

**Industry Engagement Further information**

A strategy for HSC R&D Industry Engagement was developed, and target metrics set for the initial period.  Work to establish metrics and targets for industry-sponsored clinical trials was severely hampered by the COVID pandemic.  More recently, however, Northern Ireland has been included in the government response to the O’Shaugnessy review of commercial clinical trials in the UK and is working towards increasing the proportion of commercial clinical trials in the overall research portfolio, in line with the other UK nations.

* Since December 2021 HSC Industry Engagement has handled queries from 76 companies equating to over 250 meetings.  To date this las led to 11 ongoing collaborations.  All companies have been given advice or connected with an NI health and life science internal or external contact as appropriate.

* HSC R&D Division is a co-contributor in kind to a partnership with Health Innovation Research Alliance Northern Ireland (HIRANI), a sector hub for Life & Health Sciences innovation.   HIRANI was established in 2020 by the Northern Ireland HEIs, following prolonged negotiations between the Departments of Health and Economy.  The HIRANI Board consists of an external independent Chair and membership from DoH, InvestNI and both Universities.  HIRANI has a role of advocacy, lobbying and promotion for the Life & Health Sciences sector in Northern Ireland.  HSC Industry Engagement works closely with HIRANI to support industry queries that require input from HSC, and collaborates on other networking activities and initiatives
* As part of this partnership, a series of regular PULSE networking meetings has been facilitated, with attendance from across the Life & Health Sciences sector.

A Northern Ireland bid to the Precision Medicine Catapult call was created through collaboration between all key stakeholders, but Innovate UK took the decision not to progress a separate Precision Medicine Catapult, instead merging it into the existing Medicines Discovery Catapult.  Although funding calls in Precision Medicine would still be open to NI applicants, no infrastructure funding would be available.  Therefore, the decision was made for InvestNI and HSC R&D Division to co-fund a Precision Medicine Centre for Cancer based in QUB.  The Centre has just been awarded funding for Phase 2 and has shown considerable success in developing and mainstreaming cancer diagnostic solutions in precision medicine from an accredited laboratory, providing considerable savings to the HSC.

HSC Industry Engagement has demonstrated consistent success in identifying and developing suitable procedures and channels to accommodate a diverse range of product categories and technology types. These processes effectively engage both internal and external stakeholders, promoting efficiency, effectiveness, and timeliness. Additionally, the organisation has established robust networks with other components of the HSC.

They have also adopted an intelligence- led approach in addition to the more conventional marketing, promotion, and awareness-raising endeavours such as attending and participating in pertinent conferences, seminars, and summits.

In addition, the HSC Industry Engagement have actively engaged in and made significant contributions in the following areas:

**HSC internal groups:**

1. The committee responsible for overseeing the Analytics Platform & Medicines Use is chaired by the Medicines Optimisation and Innovation Centre (MOIC).
2. The Clinical Trials Meeting of the North West Cancer Centre (NWCC) was chaired by the Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSCT), which oversees the operations of NWCC.
3. The working group for Digital Health and Care NI was chaired by the organisation known as DHCNI.
4. The evaluation group for the Health and Social Care Quality Improvement (HSCQI) TASC initiative was chaired by HSCQI, and they offered comments on the report produced by the group.

**External collaborations:**

1. The AIMS (Assessing Innovation in Medical Services) project focused on examining procurement practises within the Health and Social Care (HSC) and Health Service Executive (HSE) in Ireland. This initiative was spearheaded by the Health Innovation Research Alliance Ireland (HIRANI) in collaboration with the Health Innovation Hub Ireland.
2. The eCareWell project, which is focused on examining the utilisation of medical technology by carers in the community, is being conducted by Ulster University. The university's involvement in this study was initiated through an invitation extended by HIRANI.
3. The organisation and coordination of the AIMDay event focused on Chronic Eye Disease in collaboration with Queens University Belfast.

* Communication and coordination with medical technology firms were established in order to discover suitable and cooperative partnerships with colleagues from the Health and Social Care (HSC) sector and other stakeholders in Northern Ireland (NI). This includes collaborating with Digital Care Systems located in NI, whose joint efforts with the Southern Health and Social Care Trust (SHSCT) and Ulster University (UU) resulted in the successful acquisition of financing through the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI).