

## Skills and Workforce Development Plan

The aim of our Skills and Workforce Development Plan is to **develop and support the next generation of MedTech innovators and methodologists**, drawing on existing resources and building new opportunities.

The development plan is designed to increase capacity internally (within HRC and partner organisations) and externally (industry and HRC collaborators). The focus of our plan is on accelerating the development and evidence generation to increase chances of successful adoption and implementation. In our application we identified the following skill sets as being crucial to the acceleration of surgical technology development:

**Generic Research Training** – this will address the challenges and barriers associated with identifying the unmet clinical needs, selecting the right funders, understanding health inequalities and the role of patient and public involvement.

- Grantsmanship and funding opportunities
- Understanding systematic reviews and prioritisation matrices
- Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) and outreach
- Entrepreneurship

**Clinical Evaluations & Health Economics** – this will address gaps in technical knowledge in the following areas:

- Early phase and efficient trial design and IDEAL-D Framework for Device Innovation
- Health economic modelling and Target Product Profiles
- NICE evidence standards
- Human factors and qualitative evaluations

**Sustainability** – this will address knowledge gaps in developing evidence to support successful NHS adoption.

- Carbon foot printing and reduction
- Waste reduction and remanufacturing
- Circular economy

**Commercialisation** – this will raise awareness of the different paths to commercialisation.

- Navigating regulatory roadmaps (i.e. Software as a Medical Device, MDR, IVDD and UKCA)
- Market access
- Medical device standards and quality management systems
- Intellectual property

### **Host Organisation Contribution**

The Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHT) Research Academy provides access to extensive training programmes to increase knowledge and promote excellence in research delivery and leadership, whilst the LTHT Innovation Pop-up provides entrepreneurial training with opportunities to learn with industry. Added value comes through coordinated activities with the Leeds BRC (Surgical Technologies theme) and Early Career Researchers Group in Leeds Centre for HealthTech Innovation.

Progress so far:

- We are supporting individuals and teams in their applications for external fellowships and project/programme grants as part of the NIHR@Leeds capacity building. This involves taking part in mock interviews and reviewing applications.
- We have recorded a training module for the Innovation Pop-up entrepreneurship training.

### **External Collaborator Contribution**

We will work closely with the NIHR Academy and NIHR Mentorship scheme, engaging with the Doctoral Training Camp and SPARC programme. We will continue to support and promote the national MedTech Foundation in its undergraduate innovation and entrepreneurship programmes, established under Surgical MIC.

Progress so far:

- We conducted an innovation skills audit to map the skills of the existing workforce against the trending and predicted future skills.
- We ran a successful pilot for the sustainability incubator with WRM Ltd. This was showcased at MTI Expo 2025. We intended to make it an annual incubator and are planning the next one.

- We will be hosting a MedTech/HealthTech session at the Asian Professionals National Alliance (APNA) Conference in October 2025 to support the increase and involvement of diverse healthcare professionals in the HRC.
- We are currently setting up a mentoring register for students from underserved backgrounds with GBS University.

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| <b>Aim 1</b> – Map the skills of the existing workforce against the trending and predicted future HealthTech skills.                                                                                              | <b>Aim 2</b> – Co-develop & deliver HealthTech innovation capacity building & training programme with industry                                                                                                                      | <b>Aim 3</b> – Cultivate and expand a community of under-served researchers and advocates                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Aim 4</b> – Support training to enhance diversity & career advancement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Action Plan</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Short Term</b><br>Conduct innovation skills audit of HRC healthcare professionals and academics<br><br>Identify priority areas for capacity building and training in collaboration with LTHT Research Academy. | <b>Short Term</b><br>Develop training material & programme of events.<br><br>Identify external partners for co-development.<br><br><b>Medium Term</b><br>Co-host educational events for healthcare professionals with HRC partners. | <b>Short Term</b><br>Engage with networks & organisations that represent under-served groups.<br><br>Establish partnerships with mentoring networks, advocacy groups, industry<br><br><b>Medium Term</b><br>Promote training to MedTech Foundation | <b>Medium Term</b><br>Increase number of new early & mid career researchers involved in HRC<br><br>Fund transdisciplinary placements in host organisation for early career researchers.<br><br><b>Long Term</b><br>Support projects from less research intensive institutions<br><br>Provide guidance and best practice regarding inclusion & involvement of under-served communities. |