

ARC Wessex Information Outline

The National Institute for Health Research has awarded the Applied Research Collaboration Wessex (ARC Wessex) £9 million pounds of research funding until 2024.

The ARC Wessex mission is to improve outcomes for patients and public; improve quality, delivery and efficiency of health and care services; increase the sustainability of health and care systems locally and nationally.

Collaboration is central to our approach to tackle the health challenges we face. Working across Wessex, and with partners and organisations beyond, we aim to bring the best applied health evidence into practice. Reacting to the immediate and future pressures on our health and care system.

We have four research areas: **Ageing and dementia, Healthy communities, Long term conditions** and a **cross cutting theme Workforce and health systems**. All are based on research highlighting the health, and care system needs of our communities now and over the coming years.

Example projects include: the use of trained volunteers in the community to help support older people with physical activity, using virtual reality models to see how the placement of food in supermarkets can effect food choices, developing and testing a tool to help health and care services provide better support for people living with a long term condition and using data and mathematical modelling to help nursing teams better organise patient home visits.

This research stands alongside a number of key working principles. Involving the public, working with our member organisations and paying attention to how we might increase the chances of the findings being applied in practice. **Importantly, ARC Wessex is committed to increasing the amount of research we do through investment in the next generation of applied health researchers.**

ARC Wessex is a virtual organisation bringing together academics and health professionals from organisations across the region. The Universities of Southampton, Portsmouth, Bournemouth and Winchester are all involved in our research along with local NHS Trusts and care organisations, voluntary organisations, business, research organisations and the public.

We have a small central support team including Research and project managers, and admin support. The ARC Wessex Director, Professor Alison Richardson, works with a senior team which includes leads for implementation and translation, training and capacity building, public and patient involvement and the individual research area leads. ARC Wessex is hosted by University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust and the Trust board oversees governance and finance. A partnership board involving leads from collaborating organisations sits below the Trust board.

Our research priorities are set to expand and diversify after the first 2 years of the ARC, as we go through a process of reviewing new research projects from partners and setting the course for the final 3 years of funding.

The overall ARC Wessex outcomes are to get more people doing better research, find better ways of working and involving patients and the public, promote the rapid implementation of evidence-based research into action, and to achieve better health results.