



Clinical Infection Research Group
Edinburgh

— ANNUAL REPORT —
— AUGUST 2025-2026 —

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ABBREVIATIONS

CIRG	Clinical Infection Research Group
RIDU	Regional Infectious Diseases Unit
ART	Anti-retroviral therapy
AMR	Antimicrobial Resistance
EID	Edinburgh Infectious Diseases
PI	Principal Investigator
NRS	NHS Research Scotland
NIHR	National Institute of Health Research
CRF	Clinical Research Facilities
RIE	Royal Infirmary Edinburgh
CSHC	Chalmers Sexual Health Centre
SJH	St John's Hospital
WGH	Western General Hospital
CRDC	Clinical Research Delivery Center

****Please note there are links to interesting papers and websites throughout this report.
Links are highlighted in a different colour of text****

2025 – 2026 Summary

The Clinical Infection Research Group (CIRG) has continued to grow and strengthen over 2025-2026, now fully settled in our new premises of Ward 22 at the Western General Hospital. We are utilising our new facilities exceptionally well particularly during high volume recruitment into vaccine studies over the autumn and winter period. We are delighted to share premises with the newly created [Commercial Research Delivery Team](#) providing opportunities for mutual support and collaboration.

CIRG continues to contribute to a number of longer-term impactful international clinical trials which evolve depending on the relevant questions for the particular conditions they are addressing. These include:

- **SNAP** (PI Rebecca Sutherland) addresses aspects of the management of *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteraemia (SAB), recently publishing pivotal findings in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) and [Lancet](#). CIRG member and CSO clinical lecturer Clark Russell is leading a [SNAP substudy](#) exploring trial outcomes in reproducible SAB clinical syndromes.
- **Recovery** (PI Oliver Koch), originally set up during COVID which now investigates essential questions relating to influenza and community acquired pneumonia including investigating the efficacy of immunomodulation.

Harnessing the power of the immune system is also being explored in two novel HIV trials CIRG has recruited to; **RIO** (PI Rebecca Sutherland) and **STRIVE** (PI Matt Adam) with the results of RIO recently published in [Lancet HIV](#) and Gilead Gilead trialling the broadly neutralising Abs with long acting injectables as a novel mechanism for controlling HIV for further trials. Our vaccine work continues as a strong backbone of CIRG's activity and through involvement in surveillance studies we are contributing to national and international networks relating to respiratory viruses, imported diseases and HIV. **id:Drive** (PI Oliver Koch), a multi-country, multi-centre, hospital-based surveillance study of viral respiratory pathogens, was one of the top recruiters in the last year.

CIRG is a valued member of [Edinburgh University's Infectious Diseases network](#), with representation on the executive committee and the newly launched [Pandemic Research Forum and Antimicrobial Resistance Forum](#). CIRG members have further broad collaborations within the University of Edinburgh some of which are detailed below.

From a staffing perspective, we sadly say goodbye and thank you to Katherine Roberts, our Research Fellow for 2025–26, and welcome Alice Robinson into this role. We were also pleased to welcome Yvonne Logan Research Nurse and Michael Bulman admin support in December 2025.

In 2025-26 CIRG has delivered high quality research, strengthened collaborative partnerships, and contributed to advances in infection prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. We look forward to building on these achievements in the year ahead with our pipeline that includes further innovative and impactful studies.

Meghan Perry - CIRG Co-Chair and PI

Amy Shepherd - CIRG Co-Chair and Lead Research Nurse



Team Objectives

- Grow & develop research capacity within infection medicine specialities
- Maximise synergies between the NHS, academia and industries, fostering joint research with universities and companies within the UK and internationally
- Identify priority areas for research, building on existing strengths and future ambitions

Student
Nurse Hub



Publications from
CIRG Members



17
active studies



CiRG

Clinical Infection
Research Group
Edinburgh

Volunteer
Register



NRS Clinician
Sessions



CIRG funding
distributed



Active Studies

Over the past year, the team have facilitated 17 studies, including 4 new studies, have a further 4 currently in set up and 12 in the pipeline.

The team have been incredibly busy managing to recruit over 900 participants in the last 12 months to both observational studies and interventional studies. In our portfolio, we have a wide range of studies in both categories, each with their own challenges. Our observational studies tend to require work in the background routinely collecting and entering huge amounts of data, while interventional studies require higher volumes of patient facing visits and have more intense protocols to support the participants through the trial.

This winter season, we ran two more high volume short recruitment vaccine studies in parallel. During this time the team recruited 120 participants whilst carrying out follow up visits with 80 participants from last year's vaccine trials and two surveillance studies which peak in the winter months.



Anchor

Anchor is a phase III study to evaluate the safety and efficacy of CD388, a novel long-acting antiviral conjugate, for the prevention of influenza in Adults and Adolescents at Higher Risk of Developing Influenza Complications. The drug will be compared with a placebo to evaluate if it is more effective at preventing people from developing the flu with symptoms.

PI: Dr Oliver Koch



CPA : MR907-2502 Study

Chronic Pulmonary Aspergillosis (CPA) is a potentially long term, life-threatening infection of the lungs caused by a fungus known as Aspergillus. The MR907-2502 study aims to investigate whether six months of Rezafungin treatment is effective and safe in patients with CPA who have limited other treatment options available.

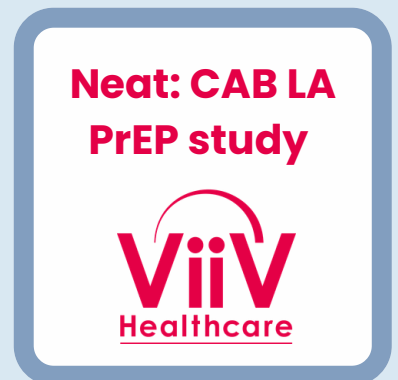
PI: Dr Iain Page



Neat: CAB LA PrEP study

This is an observational study which aims to gather information about individuals who use CAB (Cabotegravir) LA (Long-Acting) injections as PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) to prevent contraction of HIV. It aims to collect information about the individuals who are initiating CAB LA PrEP to assess the usage patterns, adherence, effectiveness, safety and resistance in practice.

PI: Dr Daniel Clutterbuck



NOVA

The NOVA 301 trial is a phase III, double-blinded trial which investigating the safety and efficacy of a vaccine to protect against the symptoms of Norovirus. Norovirus spreads easily, particularly in care homes and schools, but currently there are no vaccines licenced for use.

PI: Dr Oliver Koch



Recovery

The RECOVERY trial is the world's largest clinical trial into treatments for COVID-19. It was founded by UK research and Innovation (UKRI)'s Medical Research Council (MRC) and the NIHR. RECOVERY has now evolved to identify treatments that may be beneficial for people hospitalised with suspected, or confirmed, flu or community acquired pneumonia.

PI: Dr Oliver Koch

RECOVERY
Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 Therapy



Restorative 303

Restorative303 is a double blind, randomised trial investigating whether a medication called VE303 is safe and effective in preventing recurring Clostridioides difficile Infection (CDI). CDI is a common healthcare-associated infection which can become more challenging to treat with each recurrence.

PI: Dr Meghan Perry

RESTORATIVE303
PHASE 3 STUDY FOR PREVENTION OF RECURRENT CDI



SNAP

SNAP aims to improve treatment outcomes for patients with Staphylococcus aureus bloodstream (SAB) infections. Their adaptive platform trial set-up allows them to simultaneously address multiple questions in the management of SAB: different intravenous therapies, adjudicative treatments, and timing of the IV to oral switch.

PI: Dr Rebecca Sutherland



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

UCL

Strive

Strive is a open-label dose-escalation Phase 1/2 first-in-human study in HLA-A*02:01-positive adults with chronic HIV infection, who are virologically suppressed, & on ART. It will evaluate the safety, tolerability, PK, and anti-HIV activity of IMCM113V - an immune-mobilising monoclonal T cell receptor against viruses (ImmTAV®). It is run in collaboration with the phase I accredited Edinburgh CRF.

PI: Dr Matthew Adam

STRIVE
Soluble T cell Receptors
In Viral Eradication

IMMUNOCORE

Cascade

Cascade is a mixed methods observational study exploring the management of the current HIV epidemic in Europe; collecting important insights from HIV sero converter cohorts. The main aim is to explore viral and host characteristics, measure the outcomes of individuals who have recently acquired HIV 1 in Europe, and to understand their experiences and needs.

PI: Dr Claire Mackintosh



Coral

CORAL is a non-interventional study to characterise the real-world implementation, roll out, safety and patient experience of the long-acting injectable HIV treatment regimen of 2-monthly cabotegravir and rilpivirine.

PI: Dr Daniel Clutterbuck



EuroSIDA

The EuroSIDA study is a prospective observational cohort study following the long-term clinical prognosis for the general population of HIV-infected patients living in Europe and aiming to assess the impact of anti-retroviral drugs on the long-term prognosis for these patients.

PI: Dr Claire Mackintosh



Fortress

Fortress is an observational registry to evaluate the clinical outcome and safety of the treatment of severely infected patients with intravenous fosfomycin. The registry aims to obtain more information on the use of fosfomycin treatment in clinical practice and use this information to contribute to the knowledge we already have about this antibiotic.

PI: Dr Simon Dewar



FungiScope

FungiScope is a Global Fungal Infection Registry which aims to overcome the lack of knowledge on epidemiology, clinical course, and molecular characteristics of invasive infections due to emerging fungal pathogens, in order to develop evidence-based diagnostic and therapeutic recommendations.

PI: Dr Simon Dewar



Geosentinel

GeoSentinel is an international network of clinics and healthcare providers dedicated to monitoring infectious diseases and other travel-related health issues among international travellers and migrants which have the potential to have a global impact.

PI: Dr Oliver Koch



id.Drive

id.DRIVE is a non-interventional multi-country, multi-centre, hospital-based surveillance study of viral respiratory pathogens in adults hospitalised for SARI. The study is designed to monitor the burden of disease of multiple viral respiratory pathogens and to study preparedness for future impact and effectiveness studies.

PI: Dr Oliver Koch



PrePare

The PrEPaRe study, part of the RESPOND network, is an observational study collecting individual data on people newly diagnosed with HIV, who report having used Pre exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). It aims to assess the use of PrEP among people newly diagnosed with HIV, to understand the circumstances under which these HIV infections occurred, and to estimate the prevalence of HIV drug resistance.

PI: Dr Daniel Clutterbuck



Positive Voices

Positive Voices is the largest national cross-sectional study of adults receiving HIV care in the UK and questionnaires are conducted every 4-5 years. It aims to determine the level of satisfaction with current models of HIV care, prevalence of chronic diseases, patterns of accessing health and social care, as well as experiences of stigma and discrimination. The findings from positive voices can inform HIV policy and prevention initiatives.

PI: CSHC - Dr Imali Fernando
WGH - Dr Naomi Bulteel

Positive Voices
the national survey of people living with HIV



UK Health
Security
Agency

UKAR

UKAR (UK Antimicrobial registry) aims to answer a broad set of research questions around novel anti-microbial agents. It would allow the description of the use of such novel agents throughout the UK and to quantify the clinical outcomes and safety profile associated with their use in a real-world setting.

PI: Dr Simon Dewar

UKAR
UK ANTIMICROBIAL REGISTRY



1495
**UNIVERSITY OF
ABERDEEN**

You can find out more about each of the studies we are involved in on our website along with information about our past studies and more about the CIRG team

[CIRG: Current Projects Page](#)

To contact CIRG, for study involvement or collaboration, please email:

loth.CIRG@nhs.scot

We look forward to hearing from you.

CiRG Clinical Infection
Research Group
Edinburgh

Study Spotlights

In the
top 10 recruiting sites
2nd year
running.

The B-Well Study

PI: Dr Jenni Crane

The B-well study, which the CiRG team concluded their work on at the end of 2025, was investigating bepirovirsen to see if it effectively treats chronic HBV (hepatitis B virus) infection. It aimed to track the drug's effectiveness, safety, how it interacts with the body, and how long it remains effective.

The study team published a paper in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) highlighting their results from two replicate trials (B-Well 1 and B-Well 2). The results showed a positive indication for the use of bepirovirsen as a treatment for chronic HBV. Results showed that the reports of a functional cure after the discontinuation of nucleotide analogue (NA) therapy were significantly higher in patients treated with bepirovirsen than in those who received placebo.

The SNAP Trial

PI: Dr Rebecca Sutherland

The SNAP trial published their findings in [New England Journal of Medicine](#) earlier this year which found that cefazolin, an antibiotic little used in the UK, is as effective as and safer than the current UK standard therapy, flucloxacillin, for treating the condition.

The trial results also found that a commonly used antibiotic, penicillin, can be used when the staph is susceptible to this in the laboratory. And that similarly, this is probably as effective as flucloxacillin, and safer.

Dr Rebecca Sutherland, Principal Investigator for SNAP in Edinburgh said: "The SNAP study is helping optimise treatment of serious bloodstream infections. With over 6,000 patients recruited globally, results are already improving clinical practice. We continue to recruit patients to help answer further questions about antibiotic combinations and treatment duration of this infection."

Exciting things coming...

Gilead bNAbs Study

PI: Dr Rebecca Sutherland

This Phase 3, open-label, multicenter, randomized, active-controlled, noninferiority study will evaluate the efficacy and safety of switching virologically suppressed people with HIV (PWH) from a daily oral antiretroviral regimen to either twice-yearly LEN + TAB + ZAB regimen or CAB + RPV regimen administered every 8 weeks. To be eligible, participants must have virus susceptibility to the broadly neutralizing antibodies (bNAbs) TAB and ZAB.

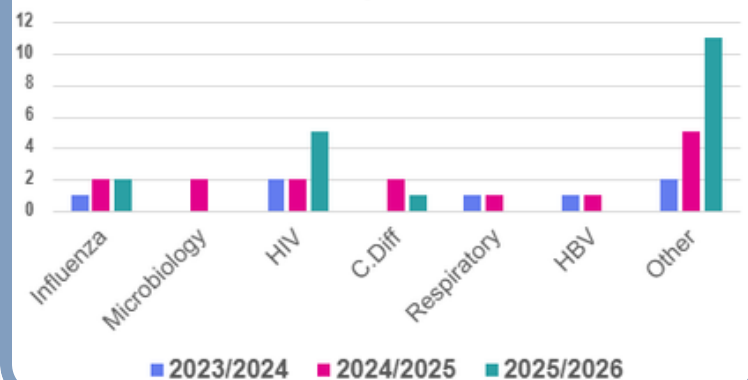
The potential benefits of participation in this study include reducing the burden of daily medication adherence by providing an option for long-acting treatment options administered either every 2 months or every 6 months. These options could be particularly beneficial for individuals with busy or unpredictable schedules making taking medication challenging, as well as for those who have concerns about privacy or inadvertent disclosure of their HIV status associated with daily medication use. Additionally, the inclusion of broadly neutralizing antibodies (bNAbs) may potentially reduce exposure to certain antiretroviral agents and thereby reduce the risk of treatment-related end-organ toxicities; however, this potential benefit has not been established.

Study Metrics

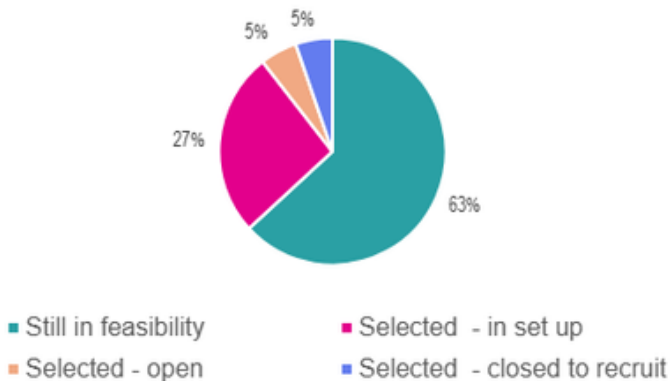
The infectious diseases research landscape is constantly evolving. Every year types of infections our studies are looking at change and develop. CIRG have a large and varied portfolio which has grown over the years. A way we can see this changing landscape is by looking at the types of feasibilities we are seeing coming through the pipeline.

This year we have seen a shift in the areas of interest with no new respiratory or microbiology studies but a significant increase in the number of studies falling under the 'other' category, which includes Malaria, Norovirus, and Travel medicine among others. This shows a diverse range in the areas of infectious diseases research that the team are being approached about and taking part in.

Feasibilities by Area of Interest



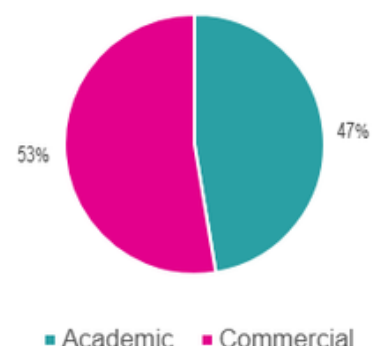
Feasibility Progression 2025/2026



Of the 19 feasibilities which have come to the CIRG this year, 37% of them have already finished recruiting, are currently open to recruit or are being set up and will be opening to recruit soon. The remaining 63% are still at the feasibility stage and are hoped to progress into the set up stage over the coming months.

53% of this year's feasibilities have been for commercial studies. This shows that CIRG can continue to balance the demands of both commercial and academic trials. Both of which are essential to the progression of understanding of infectious diseases and the development of treatments.

Academic vs Commercial Studies



Our New Home - Ward 22

In September 2025, we moved into our new clinical space in ward 22. Since the move, we have run two fast recruiting studies, carried out follow up visits, and seen participants for regular trial treatments.

Within our new unit, which we share with the Clinical Research Delivery Centre, we have a 4-bed bay area in which we can see multiple participants at once, a side room which allows us privacy to see patients when sensitivity is necessary or risk of infection is possible, and a fully equipped kitchen, sluice and sample processing area.

[See our virtual tour on our website here.](#)



First global participant and first patient in Ward 22

What is CPA?

Chronic Pulmonary Aspergillosis (CPA) is a recently identified serious chronic lung disease caused by the fungus *Aspergillus*. It is now known to affect several million people worldwide, including hundreds of people in Scotland.

What is the MR907_2502 study?

This trial provides patients IV rezafungin to individuals with CPA who cannot take oral antifungals. The trial will assess whether the drug is well tolerated and whether patients benefit from treatment.

In Lothian we have in recent years set up a specialist CPA clinic that provides effective long-term oral antifungal treatment that improves and extends the lives of our patients. Unfortunately, several of our patients have now acquired antifungal resistant strains of *Aspergillus*, for which there are currently no proven treatments. We are therefore extremely proud to have been selected as a host site for the first ever CPA treatment trial in the UK. This is the first licensed weekly IV antifungal drug and as such is a realistic option for long term treatment of a chronic disease such as CPA.

We were the first hospital in the world to recruit a patient to this study, which has now closed to recruitment. The CIRG team recruited more patients than any other hospital in Europe and were the second most successful recruiting site in the world.

“We are very proud to have delivered an innovative treatment option to this group of patients with a serious and poorly understood condition, who previously had not effective treatments available.”

- Dr Iain Page, PI on the MR907_2502 study

Collaborations

LIFELINE The Musical

Meghan Perry has a long term collaboration with Charades theatre company in the public health intervention of a musical about antibiotics as a tool to combat AMR! **Lifeline the musical** has just completed a 5 week run at Southwark Theatre reaching over 8700 audience members! An evaluation performed by CIRG members demonstrated the show increased optimism, knowledge and intent to action in relation to AMR. Plans are for a UK wide tour in 2028 – the centenary of Fleming’s discovery of penicillin.



London School of Tropical Medicine

The STReptococcal Adaptive Trial (STRAP) has been awarded a grant from NIHR to look at the optimal backbone antibiotic and merit of adjunctive antibiotics and/or immunomodulation for the treatment of invasive Group A Strep. As a collaborator on this successful grant, which is led by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Rebecca Sutherland will be supervising this study in Edinburgh alongside colleagues in Imperial, Oxford and Hull.

The University of Edinburgh

CIRG has a strong working relationship with the University of Edinburgh with many collaborations in 2026.

Oliver Koch has been invited to sit on the Pandemic Research forum steering group.

Meghan Perry has been working with the university on the following grants.

MRC grant: Investigating the Multi-scale Dynamics and Drivers of Antimicrobial Resistance in One Health Systems of China and the UK led by Professor Ross Fitzgerald from the Roslin Institute. The study involves collecting and performing genetic analysis on specimens from farm animals and farms, sewage and clinical specimens to deepen our understanding of how antimicrobial resistance genes are spread to help identify high-risk areas, improve monitoring, and prepare for potential disease outbreaks

DOSA 3 ([University of Edinburgh | PACE](#)) is an interdisciplinary international grant developing accessible diagnostic tools to improve urinary tract infection care in low- and middle-income countries thus addressing appropriate antibiotic use and AMR in these regions.

Collaborations

The Fleming Fund

Involvement in the Fleming Fund programme concluded in October 2025, marking the end of an important period of global collaboration and capacity strengthening in antimicrobial stewardship and antimicrobial resistance.

Through CIRG's partnership with the University of Edinburgh, we were privileged to mentor fellows from Uganda, Malawi, Kenya, and Zambia, supporting the development of AMS leadership, research capacity, and quality improvement initiatives. We had multiple CIRG members acting as mentors.

Several fellows have completed their projects and are progressing towards dissemination of their findings, including manuscript preparation for publication.

As Fleming Fund mentors, it was a rewarding opportunity to support fellows in translating knowledge into action, enabling sustainable improvements in antimicrobial use and contributing to global efforts to address antimicrobial resistance.



Other Teams

Effective research requires strong working relationships between teams. Our team is fortunate to be able to collaborate with other research teams across NHS Lothian to facilitate a wide range of trials and studies. These collaborations allow us to extend our reach to the benefit of our patients as well as the advancement of medical care.

CIRG works closely with the Bronchiectasis Research team who are based at the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh. As recruitment in research can be time sensitive, therefore having this partnership enables us to recruit participants to studies like SNAP and id.Drive across NHS Lothian in a timely manner. In return, we are happy to be able to support them with some of their studies, such as SBIVA.

Over the past year, we have been able to recruit hundreds of participants to the id.Drive surveillance study. Recruitment at this scale has only been possible due the hard work of colleagues in the EMERGE research teams at the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh and St John's Hospital.

We want to thank all our colleagues across the sites for their hard work and dedication and for the support we have received in delivering these trials.

We would also like to thank the OPAT clinic, the travel clinic and the infectious diseases clinical team who are very supportive of our work and help us to deliver our trials.

Our Team



Louise Sharp
Senior Research
Nurse



Amy Shepherd
CIRG Co-Chair / Lead
Research Nurse



Susie Ferguson
Senior Research
Nurse



Connor Dalby
Clinical Trials
Assistant



Jacqueline Henderson
Senior Research
Nurse



Anne Saunderson
Senior Research
Nurse



Tallulah Armstrong
Clinical Trials
Assistant



Katy Roberts
Clinical Research
Fellow 25/26



Yvonne Logan
Senior Research
Nurse



Alice Robinson
Clinical Research
Fellow 26/27

As well as our core team of permanent staff, we could not have done this past year without the amazing help of Michael Bulman, Yvonne Logan, Kay Stewart, Erin Bushe, Millie Newton and all our unblinded vaccinators.

After working on the bank with us for almost a year, we are so pleased that Yvonne will be joining the team as our newest Senior research nurse.

Our Team



**Dr Claire
Mackintosh**



**Dr Oliver
Koch**
NRS clinician



**Dr Meghan
Perry**
CIRG Co-Chair



**Dr Rebecca
Sutherland**
NRS clinician



**Dr Simon
Dewar**



**Dr Ian
Laurenson**



**Dr Kate
Templeton**



**Dr Matthew
Adam**



**Dr Iain
Page**



**Dr Sarah
Clifford**



**Dr Daniel
Clutterbuck**



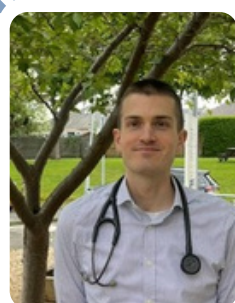
**Dr Naomi
Bulteel**



**Dr Dáire
O'Shea**



**Prof David
Dockrell**



**Dr Clark
Russell**



**Dr Imali
Fernando**



**Dr Alison
Burges**

[Find out more about our team on our website here](#)

NRS Clinician Sessions

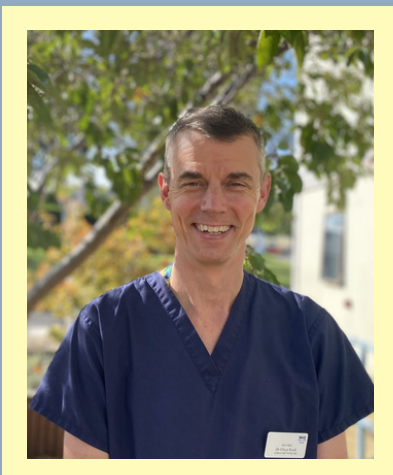
The NRS Clinician Sessions provide funded time for clinicians to dedicate to their research and building their portfolio. This time is allocated to plan and conduct research, write grants, and disseminate research findings among colleagues.

These sessions were developed in association with National Research Scotland and ACCORD, to enable clinicians to pursue their research interests. Over the last year, Dr Koch and Dr Sutherland have continued to optimise their NRS PA time to contribute to various trials across a range of disease areas.

Dr. Sutherlands' research interests focus on vaccinology, HIV, and optimising the management of serious bacterial infections. She leads the SNAP trial in NHS Lothian, a platform study investigating optimal management strategies for *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteraemia (SAB), provisional results of which have led to a change in antimicrobial management of this infection within Scotland. Upcoming studies include the use of 2 month vs 6ms injectable therapy to treat HIV, the SNAP 2 trial and the STRAP study (looking at optimal treatment of invasive Group A strep disease). Dr Sutherland also sits on the TSC for the DEXACELL study (looking at the role of dexamethasone in treating cellulitis) and is a member of the DSMC for studies looking at vaccines against Nipah virus and the Bundibugyo virus (a species of Ebola virus)



Dr. Koch specialises in tropical infections and travel medicine. In 2025/26, he continued to dedicate his NRS sessions to facilitating global surveillance studies, including GeoSentinel— a global network monitoring trends in travel-related illnesses—and id.DRIVE, which focuses on 1) viral respiratory pathogens surveillance in adults hospitalised for severe acute respiratory infection, and 2) Covid-19 and RSV vaccine effectiveness. He has also been PI for a norovirus vaccine trial, NOVA, and the ANCHOR study evaluating a long-acting antiviral drug designed to prevent seasonal influenza. He also contributed to RECOVERY, one of the largest clinical trials investigating treatments for respiratory illnesses, initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic.



“My placement with CIRG gave me a unique insight into the world of clinical research and how it improves patient care. From observing and discussing research studies with patients, learning about informed consent and sample processing, to spending time with different members of the multidisciplinary team, every member of the team made me feel included and encouraged me to learn. It has inspired me to see research nursing as an exciting future career pathway.”

- Masters student from Napier University

This year, we have continued to provide student placements within research - an experience which provides student nurses with a unique insight into the world of clinical research. Previously, clinical research has not been a focus in the nursing education system although this is starting to change thanks to the development of the Clinical Research Placement Hub, which has encouraged greater discussion around the role of research nurses.

The team has had a very positive experience working with students from the University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh Napier. It has been interesting to meet each of the students who each have their individual interests and experiences.

Although CIRG are the host team, we find that employing the hub and spoke model allows the team to use their connections to tailor the students experience to their interests. This approach has helped students to gain a deeper understanding for the range of roles available within clinical research and ensures they get the most out of their time with the team.

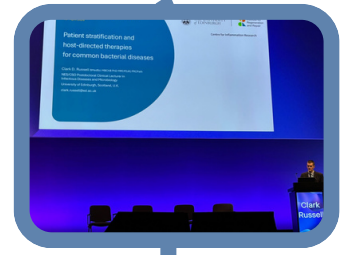
Senior research nurse Louise Sharp, oversees the student placements within the team. During the placements, we aim to show the future generations of nurses the impact a research nurse can have on the future of clinical practice and providing more clarity about what it means to be a clinical research nurse and how diverse the role can be.

Awards

CLARK RUSSELL

The ESCMID Young Investigator Award is an international award recognising achievements in research by early-career researchers (within 8 years of PhD or 5 years of completing clinical training).

At ESCMID Global in Munich earlier this year, Dr Clark Russell received this award in recognition of his work with Gram-positive bacteria. The work that led to this award involved investigating mechanisms of macrophage antibacterial defence against gram-positive bacteria and how these can be therapeutically optimised using host-directed therapies, as well as for multiple studies on solutions to address the clinical heterogeneity of *Staphylococcus* bacteraemia.



MUGE CEVIK

Dr. Muge Cevik has been awarded the ESCMID CAREer Grant 2026, recognising her strong trajectory towards independent research leadership. Based at the University of St Andrews and NHS Lothian, Dr. Cevik has developed a translational research programme at the intersection of clinical science, global health and policy, with a particular focus on tuberculosis and emerging infections.

The grant will provide dedicated research capacity across three high-impact collaborative initiatives: an international position paper on antibiotic use at the end of life, an individual participant data meta-analysis investigating personalised treatment approaches for tuberculosis, and an international Mpox project in Uganda supported by CIHR. Beyond advancing these projects, Dr. Cevik will use the award to strengthen CIRG's research capacity and expand its international academic collaborations, while supporting the academic development of CIRG fellows and assistant academics through mentorship and active involvement in research.



TEAM AWARD

CIRG research team were selected as a finalist for the Infections Management Team of the Year at the Scottish Healthcare Awards 2025! It is an honor to have our hard work recognised by the SHA. In November, members of the CIRG team attended the awards ceremony. Although sadly not winners of the award, the team had a wonderful evening celebrating the best of Scottish healthcare.



Wider CIRG Network

PI Meetings

CIRG's monthly PI meeting enables PIs to understand all studies within CIRG, and provides opportunities to present new studies

Podcasts

One of our senior research nurses talked to the career conversations podcast about her amazing career. You can listen to the podcast series which has lots of interesting episodes [here](#).

Two of our members also featured on the MIC podcast to discuss COVID-19 vaccination in patients at higher risk of anaphylaxis: A safe and pragmatic approach. This can be listened to on [Spotify](#) or [Apple podcasts](#).

Multi-team Collaboration

Working with other clinical teams to expand our reach and improve patient care

Student Placements

CIRG is a research based placement hub for student nurses

Research in Progress Meetings

CIRG members attend the Friday morning journal club slot quarterly to hear updates on current and future studies and showcase members' achievements

Conference Presentations

CIRG members have been presenting posters, giving oral presentations and chairing sessions at a range of conferences over the past year

UoE Collaboration

Working with the University to bring clinical and academic together in research

Publications

CIRG encourages and supports its members to publish their work and present at conferences and meetings. The team is proud to celebrate these achievements across social platforms

Volunteer Research Registry Development

Enabling direct contact with those who want to get involved in research

CIRG Fund continues to support researchers and clinicians with infectious diseases and microbiology related research, including support to attend international and domestic conferences or publish their work.

For information on the application process, or to contact the team, please email:

loth.cirg@nhs.scot

RESEARCH REGISTRY

A couple of years ago, the CIRG team decided to develop a Healthy Volunteer Research Registry specifically for infectious disease research within NHS Lothian: enabling individuals to voluntarily sign up to express their willingness to be contacted about potential participation in clinical research studies.

The registry aims to facilitate faster and more targeted recruitment for studies by allowing for the stratification of basic health data, such as age, to match volunteers with appropriate research opportunities.

Now, a few years down the line, the registry continues to grow in size and has supported recruitment to our healthy* volunteer studies such as NOVA and Anchor. It allowed us to reach out to a group of people who are open to taking part in research who we know may be eligible to participate.

Look out for our posters/flyers around the hospital.

* “Healthy” within clinical research is “an individual who participates in research studies and does not have the condition, or disease, being studied”

Ready to be involved?

Contact CIRG at:

loth.CIRGregister@nhs.scot

Or scan the code & send us a blank email!



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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