

National Institute of Health Research

Research is important to make new advances available to patients and to improve the standard of care they receive in the areas of prevention, screening and diagnosis, treatment and quality of life.

In the past, research into particular disorders was chosen by clinicians because it was felt that they had all the experience.

Nowadays it is realised that, actually, patients hold the key in respect of which questions should be asked and there are now various organisations that bring patients and clinicians together to organise research.

The main organisation is The National Institute for Health Research which is funded through the Department of Health to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research. It is a very large organisation heading various other research organisations such as Clinical Research Network (CRN) and the UK Clinical Trials Gateway.

CRN support the set up and delivery of studies and clinical trials within the NHS. They do not fund or commission research but play a key role in delivering studies that have a focus on improving the care and treatment that people receive.

The Metabolic and Endocrine Speciality is one of 30 clinical themes within the CRN that supports the set-up and delivery of clinical research into specific conditions with the aim of improving the care and treatment of people affected by metabolic or endocrine conditions within the NHS.

The CRN work alongside clinicians, commercial companies and patient organisations to provide an infrastructure to deliver research trials.

You can find out about all the different specialities of the CRN by visiting their website: <http://www.crn.nihr.ac.uk/networks/>

If you would like more information on the work of the NIHR Clinical Research Network for Metabolic and Endocrine disorders, you can access their website using the link below:

<http://www.crn.nihr.ac.uk/metabolic/about-metabolic-and-endocrine-disorders/>

Information about what studies and clinical trials are currently running is now more readily available than ever with websites, in many cases, carrying information that is publicly accessible.

To learn more about research, why it matters and how to get involved, the NIHR have a whole section on this topic:

<http://www.nihr.ac.uk/get-involved/research-matters.htm>

If you or your clinician are interested in finding information about a trial that is running in the UK now, you can access this information by going to The UK Clinical Trials Gateway (UKCTG) and search a number of different international trial registries. If the trial is still recruiting participants and you are interested in joining the trial, your doctor can make contact with the researchers for you.

To access the UK Clinical Trials Gateway: <http://www.ukctg.nihr.ac.uk/>

You can also find a research study by visiting the NIHR website itself:

<http://www.crn.nihr.ac.uk/metabolic/pcpie/>

Here are some other organisations that come under the NIHR where you can get more information about taking part in research:

INVOLVE has an excellent involvement in research jargon buster which will help you understand more about research: www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/jargon-buster/

People in Research is a resource where people can get involved in research and researchers can advertise opportunities to get involved in research:

www.peopleinresearch.org

NIHR Journals Library is an open access library with the results of open access research: <http://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/>

InvoDIRECT is an online directory of networks, groups and organisations that support active public involvement in research:

www.invo.org.uk/find-out-more/invodirect

It is very important that patients are involved in research, not only as participants, and this is something that Thyroid UK strongly advocates as it is the only way the proper research questions will be asked and answered.

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