



NEWSLETTER

Issue 5
December 2025



***Developing medical devices,
diagnostics and digital
technologies to improve
surgical care.***

Welcome to the HealthTech
Research Centre in Accelerated
Surgical Care newsletter.

Forming Collaborations

The NIHR HealthTech Research Centre in Accelerated Surgical Care is part of the NIHR and hosted by Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust in partnership with University of Leeds.

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<http://hrc-surgical.nihr.ac.uk>

Bringing new surgical technologies to those who need them most by ensuring our activities and reach are inclusive and reflective of the needs of underserved groups.

Building capabilities in the generation of evidence for HealthTech and improving knowledge of market access requirements

Our Research Themes

- **Theme 1 – Early Diagnosis and Personalised Care**
- Theme 2 – Minimally Invasive Therapies and Extended Realities
- **Theme 3 – Assisted Healing and Rehabilitation**
- Timely clinical evaluation
- **Surgical Care Observatory**
- Sustainability & NHS net carbon zero



We would like to wish you all a very
Merry Christmas and a Happy New
Year

MEDICA - Leading International Trade Fair



Vee Mapundee, Co-Director

We also delivered a session on our HRC at the Medilink North of England stand/area.

We heard from other centres about their aspirations and current initiatives to accelerate the adoption and implementation of HealthTech in their settings.

Arriving back in Leeds we have a few interesting technologies to explore for the HRC.

We attended MEDICA trade fair in Germany where we took part in a panel discussion "The NHS unlocked: Panel perspectives on priorities, innovation, and partnership" with Dr. Andrew Keen (NHS Grampian), Iain Hennessey (Alder Hey Innovation), and Prof. Dr. Ged Byrne (NHS England). The focus of this discussion was surgical care, digital health, and health equity. The panel was chaired by Tobias Wobbe.



The above photo was taken with the German Federal Minister of Health, Nina Warken.

NIHR Net Zero Innovation Catalyst



Building on the success of the pilot Innovation for Healthcare Net Zero Programme in spring 2025, the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) is launching the NIHR Net Zero Innovation Catalyst. The Catalyst supports early-stage innovators in embedding sustainable practices into their innovations and advancing toward translational funding applications and adoption.

Delivered in partnership with Pd-m, sustainability specialists within HealthTech product design, the Catalyst offers innovators hands-on support from academic, clinical, and industry expertise in sustainability and HealthTech. In alignment with the DHSC 'Design for Life' framework for establishing a circular economy of reuse, remanufacture and recycling in medical products. The three-month CPD accredited programme equips innovators with practical approaches and knowledge to embed sustainability within their innovations.

A £7,500 prize fund will be split between exceptional innovators participating in the Catalyst to support future development and evidence generation for follow-on funding applications.

Applicants to the Catalyst will be expected to:

- demonstrate a basic level of carbon literacy, including an understanding of Net Zero and carbon emissions
- be developing a HealthTech innovation, at technology readiness levels 2 – 4 (later-stage innovations may be considered, by exception)
- be seeking funding for further development of the innovation
- have a commitment to embedding sustainability into practice

Find our more [here](#)

The Sustainability and Simulation Theatre for Academia and Industry (SUSTAIN)



Funded by the Department of Health and Social Care in alignment with the Design for Life Roadmap, SUSTAIN is a high-fidelity simulated operating theatre providing a testbed for circular innovations, enabling industry and academia to evaluate new technologies, improve decision-making, and train healthcare teams in sustainable practices. Based in the site of the first operating theatre at Leeds General Infirmary, dating back to 1869, circularity is at the core of SUSTAIN's mission.

Our Aim: To Support 'Building the Leeds Way' by reducing the carbon footprint and generate high-impact case-studies to spur adoption across the NHS.

Our Ambition: SUSTAIN is a real-life simulated surgical operating-suite environment, with integrated sensor and monitoring systems, that offers companies and care providers the opportunity to develop, test and implement physical and digital solutions into real-life settings.

A Testbed: SUSTAIN will capture and accurately assess both the environmental and human-factors impact of the pathway or innovation being tested. Supporting effective, relevant care innovations to get to market in a standardised way which meets the needs of both the end-users and the requirements of clinicians and hospitals.

Find our more [here](#)

Environmental Sustainability Conference



Rory Turnbull, Researcher with our Sustainability workstream presented at the NIHR (National Institute for Health and Care Research) Conference on Environmental Sustainability in Health and Medical Research Practice at the Royal Society of Chemistry!

Alongside sharing work on RFID-driven surgical tray rationalisation, I introduced SUSTAIN – a high-fidelity simulated operating theatre under development in Leeds, funded by the Department of Health and Social Care.



We spoke about the work we are undertaking at MedTech World 2024 in Malta and made some strong connections with lots of UK start-ups, we also had promising conversations with non-UK start-ups. Discussions around potential projects and collaborations will be taking place in New Year.

Brilliant innovation is happening everywhere, the bottleneck is translation - moving from idea to real-world impact. We all have the same problems when it comes to accelerating research to clinical implementation, winning in a crowded market, building with the end in mind, pitching stories investors can believe, innovating for the frontline (primary care), navigating regulations and trusting artificial intelligence (AI).

The fact that human factors and implementation science were part of the conversation shows the industry is maturing beyond “tech-first” thinking into ‘system-first’ thinking.

Canada-UK Life Sciences Day: Quantum Research in Medicine



What an incredible day at the Canada-UK Life Sciences Day: Quantum Research in Medicine—hosted at the iconic Canada House and organised by the Canada-UK Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the High Commission of Canada in the United Kingdom | Haut-commissariat du Canada au Royaume-Uni and AxialBridge.

The day opened with a warm welcome and thought-provoking keynote presentations from two global leaders in quantum science:

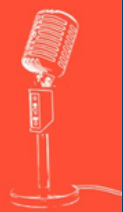
- ◆ Dr. Barry Sanders, Scientific Director of Calgary's Quantum City and Professor & Director of the Institute for Quantum Science and Technology at the University of Calgary
- ◆ Professor Ian Walmsley CBE FRS, Director of the Oxford Quantum Institute, University of Oxford

Surgical Observatory Theme – Announce New Podcast

Management & Organisations Department

New Podcast

*Introducing the Surgical Care
Observatory – why sociotechnical
thinking is needed within the NHS*



Leeds
University
Business
School



want to understand our Surgical Observatory theme in Accelerated Surgical Care HealthTech Research Centre, then this podcast is for you.

Discover why sociotechnical thinking is essential for improving surgical care within the NHS. In this episode, Helen Hughes and Emma Findlay introduce the Surgical Care Observatory, a pioneering initiative that looks beyond technology to understand the human and organisational factors shaping patient outcomes.

👉 Listen now: <https://lnkd.in/etuucVy2>

Events



The events calendar is now available on our [website](#), this will be populated with events that might be of interest.

You can subscribe to the calendar so that you are notified of events.

[Soft Robotics for Healthcare 26](#) 19-20 January 2026

[A Masterclass in the Design and Conduct of Complex Intervention Evaluations](#)
26 January 2026

[National HealthTech Series \(Southampton\)](#) 29 January 2026

[2026 NIHR Post Doctoral Event: Thriving in Transition](#) 29 January 2026

[Masterclass in the Design and Conduct of Complex Intervention Evaluations](#)
2 February 2026

[Masterclass in the Design and Conduct of Complex Intervention Evaluations](#)
9 February 2026

[Minoritised Life Scientists Future Forum 2026](#)
23 - 25 March 2026

[Manchester Health Series 2025/2026](#) 26 March 2026

Save the Date

SurgTech 2026

8th & 9th October 2026
Headingley Stadium, Leeds LS6 3BR



Scan the QR code for latest information

HealthTech Funding Opportunities

The following are funding streams that are suitable for collaborative applications with the HealthTech Research Centre in Accelerated Surgical Care.

We advise all potential applicants to discuss their potential applications well in advance of the application deadline.

JTC 2026 - Access to Care 2 February 2026

NIHR Application Development Award for Health and Care Professionals
4 February 2026

Women in Innovation Awards 2025/26 4 February 2026

BBSRC 2025 Transformative Research Technologies (25TRT) 11 February 2026

Gap Fund: single-step support for medical product development 11 March 2026

PBIAA Secondments December 2026

Funding streams with no time limits

The Horizon Europe Pump Priming Programme

Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund II

Innovate UK Business Growth – RTO Voucher scheme

University of Huddersfield Health Innovation Partnership

UK Innovation & Science Seed Fund

Creative England Investments

The British Business Bank

Efficacy and mechanism evaluation programme – fast-track scheme – no deadline

Global Innovation Fund – rolling deadline

British Heart Foundation New Horizons Grants – no deadline

Cardiovascular Small Meetings & Events Funds

EIC Accelerator

Ignite Vouchers

Amplify Grants

BHF Healthcare Implementation Fund