



CLINICAL
RESEARCH
DEVELOPMENT
IRELAND

Clinical Research Development Ireland (CRDI)

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 – 2021

Enabling Clinical and Translational Research

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Enabling Clinical and Translational Research across our Partner Academic Institutions, their Medical Schools and Associated Hospitals

INTRODUCTION

Clinical Research Development Ireland (CRDI) is a not-for-profit research partnership established in 2008 as Molecular Medicine Ireland (MMI) by the NUI Galway, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork and University College Dublin, their medical schools, associated academic hospitals and clinical research facilities, to accelerate the translation of biomedical research into improved diagnostics, therapies and devices for patients.

Having regard to the extensive changes in the external environment over recent years, the Board has decided that it is now timely to rebrand and re-launch the partnership and to set ambitious strategic goals for the next phase of our development. This is possible within the existing legal framework under which MMI was established.

Our unique position is that, as the combination of the partners, we mobilise the combined strength of all our partner academic institutions, their medical schools and associated hospitals, with the aid of a central coordinating entity. This is an extraordinarily powerful unique selling point. The partner institutions are fully committed to supporting the collaborative work of CRDI and its leadership role in tackling issues the partners cannot or should not be doing individually. Our roles include any endeavor which in any way supports the development of clinical and translational research.

CRDI collaborates with many other institutions and agencies including Hospital Groups, Community Healthcare Organisations, patient groups, private hospitals, IDA, EI, SFI, HRB, DoH, DJEI, DPER, DES, HEA, IRC, SCA, medicines and medical devices industries both individual companies and representative bodies, regulators, and international collaborators.

In presenting this strategic plan for 2017 – 2021, we have also revised our mission, vision and values statements and these are set out below.

Mission

To advance patient care and health service delivery by supporting the development of clinical and translational research across our partner academic institutions, their medical schools and associated hospitals.

Vision

To be an effective and innovative force for the development of clinical and translational research in Ireland, and to be recognised, both nationally and internationally, as a model of organisational excellence focused on advancing evidence based patient care and network coordination.

Values

Acting in the best interests of patients; Operating to the highest standards of scientific rigour and quality; Behaving with integrity and impartiality; Promoting research, innovation, openness to change and continual learning; Treating stakeholders and each other with dignity and respect at all times.

STRATEGIC GOALS

For each Strategic Goal, we set out Strategic Objectives. Appropriate Actions, Outcomes and Performance Indicators will be elaborated in our annual work plans.

Strategic Goal 1: Advance the development of a sophisticated, coordinated clinical and translational research partnership across our partner academic institutions, their medical schools and associated hospitals

Partner institutions and the CRDI network

- Mobilise the combined strength of the partner institutions in developing clinical and translational research in Ireland.
- Work across the partnership to enhance the reputation and standing of the partner institutions.
- Develop the CRDI Board and sub-committee structure further as a model of excellence in equitable, ethical and robust strategic oversight of collaborative programmes.
- Build on the network of key opinion leaders and major programme initiators in the partner institutions that have strong awareness of CRDI and its individual programmes, and its cross-institutional and multi-disciplinary utility.
- Develop a cadre of individuals that will act as CRDI ‘Champions’, raising the profile of the collaboration during crucial early planning stages of major strategic research initiatives in the partner institutions.
- Increase the number of proposals that include the CRDI network in major collaborative research initiatives and funding applications and the number of business cases and funding applications that include CRDI and its individual programmes, as a partner and coordinating centre.

Expand Partner Institutions

- Work with the University of Limerick to commence the process that will lead to full partnership, thereby positioning CRDI as a collaboration of all the Irish Medical Schools.

- Develop our existing strong links with Queen's University Belfast (including current Board observer status and ICAT partnership) to full partnership in CRDI while implementing a model that results in the best opportunities for winning EU, IE, UK and International funding for joint initiatives.

Hospital Groups and hospitals

- Work closely with stakeholders in the developing academic medical centres and hospital group structures, including the National Children's Hospital Group, to explore the value of CRDI in a national research coordination role.

Patients

- Build relevant and robust patient/ public engagement and communication strands in all CRDI programmes.

Industry Partnerships

- Aligned with the research strengths of the partner institutions, work closely with the Board and other key contacts to present a strong portfolio of appropriate cross-institutional research strengths to industry.
- Leverage existing industry engagement in the partner institutions and in various CRDI programmes, including HRB-CRCI, our partnership with CURAM, and short courses.

Other Stakeholders

- Strengthen relationships with all stakeholders and potential funders, in line with increased activity and funding applications involving CRDI and its individual programmes, working closely with the Board and other key contacts (champions) in the partner institutions.

Strategic Goal 2: Develop and support clinical and translational research infrastructure and delivery across our partner academic institutions, their medical schools and associated hospitals

Facilities and Staffing

- Coordinate across the partnership to ensure world class facilities and staffing is available to support clinical and translational research in Ireland.
- Advocate for dedicated research time for clinical colleagues.
- Support the work of research - active clinicians who do not have academic appointments.

Networks

- Enhance operational efficiency and work across the partner institutions to remove any barriers to improved efficiency and seek process improvements to ensure Ireland is viewed distinctively and positively as a location of choice for clinical research.

Biobanking/Registries

- Play a role in national coordination of patient registries and biobanks, building on the management, methodology, governance and patient engagement experience of delivering IPCOR and biobanking standards.

Ethics Approval Structures/Services

- Encourage the development of an efficient, well performing ethics approval infrastructure which is delivering at both national and local levels.

Socio Economic Analysis of Benefits of Clinical Research

- Encourage the development of a robust, coordinated and systematic research programme on the socio economic benefits of clinical research for patients, industry and society.

Strategic Goal 3: Develop and support clinical trials delivery across our partner academic institutions, their medical schools and associated hospitals

Number, Recruitment and Impact

- By our coordination efforts, through HRB CRCI, bring about an increase in the number of clinical trials taking place in Ireland, in the sophistication of the trials attracted, and in the number of patients recruited and experiencing the benefits of participation in clinical research.

Medicines, Medical Devices and Diagnostics

- Deliver specific supports to enhance clinical trials delivery across medicines, medical devices and diagnostic via CRDI participation in programmes such as HRB CRCI and CURAM.

Strategic Goal 4: Develop and support education and training

Attract, train and retain world class researchers in Ireland

- Provide support across the network of partner institutions that positions CRDI as the national coordinator for clinician scientist training to serve future academic and industry staffing needs.
- Utilise the Curriculum Website Portal as the platform of choice for sharing of graduate education modules in different areas.
- Develop and deliver courses, including E-learning, in partner institutions and centrally, recognised as a high quality collaborative activity, with stakeholder support in delivery and in funding.

Shared Graduate programmes

- Coordinate the Wellcome - HRB Irish Clinical Academic Training (ICAT) programme.
- Support CURAM education and training through provision of existing MMI modules and development of new online modules.
- Position CRDI and the partners to capture future funding streams that support development and delivery of new structured PhD programmes.
- Promote our strengths in education and training coordination and resource development for inclusion as work streams in partner research centre funding applications.
- Foster long-term relationships with alumni, with follow-up news and interviews and involvement in current CRDI activities.

Accreditation

- Ensure accreditation in the partner institutions of CRDI education and training modules, aligned to the requirements of the partner institutions and participants.

CME/CPE requirements

- Ensure CME/ CPE requirements are met for accredited modules.

Strategic Goal 5: Develop capability across network partners and CRDI

Clinical, Scientific, Technical, Managerial and Communications competencies

- Ensure optimal organisational structures and governance is in place.
- Keep under review the roles, responsibilities and composition of key CRDI committees and Governance arrangements to ensure they adapt to the developing roles of the organisation and the changing external environment.
- Recruit and develop appropriate management expertise in critical areas to support an effective infrastructure and focus on retaining skilled staff.
- Ensure employee engagement, commitment and motivation supported by a culture of performance and accountability.
- Enhance IT and business services capabilities and develop knowledge management services and processes which integrate key information sources, expert skills and technology solutions.
- Encourage a culture of continuous improvement in all areas of management.
- Ensure that best possible value is obtained with available funds.

Representing Ireland in clinical and translational research infrastructures/networks in Europe and Internationally

- Utilising the skills and expertise available across the partnership, ensure CRDI and partner institution interests, aligned with CRDI activities, are adequately coordinated and represented in European and International fora.

Enabling provision for any additional areas of collaboration that may be agreed upon from time to time

- Keep under review any potential for further collaboration across the partner institutions which can be optimally delivered within the CRDI network, including any future revenue-generating activities.

Strategic Goal 6: Advocate for adequate funding for the development of clinical and translational research

Raising Awareness with Government, Funding Agencies, Industry and Philanthropic Donors

- Strengthen relationships with all potential funders and stakeholders, working closely with the Board and other key contacts (Champions) in the partner institutions.

Monitoring Funding Calls

- Coordinate monitoring of future funding calls from relevant sources across the network.

Providing Support to Funding Applications

- Monitor for synergies in funding applications where CRDI network support may be of value to our partner institutions.
- Partner institutions may involve the CRDI network at an early stage when it is deemed that CRDI support may add value to an application.

Partnering and/or Leading Funding Applications

- Work closely with the Board and key contacts in the partner institutions to identify at an early stage funding opportunities that will benefit from CRDI involvement as a partner or as collaborative lead.

Administering Awarded Funding Across the Partners

- CRDI may provide financial management of complex cross-institutional programmes.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Assumptions and risks

This plan is based on certain assumptions and risks concerning the future.

It is assumed that Government policy will continue to actively support, develop and fund research over the period of the plan and beyond. It is assumed that the external environment will remain positive in the main towards the further development and funding of research, and that any geopolitical changes, including the UK exit from the EU, will not have any detrimental effect.

Financial resourcing of the research efforts across the partnership will always be a challenge both for core funding and programme funding requirements. It is assumed that there will be success in certain joint funding calls and agreement on a sustainable future funding model for any additional areas of endeavour undertaken across the partnership.

Availability and retention of staff and experts will be an ongoing challenge and it is assumed that policies on funding, remuneration and career development will assist in this regard.

It is anticipated that other stakeholders in our sphere of activity will actively collaborate with CRDI in advancing our mission, to the benefit of patients and the health system generally. In this regard, it is anticipated that structural changes underway in the organisation of health service delivery will assist and facilitate the development of translational and clinical research.

Monitoring and Reporting

Achievement against the plan will be monitored through regular monitoring of annual business plans and reported to the CEO and Board on an ongoing basis throughout the year, with a formal update annually to the Board and in the Annual Report.

Review

The strategic plan and the activities which support it will be kept under review by the Board during the annual business planning process and will be subject to formal review of the goals and objectives mid-way through the 5 years of the plan.