal, as **health inequalities affect us, not them**
- ✓ That we should **reflect on past EDI training sessions**, and think about how ideas and practices from these may help us, for example, communication styles that staff learned about in cultural intelligence training

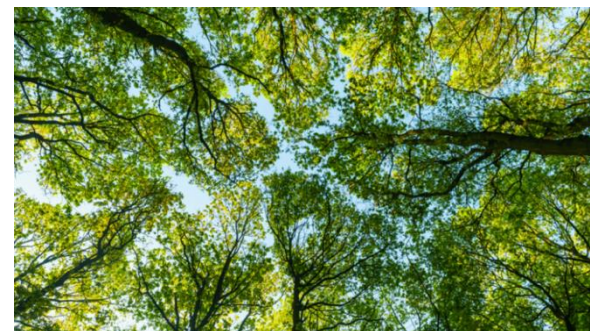
These ideas were incorporated into the training, and the session was co-delivered by Roseline Agyekum, Lead Nurse and Researcher, who focuses on kidney research in the community.

A full report about the health inequalities training session will be hosted on our website as soon as possible.

King's CRF Strategy Refresh

We are currently in the process of renewing our King's CRF PPI Strategy, which ends in December 2025. We have been working closely alongside two public members to think about how best to review the current strategy and gather your ideas for innovation.

Together, we decided to put together an online survey (one version for CRF staff and one version for public members), which starts by simply asking, **'Have you read the strategy?'** It then delves deeper into your thoughts on individual components of the strategy, as well as the clarity and accessibility of the strategy.



"It was great to be involved in shaping the survey for the strategy refresh. As someone with lived experience in PPI, it felt meaningful to contribute to something that aims to genuinely reflect the views and needs of a wide range of people. Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of what I do, so helping ensure the survey was accessible and inclusive was really important to me. It's encouraging to see openness to feedback and a real commitment to hearing from underrepresented voices at the centre of this process."

Clara, PPI member and Strategy Refresh Working Group member

We would be grateful for your responses to the survey – it will help make sure our revised strategy reflects your wants and needs.

You can complete the survey by clicking here:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/zeyC3H0ugm>

The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

You will also receive a personal email with an invitation to complete the survey!



KING'S CRF

1st Floor Cheyne Wing, King's College
Hospital
Denmark Hill

Phone: 020 3299 1851

Email: catherine.harvey15@nhs.net

X (formerly known as Twitter): @King's CRF

Visit our website:

<https://www.maudsleybrc.nihr.ac.uk/crf-home/>

Have a virtual tour of our facilities:

<https://www.maudsleybrc.nihr.ac.uk/nihr-kings-clinical-research-facility/about-crf/>

If you would like to receive this newsletter in a different format, please let us know.