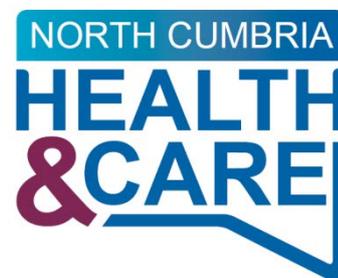


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COVID-19 patients in north Cumbria invited to take part in ground-breaking research to help further our knowledge of the disease

Patients in north Cumbria with symptoms of coronavirus are being given the opportunity to support research into Coronavirus/COVID-19.

The NHS, through its National Institute for Health Research, has set up national clinical research trials across the UK to reliably assess possible treatments for Coronavirus. The trials are taking place in hospitals in north Cumbria - including the intensive care units (ICUs) - and a host of GP surgeries.

North Cumbria is one of the first areas in the UK to open these studies. The three key national trials running have different focuses and names:

- [PRINCIPLE](#) – This includes higher risk patients in primary care (GP surgeries) to evaluate potential treatments for COVID-19 infection in older people.
- [RECOVERY](#) – This involves patients in hospital with confirmed COVID-19 and aims to identify treatments that may help their recovery.
- [REMAP-CAP](#) – This trial focuses on critically ill patients with community-acquired pneumonia (or CAP) which is a significant cause of hospitalisation and illness world-wide.

The hospital-based research trials are led by consultant anaesthetist Dr Tim Smith and consultant microbiologist Dr Clive Graham, with support from the Trust's research staff. Hospitalised patients with COVID-19 at the Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle and West Cumberland Hospital, Whitehaven who can take part will be given the opportunity to do so.

Prof Dave Dagnan, Clinical Director for Research at North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust said:

"In hospital settings eligible COVID-19 patients are being asked to join this research where possible. These trials are an important opportunity for people in north Cumbria to contribute to this critical research; trying to find answers that may ultimately help patients with COVID-19.

"The results will be essential in the future treatment of patients in our region, the UK and around the world."

In the community, a number of GP surgeries are inviting people to take part in the PRINCIPLE research trial in north Cumbria. Currently seven GP surgeries are able to invite patients to take part in the trial, with more GP surgeries planning to join in the

next few weeks. To be involved in the PRINCIPLE trial, patients need to be experiencing the symptoms of COVID-19 infection (a high temperature/fever, or a new continuous cough). Patients also need to be aged between 50 and 64 with certain medical problems OR over 65 years of age.

The north Cumbria GP surgeries currently running this research trial are:

- Carlisle Healthcare
- Fellview Healthcare
- Eden Medical Group
- Wigton Group Medical Practice
- Silloth Group Medical Practice
- Aspatia Medical Group
- Temple Sowerby Medical Practice

Patients can find out more about the PRINCIPLE trial and register their interest by visiting: <https://www.ncic.nhs.uk/trust/research-development>. The contact details found here should be the first port of call for any trial-specific queries.

Prof Leon Jonker, Science and Innovation Manager said:

“This is a great opportunity for north Cumbria; we have been really quick off the mark to make this trial available for our region, thanks to ongoing collaboration between North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust and a number of GP surgeries.

“We will be sending out information regarding the PRINCIPLE trial to the 25,000+ patients in the participating surgeries who are eligible to join, but we are also encouraging people to visit the Trust’s [web link](#) if they hear about this through other means.”

Dr Stacey Fisher – Research GP (Local lead for PRINCIPLE study) added:

*“For this trial, people who think they may have COVID-19 can join if they have had the symptoms for **fewer than eight days**. We are therefore asking anyone in the relevant groups to visit the [web link](#) as early as possible if they think they have symptoms of Coronavirus. “*

Patients should continue to follow national NHS advice, by contacting 111 for concerns about their health related to Coronavirus/COVID-19, or their own GP surgery (111 if out of hours) if they have other health concerns.

Notes to Editors

The North Cumbria Health and Care System is made up of health and care commissioners and providers – NHS North Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group, North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust, NHS England, NHS Improvement, North West Ambulance Service, primary care – working in partnership with Cumbria County Council and third sector organisations.

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is the nation's largest funder of health and care research. The NIHR:

- Funds, supports and delivers high quality research that benefits the NHS, public health and social care
- Engages and involves patients, carers and the public in order to improve the reach, quality and impact of research
- Attracts, trains and supports the best researchers to tackle the complex health and care challenges of the future
- Invests in world-class infrastructure and a skilled delivery workforce to translate discoveries into improved treatments and services
- Partners with other public funders, charities and industry to maximise the value of research to patients and the economy

The NIHR was established in 2006 to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research, and is funded by the Department of Health and Social Care. In addition to its national role, the NIHR supports applied health research for the direct and primary benefit of people in low- and middle-income countries, using UK aid from the UK government.