

NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre

NIHR Manchester Clinical Research Facility



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2022-2027

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Foreword

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is vital to the success of the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Manchester Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) and NIHR Manchester Clinical Research Facility (CRF).

We believe EDI should be at the heart of everything we do across both the BRC and CRF because it is so important in supporting us to deliver our vision to provide personalised health and care *for all*.

At the BRC and CRF, we recognise the value of a diverse workforce and how it can lead to greater creativity, advances and, ultimately, to better outcomes for our patients and the communities we serve.

Research improves and saves lives. Our new joint EDI Strategy is our commitment to building a more inclusive and effective research environment, which will drive forward even more improvements in health and care for patients.

We believe that:

- Individuals who feel included and valued are more likely to contribute their ideas and skills to the team. We can help people realise their full potential when they feel part of a team which, in turn, creates a culture of excellence.
- It is important to recognise that when certain groups of people do not feel included, this impacts negatively on the rest of the organisation as we may miss out on their unique perspectives and experiences. We want to ensure that everyone can reach their full potential and contribute to the success of the BRC and CRF.
- Including many different viewpoints in research and patient care will ensure we do not miss any valuable ideas or opportunities. By embracing diversity and creating a culture of inclusivity, we will continually ask new questions so that we can find alternative solutions to the challenges we face.

This is our shared vision and will be delivered through this EDI Strategy. Our EDI strategy has also been developed alongside our Education and Training Strategy and our [Patient and Public Involvement, Engagement and Participation \(PPIEP\) Strategy](#) which was developed by working with our partners Vocal and our Inclusive Research Oversight Board.

Collectively these will help us in creating a more equal, diverse, and inclusive research environment.

By bringing together our skills and people, and by building on the strong foundations of our partner organisations, we know we can achieve greater progress.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Bruce".

Professor Ian Bruce
Director
NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacky Smith".

Professor Jacky Smith
Director
NIHR Manchester Clinical Research Facility

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Introduction

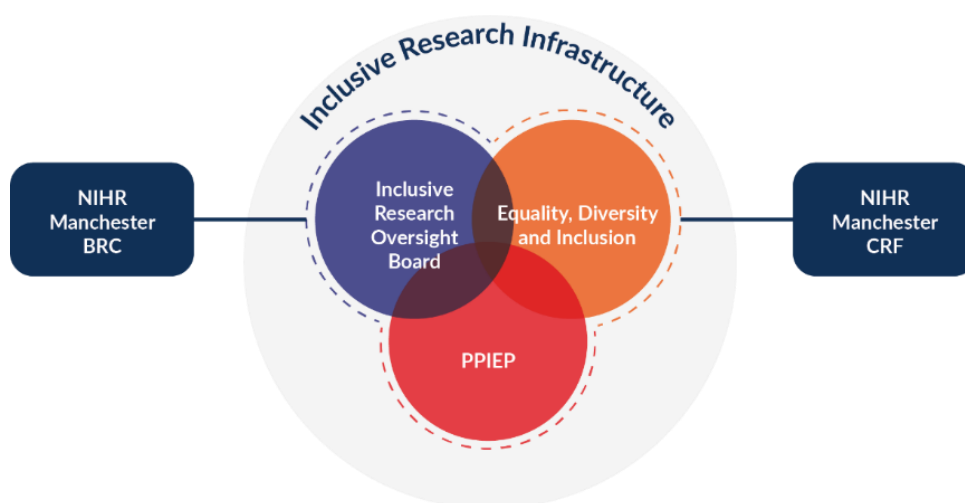
This document outlines a joint EDI strategy between the NIHR Manchester BRC and NIHR Manchester CRF (referred to as 'BRC' and 'CRF') to embed our shared EDI vision within our infrastructures.

To inspire evidence-led Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) practice, supporting a diverse and inclusive workforce to drive improvements in health and care for all.



Development of our EDI Strategy

Our EDI strategy will mainly focus on our **workforce and students**. However, many of the plans in this strategy will be aligned to our BRC and CRF Public Involvement, Engagement and Participation (**PPIEP**) Strategy. **Vocal** and our **Inclusive Research Oversight Board (IROB)** will drive delivery of the PPIEP strategy and guide our work with patients, research participants and communities.



Our EDI Strategy will also be closely linked to the **BRC's Capacity Building Strategy**, through which an ambitious and inclusive programme of training and education for our workforce and students will be delivered.

What we did

Our strategy is built on 3 pillars:



1. Coproduction aims to listen to and act on people's experiences. **We did this by** involving our workforce and stakeholders at all stages of the development of this strategy.



2. Value. By using EDI as a tool to help us achieve our goals, we are more likely to embed EDI into our every-day work. **We did this by** identifying areas of similar focus across the BRC and CRF partner organisations, known as **perspectives**. We then developed an EDI strategy that aims to create improvement within each perspective.



3. Behavioural Equality focuses on evidence-based EDI work. **We did this by** ensuring the development of our strategy considered a range of information sources.

To develop our EDI Strategy, we spoke to almost 100 members of staff across a wide range of roles in the BRC, CRF and partner organisations. We offered virtual or face-to-face, and group or individual interviews to encourage lots of people to get involved in the way that most suited them.

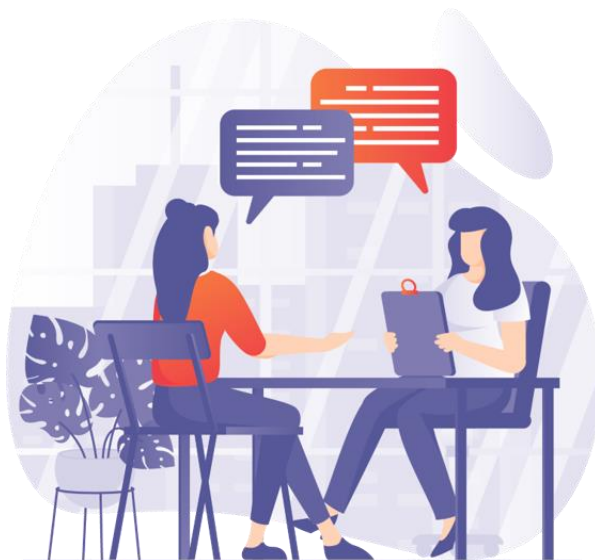
We also reviewed several documents, for example strategies and EDI policies, from across the BRC and CRF and our partner organisations.

97

 Ninety-seven individuals were engaged from the BRC and CRF infrastructure partner organisations.

Interviewees included:

- 14** Leaders across BRC and CRF partner organisations Research and Innovation (R&I)
- 8** Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Leads from across partner organisations
- 25** Senior Leadership Team members from across BRC and CRF infrastructures (defined as members of Executive Committees)
- 5** BRC and CRF Leads (Directors, Operations)
- 45** From the wider BRC and CRF teams



What we found

The interviews with our BRC and CRF teams highlighted the following themes:

- Culture - the environments and atmosphere of our partner organisations
- Structure - the internal systems and supporting structures within our partner organisations
- Communication - how information is shared across the BRC and CRF and our partner organisations
- EDI implementation - carrying out EDI work in the BRC and CRF and our partner organisations

We found that having several partner organisations across the BRC and CRF provided significant benefits, including diverse experiences, expertise and knowledge. However, across our partner organisations EDI maturity, initiatives and expertise were at different stages - some were more developed and embedded, whereas others were in earlier phases.

We also found that a significant amount of work has already been undertaken around EDI with our patients and the public across all our partner organisations, supported by **Vocal**. This confirms that work focusing on our workforce, through this new joint EDI Strategy, would benefit from a similar focus. Further information on our work with patients and the public can be found in our **PPIEP strategy**.

Our Strategy

From the interviews and information gathered, we found broadly similar strategic ambitions which could be grouped under the following four **perspectives**:



People



Process



Education &
Training



Legacy

To create our EDI **ambitions**, we took the four perspectives and linked those to the themes we identified from the interviews with our BRC and CRF teams. To achieve these ambitions, we have developed a series of **objectives** that will be delivered in the short-, medium- and long- term and monitored through our governance structures.

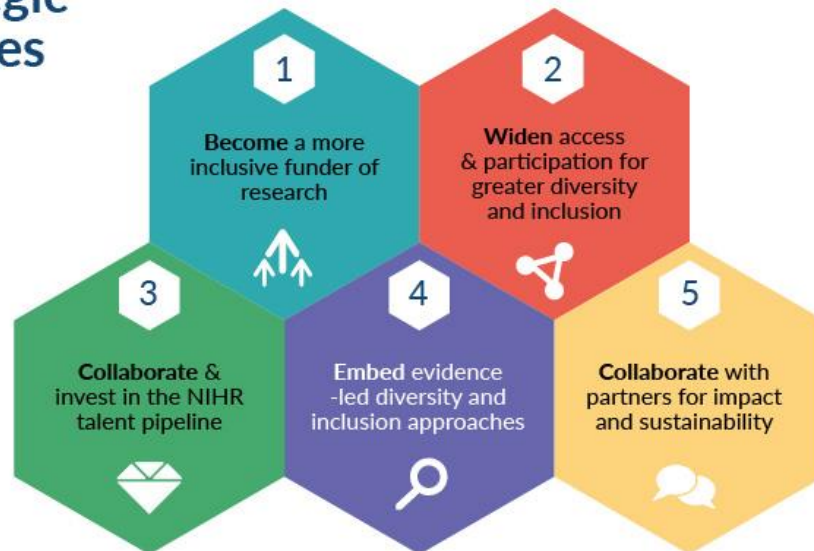
Within each objective we have created a series of proposed actions; these can be found in the actions plans on pages 8 – 11 and will evolve and be refreshed over time, following learnings from the implementation of our short-term objectives.

It is important to recognise that implementing change across so many organisations may be challenging due to different organisational processes. Therefore, we are targeting some of our activities within core areas of the BRC and CRF that we feel will deliver the most impact.

NIHR EDI Strategy Alignment

Our strategy relates closely to the five themes that the [NIHR EDI Strategy \(2022 - 2027\)](#) centres around.

Five Strategic Themes



1. Become a more inclusive funder. We aim to represent and inspire our communities to encourage engagement, enabling us to provide a more inclusive service.

2. Widening access and participation for greater diversity and inclusion. We want to represent and inspire our communities to encourage engagement, greater access and participation to enhance the delivery of research.

3. Improve and invest in the NIHR talent pipeline. Our ambitions around inclusive cultures and processes are key to improving diverse recruitment, retention, and career progression within the BRC and CRF.



4. Embed evidence-led diversity and inclusion approaches. Our central pillars of coproduction, value and behavioural equality support an evidence-led approach.

5. Collaborate with partners for impact and sustainability. The delivery of our strategy is built around working together across our partner organisations, building on existing good practice and promoting delivery of new initiatives. Promoting what is already working well will help us to maintain this good work and help us to make further advances.

Supporting the NIHR EDI strategic aims is a priority for us. In the action plans (on pages 8 - 11) we have also shown how our objectives map to these.

Action Plans

Perspective & Ambition	Short Term Objectives (1-2 years)	Medium Term Objectives (2-4 years)	Long Term Objectives (4-5 years)
<p>People</p>  <p>Foster a culture with the BRC and CRF that prides itself on its commitment to proactive inclusion</p> <p>NIHR Objectives</p>   	<p>1: Embed proactive inclusion in BRC and CRF culture</p> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete mapping of Race Equality Framework priorities with delivery action plan developed. Disseminate quarterly EDI-focused newsletter across our partner organisations. At least 4 opportunities to celebrate diversity per year. 20% increase per year in inclusive research training completion. 100% of BRC/CRF-funded workforce receive standardised BRC/CRF induction. 100% BRC/CRF core workforce have EDI objective within appraisal. <p><i>Lead: BRC and SRF SLT</i></p>	<p>2: Understand the demographics of our people</p> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design tools to collect diversity data about our workforce and students. Pilot the collection of diversity data for our workforce and students. Collect the diversity data of our new starters and leavers as standard, alongside qualitative exit interview information. <p><i>Lead: IROB and BRC/CRF Data Team</i></p>	
	<p>3: Ensure communications are inclusive for all</p> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a communications working group with diverse representation. Roll out communications survey to all BRC and CRF workforce to review our current communications approaches. Use feedback from this survey to develop an inclusive and accessible communications plan. Present EDI strategy in variety of formats. Review accessibility and update BRC and CRF websites. Create accessible summaries of our Annual Reports and impact cases plus research outputs (at least 10 per year – BRC only). <p><i>Lead: BRC/CRF Communications Team</i></p>	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the collection of diversity data for our workforce and students with a target of 80% uptake by 2027. Pilot the collection of diversity data for research participants across the BRC and CRF. Compare workforce diversity data with that of our research participants. Compare baseline and Year 5 data to assess impact of our actions on the diversity of our workforce and student population over time. 	

Perspective & Ambition	Short Term Objective (1-2 years)	Medium Term Objective (2-4 years)	Long Term Objective (4-5 years)	
<p>Process</p>  <p>Create processes and practice that enable BRC and CRF workforce and student population to thrive</p> <p>NIHR Objectives</p> 	<p>4: Ensure the BRC and CRF EDI strategy is embedded in our standard processes</p> <p><i>Actions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint EDI Lead and identify EDI team with dedicated resource (end of Year 1). • Set up an EDI working group with diverse representation (end of Year 1). • Embed EDI strategy oversight into governance structures with regular review of progress • Create a registry of individuals across the BRC and CRF partner organisations trained to undertake equality impact assessments (EIA). • Develop a clear pathway of EIA process documented centrally within the case study library. • Undertake review of progress within the planned BRC and CRF mid-term reviews (end of Year 2). <p><i>Lead: BRC and SLT EDI</i></p>	<p>5: Ensure recruitment, retention and progression of BRC and CRF workforce and students is equitable</p> <p><i>Actions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the diversity of our BRC and CRF governance structures with action plan to address findings utilising, where applicable, existing initiatives such as the NIHR Race Equality Framework actions for change. • Standardise all BRC and CRF core role adverts to ensure accessibility and inclusivity (end of Year 2). • Ensure diverse panels and develop guidance for inclusive questions for all BRC and CRF core role interviews (end of Year 2). • Train recruiting managers in inclusive recruitment practice. • Collect data regarding interest, application, interview and success rates across advertised core roles and studentships (end of Year 4). <p><i>Lead: BRC & CRF SLT & HR Teams</i></p>		
	<p>6: Develop and maintain an evidence-led EDI case study library</p>			
	<p><i>Actions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design case-study template and identify accessible platform for case-study library (end of Year 2). • Create communications plan for launch and use of case study library. • Identify case studies with the addition of at least one case study per year from each partner. • At least one case study to be submitted to NIHR as an impact case, promoted across BRC and CRF. • At least one case study submitted as an abstract to the UKCRF Network conference in year 3 (CRF only) and any BRC-relevant conferences. 	<p><i>Actions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit at least one case study to a peer-reviewed journal. • Commitment of resource to ensure library remains up-to-date, relevant and accessible. • Share library with other NIHR infrastructure within GM. • Share with other partners such as the NWCRF Alliance (CRF only) and Northern BRCs (BRC only). 		
<p><i>Lead: BRC & CRF SLT EDI Teams</i></p>				

Perspective & Ambition

Education & Training



Ensure training and development opportunities are accessible and attractive to all



Short Term Objective (1-2 years)

7: Ensure fair and equitable access to opportunities to build capacity in experimental medicine

- Actions**
- Review of BRC and CRF training schemes by EDI working group to support uptake and equitable access.
 - Initiate placements with NW CRF Alliance to increase capacity in EM (CRF only).
 - Develop a careers tracker to capture career journeys and training (BRC only).
 - Pilot a mentorship and buddying programme for PhD students and core staff team (end of Year 2).
 - Promote local and national schemes that focus on under-represented groups at different career stages e.g. HDRUK Black Internship Scheme, Associate PI scheme.

Lead: BRC and CRF Training Leads

Medium Term Objective (2-4 years)

8: Develop an EDI training offer that supports our EDI ambitions

- Actions**
- Review training needs and membership of EDI working group to support the ongoing delivery of our EDI strategy, allocating resource as required.
 - Work with the EDI working group and capacity building teams to roll out an EDI training offer aligned to roles and responsibilities (end of Year 3).
 - Offer bitesize EDI training opportunities to be shared with BRC and CRF workforce at relevant meetings and at other times when groups of staff are convening e.g., nurses huddle (CRF only).
 - Collect feedback on EDI training offer and demonstrate a year on year 10% increase in uptake of EDI training, relevant to role (end of Year 4).
 - Monitor EDI training compliance in BRC/CRF core workforce via annual appraisals.

Lead: BRC and CRF EDI Leads and SLT

Long Term Objective (4-5 years)

9: Ensure the process to access all types of training is fair and equitable

- Actions**
- Include the collection of diversity data within BRC and CRF training feedback processes to determine who is accessing training.
 - Create a communications plan to support fair and equitable access to training, and to highlight addition of training opportunities.
 - Develop a training matrix (end of Year 3) with the addition of at least 5 training opportunities to the matrix per year.
 - Gather feedback on the accessibility and content within the training matrix and adapt if needed (end of Year 4).

- Actions**
- Share training matrix with other NIHR infrastructure with GM (end of Year 4).
 - Share with other partners such as the North West CRF Alliance (CRF only) and Northern BRCs (BRC only) (end of Year 5).

Lead: BRC and CRF Training Leads and SLT

Perspective & Ambition

Legacy



Bring evidence-led EDI into the spotlight in our BRC and CRF infrastructure; to leave a footprint of positive and impactful change for our workforce, research participants and communities.

NIHR Objectives



Short Term Objective (1-2 years)

10: Prioritise collaborative working

Actions

- Support at least one TeamResearch community workshop to identify and reduce barriers to working across disciplines (*BRC only*).
- Upskill a core group of BRC and CRF workforce as Team Research facilitators.
- All BRC PhD students will have accessed a Team Research session (end of Year 2).
- Develop a publicly accessible Team Research 'toolkit', linked to the BRC and CRF EDI case study library (end of Year 2).
- Disseminate our Team Research work at specialist conferences and journals (at least one per year).
- Showcase examples of good practice and multidisciplinary approaches via a range of communications/blog series and external dissemination to further raise awareness and reputation.

Lead: BRC Team-Research Leads

Medium Term Objective (2-4 years)

11: Ensure inclusive access to funding and support

Actions

- Collect diversity data as part of BRC core funding awards (*BRC only*).
- Ensure diverse funding call review panels and collect diversity data of panels (*BRC only*).
- Collect feedback about the experience of our workforce in accessing core funding awards and impact of the funding (*BRC only*).
- Core funding calls include questions on commitment to EDI within the project plan (end of Year 3).
- Provide inclusive support and guidance to those applying for funding calls through the expertise in the CRF (*CRF only*).
- Demonstrate clear progress towards equity across our funding panels, as well as funded researchers (end of Year 4).

Lead: BRC Strategic Funding Team

Long Term Objective (4-5 years)

12: Embed and promote EDI projects, into the core business of the BRC and CRF

Actions

- Develop a suite of EDI-focused research projects that could be offered as student projects, placements, etc.
- Review funding and resource allocations to direct towards and pump prime EDI projects (at least one per year).
- Build EDI project delivery into business as usual and showcase practice through case studies (at least one per year).
- Ensure that any commitment to workforce development is considered with an EDI lens and use of EIA.

Lead: BRC and CRF EDI Leads and SLT

Next Steps

To deliver on our ambitions we will commit appropriate time and resource. This includes priority actions of appointing an EDI Lead, bringing together an EDI team and establishing an EDI working group. Together they will lead and support our strategy, with support from a diverse membership of Senior Leadership Team (SLT), workforce and students.

We will ensure this strategy is regularly updated in line with any feedback from our stakeholders and learning as we deliver our objectives. Progress of our EDI strategy will be continually reviewed through our inclusive research infrastructure and governance structures and will also in the formal mid-term review scheduled for both the BRC and CRF.

Our Impact

We will measure the impact of our strategy across our four perspectives:



People

We will have developed a more inclusive and diverse workplace. Communication will be more inclusive and proactively considered to increase engagement. We will also collect data, identify barriers, develop action plans, and review progress to improve equity and inclusion for all our workforce, student population and research participants.



Process

We will have developed an evidence-led EDI case study library that highlights EDI work. The library will also create a standardised way of sharing EDI projects and knowledge across our partner organisations. Our aim is that processes across the BRC and CRF will work for everyone.



Education &
Training

We will have developed EDI training that supports our ambitions and will have embedded EDI principles across the BRC and CRF. We will also have ensured that access to all types of training and career opportunities is fair and equitable.



Legacy

We will have created a culture where all team members are encouraged, recognised, acknowledged, and valued. In addition, we will have provided opportunities and resource to undertake EDI projects and build on existing experience and knowledge to create positive change.

The BRC and CRF infrastructures are committed to delivering, reflecting on, and continually evolving this strategy to create a more equal, diverse and inclusive research environment.

As a result, our workforce will feel confident and comfortable in their place of work, and will display attitudes and behaviours that are truly inclusive. Career progression will be fair and equitable, with diversity across all roles. Our diverse workforce and student population will represent our communities, leading to improved access to research opportunities for participants and patients. Our EDI strategy will lead to a richer, more innovative and inclusive research environment, that meets the needs and improves the outcomes of the populations we serve.

Abbreviations

- BRC** - NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre
- CRF** - NIHR Manchester Clinical Research Facility
- EDI** - Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- EM** - Experimental Medicine
- GM** - Greater Manchester
- IROB** - Inclusive Research Oversight Board
- MRI** - Manchester Royal Infirmary
- MFT** - Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust
- NCA** - Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust
- NIHR** - National Institute for Health and Care Research
- NMGH** - North Manchester General Hospital
- PPIEP** - Patient and Public Involvement, Engagement and Participation
- R&I** - Research and Innovation
- RMCH** - Royal Manchester Children's Hospital
- SLT** - Senior Leadership Team
- UoM** - The University of Manchester

Glossary

Experimental Medicine - also known as early phase clinical research, is undertaken in people to better understand the cause of disease and/or test new treatments.

Inclusive Research Oversight Board (IROB) - includes patients, citizens, public health, methodologists and Greater Manchester Integrated Care System. Working with the IROB and informed by NIHR, we will develop ways to capture and understand the demographic diversity of people recruited to BRC and CRF research. This data will inform patient recruitment strategies and priorities.

In-groups and Out-groups - in-groups and out-groups are defined in this document as groups that have access to resource and power and groups that do not have access to resource and power. These groups can be fluid across organisations, but some trends are common, for example out-groups are likely to be covered by a protected characteristic. Out-groups can also be a subset within an organisation that are given less power and decision-making autonomy, for example professional services compared to academic staff.

NIHR Race Equality Framework - brings together patients, the public and research organisations as partners working to understand the needs of Black African-, Asian- and Caribbean-heritage people, overcoming barriers to their participation in research and increasing the number of them directly benefitting from it. The NIHR Race Equality Framework for Public Involvement pilot was sponsored by MFT and resulted in actions for change target initiatives towards workforce diversity, senior organisational allyship and public involvement activities with people with experience of racial inequalities and we have embedded these within our objectives.

Northern BRC Network - the Northern NIHR BRCs (Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield) have many existing areas of collaboration and has established a network to align and promote mutually supportive strategies, seek new opportunities to drive R&I potential across our infrastructures and maximise outputs and opportunities for investment to address health needs of the North of England.

North West CRF Alliance - is a collaboration of the NIHR CRFs in Manchester, Merseyside and Lancashire to coordinate knowledge exchange and optimise research capacity, e.g. training in clinical pharmacology, to underpin the delivery of EM across the North West of England.

Protected Characteristic - in the United Kingdom, the concept of "protected characteristics" refers to a set of personal attributes and characteristics that are protected under the Equality Act 2010. The Act provides legal protection against discrimination and promotes equal opportunities in various areas of society, including employment, education, housing, and the provision of goods and services. The protected characteristics recognised under the Equality Act 2010 are as follows:

1. Age: Protection against discrimination based on a person's age, whether they are younger or older.
2. Disability: Protection against discrimination based on physical or mental disabilities.
3. Gender reassignment: Protection for individuals who have undergone or are undergoing gender reassignment.
4. Marriage and civil partnership: Protection for individuals who are married or in a civil partnership.
5. Pregnancy and maternity: Protection against discrimination based on pregnancy or maternity leave.
6. Race: Protection against discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality, or national origin.
7. Religion or belief: Protection against discrimination based on religious or philosophical beliefs.
8. Sex: Protection against discrimination based on biological sex.
9. Sexual orientation: Protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation.

These protected characteristics are designed to ensure equal treatment and prevent discrimination in various aspects of life. It is important to note that these protections apply to both direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on any of the listed characteristics.

Team Research - the Greater Manchester Team Research community defines Team Research as "a collaborative effort to address a common goal using the strengths and expertise of a diverse team where contributions of all team members are encouraged, acknowledged, recognised and valued." Key features of a team research approach can include multi-disciplinary working, removing hierarchy, and recognising contributions beyond traditional academic roles. Research is enhanced by contributions from researchers, students, skilled specialists, such as project managers and software engineers, the public, academics, and many other stakeholders depending on the research area.

Vocal - by bringing together patients, carers, artists, researchers, scientists and others health professionals to share their views, expertise and lived experiences, Vocal has pioneered a joined-up approach to PPIEP across GM NIHR infrastructure ensuring a collaborative community of practice, economies of scale, and tailored approaches. Vocal's vision is to bring people and health research together for mutual benefit.

Overview of the NIHR Manchester BRC and NIHR Manchester CRF

The NIHR Manchester BRC

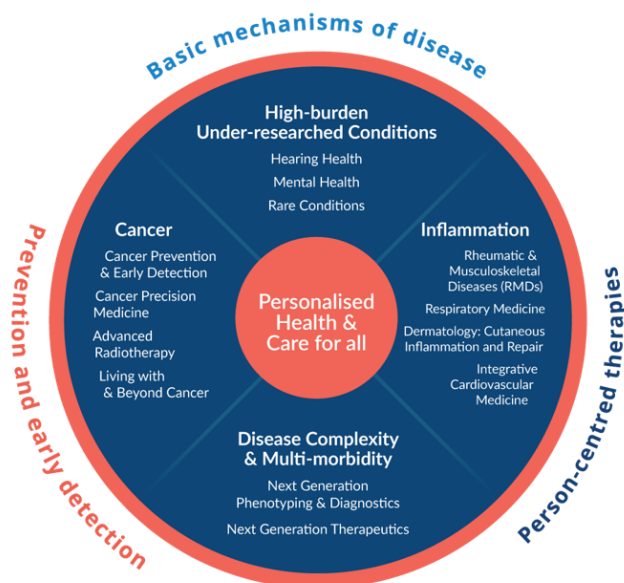
BRCs are collaborations between world-leading universities and NHS organisations which bring together academics and clinicians to translate lab-based scientific breakthroughs into potential new treatments, diagnostics and medical technologies.

At the Manchester BRC we want to drive forward health improvements for all and our research will:

- Understand the illnesses most relevant to the population of our region
- Find new ways to make correct diagnoses and treat disease
- Discover how to prevent ill-health

Our 13 research themes have been split into 4 Clusters:

- **High-burden Under-researched Conditions** - shining a light on neglected areas
- **Inflammation** - a process common to conditions of the joints, chest, heart, blood vessels and skin
- **Disease complexity and multi-morbidity** - using a variety of new methods to better diagnose and treat patients.
- **Cancer** - finding ways to detect cancer early, tailor treatments, improve radiotherapy, and care for those living with and beyond cancer.



The NIHR Manchester CRF

CRFs are purpose-built clinical environments for volunteers and patients taking part in early-phase clinical trials and other experimental medicine (EM) research projects.

At the Manchester CRF we want to help move scientific discoveries from the laboratory into EM research, and to promote research participation for patients of all ages and backgrounds. We have six dedicated research facilities located in hospitals across GM.

At **MFT** we have 4 facilities at:

- MRI
- NMGH
- Wythenshawe Hospital
- RMCH

At **NCA** our facility is located at Salford Royal Hospital.



Our specialised cancer facility is located at **The Christie NHS Foundation Trust**.



Partner Organisations

The BRC and CRF are hosted by MFT and work in partnership with the following organisations to cover some of the most diverse populations in England:

	NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre	NIHR Manchester Clinical Research Facility
	BRC Host	CRF Host
	BRC Partner	CRF User
	BRC Partner	CRF Partner
	BRC Partner	CRF Partner
	BRC Partner	CRF User
	BRC Partner	NWCRF Alliance Member
	BRC Partner	