

Newsletter

2ND EDITION
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Queen Mary University of London



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Barts CTU
Barts Clinical Trials Unit



'What a fantastic start to the year, with new year honours recognition for Peter and Jack, founder members of Barts CTU! Thank you to all our contributors, especially PPIE members Samarajit and Catherine for their insights. We spotlight recent public engagement events, publications, blogs and links to upcoming clinical trial regulatory changes for your interest below.'

-Barts CTU Director, Professor Rhian Gabe

GOOD NEWS STORIES

PROTECT-C

It's exciting to share that PROTECT-C, a Barts CTU trial, led by Professor Ranjit Manchanda, has been selected for the NHS DigiTrials initiative. This nationwide study aims to recruit tens of thousands of volunteers over the next two years to improve cancer diagnosis and treatment.

PROTECT-C offers genetic testing to individuals- regardless of their cancer history to identify genetic risks for breast, ovarian, bowel, or womb cancer. Those at increased risk can access NHS support, including early screening, preventive medication, or surgery, potentially saving lives.

Funded by Yorkshire Cancer Research, this groundbreaking study is making a real impact.

Congratulations to Professor Ranjit Manchanda and the PROTECT-C Team!

Learn more and sign up for updates below:
PROTECT-C
NHS DigiTrials





We are delighted to congratulate Emeritus Professor Sir Jack Cuzick on receiving a Knighthood for his outstanding contributions to epidemiology. His groundbreaking IBIS trials were among the first conducted by Cancer Research UK Cancer Prevention Trials Unit (CPTU), helping to lay the foundation for Barts Clinical Trials Unit.

We also extend our warmest congratulations to Professor Peter Sasieni, who has been awarded a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) for his exceptional work in cancer early detection and prevention.

These well-deserved honours recognise their dedication and lasting impact in the field.

Read more here

IN THE MEDIA

Two of our prostate cancer detection trials have been featured in the media:

TRANSFORM – A £42M trial exploring prostate cancer screening technologies, highlighted in a two page spread in The Times on 2nd February.

AVIDITY – A £1.9M study on prostate- specific membrane antigen (PSMA) PET imaging for high-risk prostate cancer, featured on March 11th in The Times and myScience.
PSMA PET scans use a radioactive tracer to detect prostate cancer more precisely, helping determine if it has spread or recurred. These studies are driving advancements in early detection and treatment.

New scanning technology trialled for prostate cancer patients | news.myScience / news / science wire

PROSTATE CANCER UK TRANSFORM

AVIDITY

THE FOCUS

Spotlight Publication



Prospective Evaluation of Lung Cancer Screening Eligibility Criteria and Lung Cancer Detection in the Yorkshire Lung Screening Trial - Journal of Thoracic Oncology.

This evaluation by Professor Rhian Gabe and Daniel Vulkan from Barts CTU and the wider Yorkshire Lung Screening Team (YLST), supports the continued use of risk prediction model-based criteria (Prostate, Lung, Colorectal, and Ovarian- PLCO) and the Liverpool Lung Project- LLP) model- in the rollout of lung cancer screening across the UK. These models help identify high-risk individuals more effectively, ensuring early detection and improved outcomes.

HIGHLIGHTS

A message from the Barts CTU Director

GOOD NEWS STORIES:
PROTECT-C- NHS DigiTrials

Recognition in The King's New Year Honours list 2025

IN THE MEDIA:
TRANSFORM & AVIDITY trials

THE FOCUS:
Spotlight Publication

Targeted Trials to Reduce Research Waste

VALUED VOICES:
Samarajit and Catherine

STAYING AHEAD IN CLINICAL RESEARCH:
Key updates from the MHRA GCP Symposia

PATIENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT (PPIE):
Connecting with the community

NEWS FROM OUR SUBUNITS:
MSK BRC PPIE meeting update

VALUED VOICES

In this edition, we introduce you to some of the remarkable individuals who help ensure our work remains relevant and impactful—our dedicated PPIE members. Join us as we get to know Samarajit and Catherine, who share their experiences of being part of our diverse PPIE community.

Samarajit Roy

What motivated you to become a PPIE member?

From 1982 to 1986, I served as an elected councillor for the London Borough of Islington. During this time, the Camden and Islington Health Authority needed a public board member, marking the start of my PPI involvement through the Community Health Council (CHC). I also founded the Islington Asian Centre, which was supported by Islington Council and provided vital community services. After relocating to Lambeth in 1987, I was recommended by the Secretary of State to join the Lambeth and Southwark CHC. Over the years, I have remained deeply involved and now proudly hold the title of the UK's longest-serving PPI member.

What activities are you involved in?

I actively participate in five National Institute of Health and Care Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaborations (ARC) forums, and have detailed knowledge of cancer, heart disease, rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, mental health, and paediatrics. As an NIHR external reviewer, my evaluations have helped professors, PhD students and other researchers in receiving grant funding.

What has been the most rewarding part of your experience?

My reviews helped to secure a significant grant for one professor who received £400,000.

What challenges have you faced?

The amount of work involved can be very time consuming requiring me to do extensive reading and preparation for meetings. Some authorities offer payment for our time.

How do your contributions make a difference?

My contributions can make a significant difference in the diagnosis and design of medicines. My experience and knowledge can also help to ensure people from all backgrounds are included in medical research.

What advice would you give to others considering this role?

Be prepared to spend a significant time carrying out this role. Engage with diverse communities, and contribute without financial expectations. You may be asked to visit some sites like hospitals, clinics, and care homes.

Catherine Scott

What motivated you to become a PPIE member?

To be involved in planning new research aims as a member of the public and as a potential patient.

What kind of activities are you involved in as part of this role?

Being part of a workshop for Protect-C to explore and use a new app and give feedback upon it during the workshop.

What has been the most rewarding part of your experience?

Listening to other women's perspectives and personal experiences in the workshop.

What challenges have you faced in this role?

Only geographical, I live 3 hours from London.

How do you think your contributions make a difference?

I hope perhaps one or two threads I contributed overlapped with other people's experiences to consolidate a point of view or could even have been unique and considered valid?

What advice would you give to other people considering a similar role?

Do it, you won't regret it.



Targeted Trials to Reduce Research Waste

Dr. Adam Brentnall, a statistician at Barts CTU, has written a blog post based on a recent publication (https://academic.oup.com/jnci/article/117/3/450/7821193).

He describes why it is critical to get study design right for cancer screening trials, and how the use of stored samples may lead to more efficient, smaller trials.

➡ Read the blog post: **Here**

STAYING AHEAD IN CLINICAL RESEARCH

Nadia Haidar, Quality Assurance Manager at Barts CTU, recently attended the MHRA Good Clinical and Laboratory Practice (GCP) Symposia, where experts shared updates on upcoming clinical trial regulations.

Key topics included the Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Regulations 2024, ICH E6 (R3) guidelines, safety reporting, data governance, and investigator/sponsor roles. A major focus was the shift to a balanced, risk-based approach for greater efficiency and patient safety. Nadia's insights support our commitment to high-quality, compliant research.

For more information, explore the helpful links below.

➡ MHRA Inspectorate blog
➡ MedRegs blog
➡ Good Clinical Practice for Clinical Trials

Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

PATIENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT (PPIE)

PPIE Coordinator Cherrelle Salmon and Trial Manager Tia Wenham recently joined a Women's Health Event by Flourishing Communities, a collaboration of local organisations. They discussed health research, PPIE, and the PROTECT-C trial on genetic cancer risk testing, sparking strong interest with 20+ sign-ups.



Cherrelle also attended the Winter Wellbeing Event at Tower Hamlets Town Hall, engaging with local health services and meeting Mayor Lutfur Rahman, who showed strong support for Queen Mary's research and future collaborations.



➡ About Flourishing Communities: THCVS Health & Wellbeing Bulletin

EMR Centre for Experimental Medicine & Rheumatology

NEWS FROM OUR SUB- UNITS

Musculoskeletal Biomedical Research Centre PPIE Meeting – A Successful Start!

The first MSK BRC PPIE meeting on 7th March was a great success, with 7 speakers and 11 patients fostering meaningful discussions. Experts from Experimental Medicine and Rheumatology (EMR) and Bone & Joint Health (BJH) shared research insights, while patient representatives Anne Gadsden and Smarajit Roy provided key updates. Patients engaged actively, advising on research clarity, relevance, and dissemination.

'A huge thank you to all the EMR & BJH staff and David Collier and Abida Firdaws from the Central BRC PPIE committee for their support in organising this meeting. We look forward to building on this momentum and enhancing engagement in future sessions!'
- Ayat Azhar, Clinical Trials Practitioner

Want to be featured in our next Newsletter?

Contact our PPIE Coordinator

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UKCRC Registered Clinical Trials Units

barts CHARITY