

Clinical research facility gives over 500 patients hope in its first year

Summary

ULHT's clinical research facility at Pilgrim Hospital recently celebrated its first birthday and the news it has recruited more than 500 patients onto trials over the last year.

Clinical research in Lincolnshire's hospitals has gone from strength to strength in recent years. Last year across the Trust, almost 2,000 people took part in 198 trials, including the 541 patients at the Boston clinical research facility who say following trails, they have had a second chance at life.

It has been our busiest year on record thanks to all of the hard work from our teams at Lincoln, Grantham and Boston. The new facility has enabled us to offer trials to even more patients, but without our teams across all sites none of this would be possible.

Participating in clinical research helps to detect health problems earlier, makes treatments more effective, helps to reduce symptoms and side effects, and improves a patient's quality of life. The patients are also closely involved in their care and treatments. Research also benefits ULHT staff too by exposing them to the latest thinking in healthcare and development opportunities.

Areas of current research include oncology, haematology, stroke, cardiology, paediatrics, dermatology, diabetes, midwifery, ophthalmology, respiratory, anaesthesia, general surgery, gastroenterology, and orthopaedics.

Patients say the opportunity to try pioneering treatments has given them hope and a personal support network. Grandmother of two Linda Storr has just returned from a family holiday to the Lake District where she climbed four of the highest mountains.

She was diagnosed with a type of blood cancer and was having a really bad reaction to the conventional treatments. Linda says there is no way she could have climbed the mountains before her drug trial. Thanks to the support of the Lincolnshire clinical research facility at Boston, Linda says she got her life back

Hearing stories like Linda's reminds us of how important our work is and the difference we can make to people's lives.

The team has also commissioned a fun cartoon to help spread awareness of its vital work: <https://www.ulh.nhs.uk/about/training-and-research/clinical-research-facility/>

Next steps

We are now planning to do more of our own research, as well as being a centre for national trials and we are also looking at taking part in some phase one trials. These are trials when potential new medicines are usually given to humans for the first time.

Research will be a key focus of the emerging national centre for rural health and care. This work is progressing well. A project team lead has now been appointed and we are pursuing partnerships with third party organisations to launch the centre next year.