

Academic Directorate of Emergency Medicine

Research Strategy 2015-18



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Executive Summary

The Directorate research strategy builds on the strengths of academic links with the School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR) at the University of Sheffield; specifically the extensive portfolio of NIHR-funded research, the Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) and the clinical academic training opportunities.

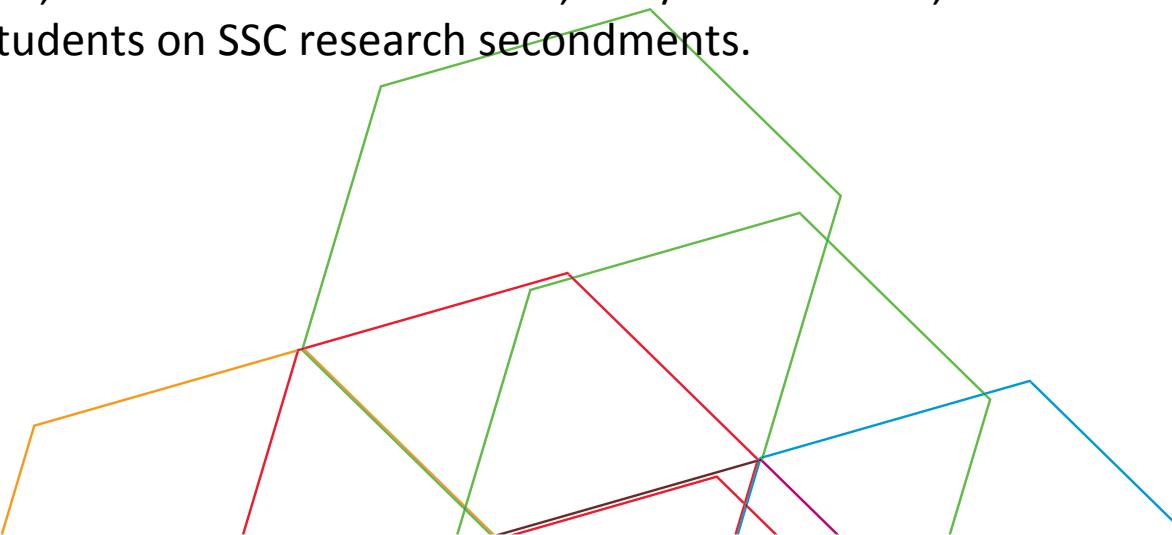
Through links with ScHARR the Directorate has attracted a number of substantial research projects that are due to start recruitment in 2015. Resources attached to these projects and Research Capacity Funding will be used to support research nurses who will be based in the Directorate and responsible for increasing portfolio recruitment. It is anticipated that recruitment to these studies will lead to increased portfolio funding and the ability to maintain Directorate research nurse support for future studies.

In the medium term the Directorate aims to attract further portfolio studies through a combination of links with ScHARR and the development of clinical research interest within the Directorate. An application will be made to become an Academic Directorate. Involvement in research will be used to improve clinical care provided in the Directorate and support the development of sustainable careers in emergency and acute medicine and nursing.

Current research strengths

Emergency Medicine Research in Sheffield (EMRiS) is based in ScHARR at the University of Sheffield. EMRiS is a leading national and international centre for emergency care research that builds on a long history of emergency care research in ScHARR. ScHARR is one of the leading centres for health service research in the UK, as reflected in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF). ScHARR research impact was rated 2nd highest in its unit of assessment and 95% of the impact was rated 4*. Emergency care research made a substantial contribution to this by contributing two out of the eight ScHARR REF impact case studies.

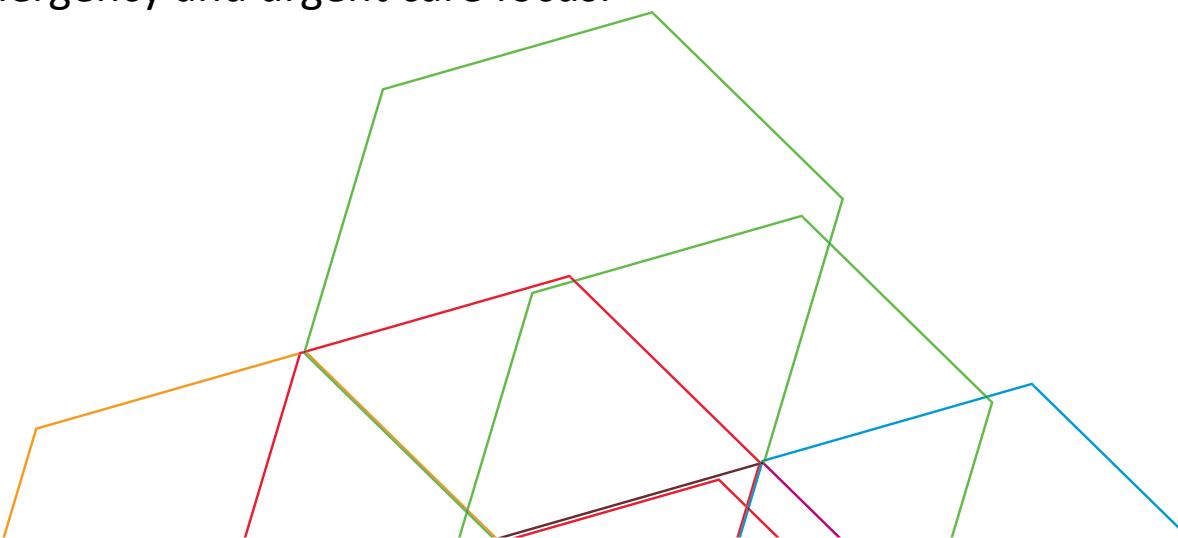
The links with ScHARR have led to development of strengths in pragmatic clinical trials, evidence synthesis, economic evaluation, organisational research and evaluation of workforce issues. EMRiS undertakes all levels of clinical academic training and currently supports a Clinical Lecturer, Academic Clinical Fellows, PhD/MD students, intercalating BMedSci students and medical students on SSC research secondments.



Current research strengths

Researchers in EMRiS have recently been successful in attracting National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and European Commission (EC) funding and our national and international research collaborations have led to further opportunities for portfolio-supported research activity. These projects focus upon common patient presentations to the emergency department; suspected acute coronary syndrome, sprained ankle and patients at risk of acute delirium.

Participation in the Yorkshire & Humber CLAHRC has provided opportunities to develop our research in new directions, such as embarking on 'big data' projects, undertaking region-wide studies and participating in improvement projects. The CLAHRC theme we lead focusses on 'avoiding attendance and admission in long term conditions' and is the first theme nationally to have an emergency and urgent care focus.



Research Themes

EMRiS covers a wide range of research themes, mainly based around ScHARR areas of methodological expertise. These include clinical trials, evidence synthesis, economic evaluation, organisation research, workforce evaluation, quality indicators and outcome measures. The whole spectrum of clinical activity is covered but there has been particular focus on acute coronary syndrome, head injury and venous thromboembolism. These have been the main themes for research involving Sheffield Teaching Hospitals, along with research into emergency department organisation (especially waiting times and avoidable admissions) and the emergency care workforce.

Future development of research themes will be based around existing strengths and emerging opportunities:

- Acute coronary syndrome: based upon previous research into the chest pain unit and cardiac biomarkers, and new opportunities arising from the Lab2Go study and RAPID-CTCA trial
- Venous thromboembolism: based upon previous evidence synthesis work at ScHARR and new opportunities arising from the DiPEP study
- A validation study to investigate the use of predictors in managing anticoagulated head injury patients.
- The development and evaluation of ED-based interventions targeted at the frail elderly population
- The evaluation of Advanced Nurse Practitioner roles in the ED
- The development of routine linked datasets in order to better describe and understand the management of patients accessing the urgent and emergency care system

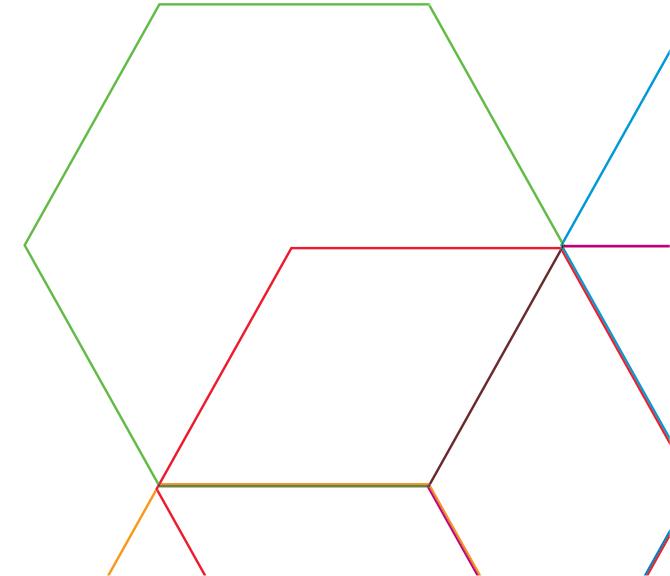
Research Aims and Objectives 2015-18

The aim of the Directorate research strategy 2015-2018 is to secure a sufficient flow of recruitment to portfolio studies to support ongoing development of research activity. The following specific objectives will be set:

- To initiate recruitment to at least 3 new portfolio studies in 2015 and at least 2 new portfolio studies per year thereafter
- To maintain recruitment across our portfolio studies from the end of 2015
- To recruit an average of at least 200 patients per year
- To submit at least 1 funding application to a national funding call per year involving both an Sheffield Teaching Hospital (STH) co-applicant and significant portfolio recruitment at STH
- To achieve STH key performance metrics as outlined in Performance Operating Framework
- To support the appointment of two PhD students within 2014-15 working within the Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) theme Avoiding Attendance and Admission for patients with Long Term Conditions.

Communication and publicity

ScHARR has an impact co-ordinator and established methods for communicating research findings. We have successfully communicated findings from emergency care studies in the past and have received national media attention. We also have well established links with professional organisations and guideline developing bodies to ensure research findings are used to influence practice. Emergency care research often addresses politically sensitive issues, such as waiting times and avoidable mortality, which mean care must be taken when considering our communication plans. The political sensitivity in emergency care research is unlikely to change substantially over the next few years.



Future Directorate aspirations

The Directorate aims to embed research as a core part of clinical activity and use research to improve patient care and staff motivation. Specifically we aim to:

- Ensure recruitment to research is possible for a large proportion of emergency patients by recruiting patients with “core” emergency department presentations (e.g. chest pain, head injury, possible delirium, major trauma) and ensuring research nurse availability during peak hours of activity
- Ensure the success of the Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) theme Avoiding Attendance and Admission for patients with Long Term Conditions throughout Yorkshire and the Humber in developing key collaborations and in outlining the methodological expertise to use large datasets for future research purposes aimed at improving patient outcomes
- Use research to improve the care provided in the Directorate by, for example, improving understanding of departmental organisation
- Use research opportunities to attract and retain high quality medical and nursing staff, and train future emergency medicine clinical academics

Patient & Public Involvement

The Sheffield Emergency Care Forum (SECF) is a patient and public representative group that has been set up to provide the user perspective for emergency care research undertaken in ScHARR. It has undertaken the following activities:

- Involvement in 14 different emergency care research projects with roles ranging from reviewing lay summaries and patient information to involvement in the research as a member of the project management team
- Quarterly meetings at which proposals are reviewed and updates on ongoing research are received
- Organisation of public meetings to promote awareness of emergency care research and contribution to public events arranged by the University
- Production of public information about emergency care research
- Production of top tips for researchers involved in emergency care
- Maintenance of a website (<http://secf.org.uk/wordpress>) for patients, the public and emergency care researchers

