

Coventry HDRC

Two Years of Progress and Collaboration



Celebrating success

As we reach the end of our two-year birthday, it's the perfect time to reflect on what we've accomplished and look forward to the exciting year ahead.

In October 2022, we were among the first 10 local authorities to receive Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) funding from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). Fast-forward to today, and we've built a team of dedicated individuals to drive the work of the HDRC forward alongside colleagues from Coventry University, University of Warwick, University College London, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire, key voluntary and community sector partners, and public representatives.

“It's been a great privilege to start this journey of building an open, creative, and dynamic research network that uses evidence to address the wider determinants of health.”

Sue Frossell, Director of Coventry Health Determinants Research Collaboration



Drivers and priorities

The initial HDRC wider determinants of health priorities for research align with the Marmot City Principles and One Coventry Priorities. These are best start in life, local economy, employment & skills, digital inclusion, and housing & homelessness. We will also explore other research opportunities and emerging priorities as they arise.

Our progress so far

Data and Governance

- Developed council guidance for intellectual property in research.
- Produced a risk assessment and research governance policy for the HDRC.
- Developing research application process, and ethics committee.

Training and Skills

- Co-developed training pathways for council and external stakeholders and the community.
- Ran 6 webinars, attended by around 300 participants, on a range of topics including community researchers, health economics, public involvement, intellectual property, research methods, and a research-based wellbeing programme.
- Integrated “Professional Development and Research” into the Council’s Learning and Development Hub and launched several training modules available to all employees.
- Other opportunities include a citizen science course, bespoke research training for council teams, a “So What” journal club, mentorship, and support with NIHR Fellowships.

Public Involvement

- Defined our public involvement principles to ensure that residents’ voices are at the heart of the HDRC work.
- Conducted a systematic review to develop recommendations for co-producing research with community groups.
- Established a Voluntary Sector Reference Group with our 7 VCSE Collaborators and a Public Voices Group with 24 members.
- Hosted a Warwick Institute of Engagement intern and student on work experience.

Evaluation

- Developed the 3-phase evaluation plan and obtained research ethics approval.
- Conducted our baseline study of research culture and collaboration functioning.
- Coventry is leading a joint output of HDRC evaluations.

Impact and Implementation

- Developed a system for monitoring and managing our research development “pipeline”.
- Conducted evidence reviews, mixer events, supported service & policy evaluation, brokered research partnerships, scoped research opportunities, inputted to research design and funding applications in priority research areas.
- Developing new strategic alliances for research at regional/national level to facilitate funding opportunities & economies of scale.
- Developed the Research Ambassador role in the Council and have started recruiting up to 10 Research Ambassadors.
- Developed a HDRC University Secondment Opportunity. With secondees starting in 2024.
- Inputted and supported university applications for research funding and studentships into the wider determinants of health.

Communications

- Launched a website.
- Established a monthly newsletter, sharing updates and research reports.
- Produced a video introducing the HDRC and its purpose.
- Developing a library of case studies that are shared with NIHR.
- Raising awareness internally and externally about how research and evidence can have impact on local communities.

Case studies

Retrofitting

The HDRC has recently worked with the Sustainability and Climate Change Team to help understand the barriers people face when considering or accessing services and grants to retrofit their homes. A research review found that the main ones are cost, time, and inconvenience. These findings have supported the Climate Change Team in implementing practical actions to address the need to improve retrofitting awareness.

The Job Shop evaluation

We have supported the Employment and Skills team to understand the associations between the Job Shop services' support and the impact of health outcomes, such as mental health, on customers. A working group was facilitated, and support was given to conduct public involvement. A research proposal is being developed, which will later contribute to a funding bid.

EIP programme evaluation

The Early Intervention Programme wanted to evaluate the impact of services and validate that early intervention is the best way forward for victims affected by domestic violence and abuse. Support for conducting public involvement via interviews helped verify that this way of working was most impactful. This evidence was used in a funding bid, which was successful, securing another three years of funding, which is given directly to Coventry Haven Women's Aid.

Social Value

The Economic Development Inward Investment Team suggested to Coventry HDRC that they would benefit from a review of evidence of best practices in approaches to their social value work with developers. A literature review helped benchmark where we are regarding social value compared to other local authorities, which confirmed that Coventry is pretty advanced in this area.

Looking forward to our third year

As we head towards our third year, we're excited to build on our successes and continually evaluate our work to ensure we're maximising the HDRC's potential. In our third year, we will continue to work across our collaboration, emphasising the development of specific research that directly addresses the wider determinants of health. The research findings will help us improve the health of Coventry residents and reduce the inequalities they experience.



How might the HDRC help you?

- Increase your research knowledge and skills
- Use research evidence to make better informed decisions
- Help you think differently in your area of work and see things from different perspective
- Support you to develop public involvement in your research
- Work with you to design, develop, conduct and learn from research and evaluation
- Apply for research funding into the wider determinants of health

If you would like to find out how you can get involved with the HDRC, please visit our website or email us.

Coventry.gov.uk/HDRC
CoventryHDRC@coventry.gov.uk

YEAR 1

- Funding received 1 October 2022
- Team established
- Establishing a work platform
- Governance processes
- Training needs assessment



YEAR 2

Infrastructure being built:

- Ethics review processes
- VCSE and Public Involvement set up
- Evaluation framework
- Developing training
- Communication and engagement
- Initial research priorities



YEAR 3

- Dissemination of existing research and funding opportunities
- Identification of possible research questions and areas of interest
- Research ambassadors
- Coproduce research with communities
- Development of research projects
- Implement research governance processes
- External funding research applications



YEAR 4

- Establishing an impact platform
- Establishment of wider communities of practice in key areas
- Utilising research fellows and research evidence to improve practice
- External funding research applications and projects



YEAR 5

- Culture change within Local Authority
- Externally funded research studies
- Evidence impacting decisions

LONG-TERM

- Evidence-driven approach to tackling wider determinants
- Use of research evidence to improve services and address inequalities of health
- Further development of HDRC concept/infrastructure

NIHR | Health Determinants Research Collaboration Coventry



The NIHR Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) Coventry is part of the NIHR and hosted by Coventry City Council.

The HDRC is a collaboration between Coventry City Council, Coventry University, University of Warwick, Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise organisations, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire, University College London - Institute of Health Equity. Working with local people.



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