



Satbir Saggu

Research Programme Manager

“What we do makes a difference.”

What is your job title, what does it involve day-to-day and how long have you been working in that role and/or at the Trust?

I am relatively new to the Trust – I started in post at the beginning of February this year. However, I've been involved in NHS research for 12 years. I'm responsible for managing a team of researchers who deliver research projects within the Trust. These studies are generally formulated by collaboration between academic or clinicians. The type of research that we get involved in varies vastly, for example, we have simple studies that may ask service users to complete a questionnaire about their mental health condition. These types of projects are referred to as observational studies, as they do not require the administration of an intervention. Other projects, called interventional studies, can involve the administration of a clinical trial medicine. Achieving the right mix of studies that produce meaningful results for both our clinicians and service users is a critical component of my role as research programme manager.

Why did you choose to work for the NHS?

My primary driver for joining the NHS was being able to contribute to the care of patients. Specifically, being a part of improving health outcomes for patients, through the development of new treatments and patient pathways.

What's your favourite part about your job?

Sharing results from research projects, particularly when they provide evidence to shape or improve practice. Research in the NHS can result in new medications, improved patient pathways, better health outcomes and increased organisational efficiencies. Having an opportunity to be involved in this process has, and will continue, to drive my career in research.

What's the most challenging part about your job?

The most challenging aspect of my role is making sure that research projects within the Trust achieve recruitment targets, and more importantly, that the data collected during the process is of a high quality. We currently have 24 active projects within the Trust across a number of conditions, which include anxiety, depression, psychosis and dementia. These projects can entail delivery of an investigational drug, completion of questions, interviews, undertaking interventions and recording observations. The studies can involve service users, carers and staff.

Tell us about:

a time you were really proud of your work

In a previous role in the NHS, I managed a project which examined the drivers of cost efficiency in a community hospital setting. This was an innovative piece of research that directly shaped practice. We developed a toolkit about services and methods of delivery that could be used by commissioners in their decision-making. [Further information about this research can be found online.](#)

your fondest memory of working at the Trust

Recently, a researcher within the team received positive feedback from a trial participant. The service user was grateful for being given the opportunity for being involved in the trial. This will remain a fond memory for me as it is a clear demonstration that service users value being involved in research and what we do makes a difference to individuals and the wider public.

What do our values of integrity, simplicity and caring mean to you? How do you show these values in the work that you do?

Integrity is being open, honest and inclusive with people from all communities and backgrounds through allowing equal access. This is a central value to the Research and Development Team's work as we offer opportunities of involvement in research as widely as possible. Simplicity is making sure that information is presented in a way that is easily understood. Information that is used and given, by the research team to participants, is delivered in a clear and simple manner. This limits the chance for misunderstanding and results in participants making informed decisions about research involvement. Caring is being compassionate and accommodating of service user, carer, and staff circumstances. As researchers we adapt our communication to each person that we communicate with.

What message would you give to inspire the future NHS workforce in your area of work or in general?

Research is integral to the continued development of new treatments, medications, patient pathways and methods of working. The NHS mandate sets out a need to 'promote and support participation by NHS organisations, patients and carers in research funded both by commercial and non-commercial organisations, so that the NHS supports and harnesses the best research and innovations and becomes the research partner of choice'.

A study, published in 2015, showed that patients cared for in research-active Trusts have better outcomes. The results were published in an international, peer-reviewed journal and demonstrated a direct association between [higher levels of research activity and lower rates of patient mortality](#) following emergency admissions.

How has the NHS made a difference to you/how have you seen the NHS help people?

Making a difference and contributing to the health of people indirectly through research, continues to drive my career in the NHS. It has allowed me the opportunity to develop both professionally and personally. I believe that my experiences of working in the NHS have improved my communication skills and have resulted in me communicating with more compassion and empathy.