

Delivering partnership solutions to major health and health care challenges

UCLPartners is one of five accredited academic health science systems in the UK. Our purpose is to translate cutting edge research and innovation into measurable health gain for patients and populations.

This paper serves as a brief introduction to our approach and organisation. It sets out:

- Why UCLPartners exists: the imperative to deliver improved health with ever-increasing value for money
- What makes us different: partnership solutions to major health and health care challenges
- Our business model and programmes
- Working together: what we offer our partners

WHY UCLPARTNERS EXISTS: THE IMPERATIVE TO DELIVER IMPROVED HEALTH WITH EVER-INCREASING VALUE FOR MONEY

In the UK and worldwide, health systems are under huge pressure: aging populations and advances in treatment are creating ever-growing health care needs and expectations, while the economic climate imposes severe resource constraints.

In this context, academic health science systems have three vital roles to play:

- **Ensuring that research delivers greater patient benefit.** It currently takes 17 years to turn 14% of original research to the benefit of routine patient care¹. The translation of discovery into health outcomes must be greatly accelerated – requiring new models of collaboration between universities, health care institutions and industry.
- **Integrating health care to drive improved quality, value and outcomes.** An integrated view is essential for improving outcomes across whole patient pathways, reducing fragmentation across the system, delivering value for money, and improving the health status of populations. For example, we should not only provide excellent acute stroke care, but also work to prevent strokes through better primary care and healthier lifestyles, and improved rehabilitation.
- **Developing leaders equipped to deliver change at pace and scale across the health system.** Delivering these improvements will require fundamental change in the way health care is conceived and organised – and with it leaders

¹ Green LW et al. Diffusion Theory and Knowledge Dissemination, Utilization, and Integration in Public Health. *Annu Rev Public Health*. 2009;30:151–174

who excel at driving improved quality, outcomes *and* long-term value, whether within particular institutions or across the whole health economy.

The challenges could not be more acute. The change required is radical. Yet the opportunity to save and improve lives is huge.

WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT: PARTNERSHIP SOLUTIONS TO MAJOR HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE CHALLENGES

UCLPartners is redefining the contribution that an academic health science system can make to health locally, nationally and globally, and to the UK economy. Our founding partners are a world class university and four major teaching hospitals; we are progressively widening the partnership to expand and enhance our population focus. A wider partnership not only increases our scale but also our expertise and capacity, bringing additional intellectual resources, energy and experience which we both need and appreciate.

The **objective** of UCLPartners is to:

Translate cutting edge research and innovation into measurable health gain for patients and populations through partnership across settings and sectors, and through excellence in education.

This objective highlights three distinguishing characteristics of UCLPartners.

The *first* is our relentless **focus on developing integrated, value-for-money, outcome-driven solutions to the most pressing health care challenges**. These solutions range from faster discovery, to new technologies, to new approaches to clinician education and professional development, to improved models of care. In other words, solutions that are relevant not only academically, but also to routine clinical practice in all settings – and to the health of populations in London and beyond.

The solutions we develop with our partners are:

- **Patient-led**, organising care around patients' needs and preferences
- **Population-focused**, taking a system-wide (rather than institution-based) view to deliver innovation at speed and scale across defined populations – with an emphasis on health outcomes as well as health care
- **Cross-boundary**, spanning primary, secondary and tertiary care, and connecting different phases of academic research – from those focused on discovery to those concerned with improving models of care.
- **Drawn on academic expertise** from the wide range of disciplines found in a multi-faculty university, from computational sciences to humanities, anthropology to bioengineering.

Our *second* distinguishing characteristic is our **partnership approach**: we develop solutions with a wide range of partners spanning patient groups, primary, community

and social care organisations, commissioners, universities, industry and government. Our role is not to mandate change or to “own” solutions ourselves. Rather, we work with our partners to co-create, test and implement solutions, ultimately embedding these solutions in normal ways of working. By demonstrating the benefit of integrated solutions, we support our partners in raising and delivering their goals for improving outcomes.

Our *third* distinguishing characteristic is our **focus on harnessing academia, across biomedicine, social and physical sciences, the humanities and other disciplines**, to solve the broader health problems of populations – such as cultural barriers to cancer screening in certain ethnic communities. We facilitate dialogue between academics, clinicians and populations to ensure that research is focused on impact.

These characteristics represent fundamental change in the way health care is conceived and delivered, and emphasise the relationship between health and health care. To make this change achievable and sustainable, we work with our partners to shift the mindsets and behaviours of both patients and professionals, and to break down cultural barriers between different institutions, professions and stages of care and academia.

Our approach to developing solutions has already yielded exciting results. Highlighting just four to date, these include:

- **A new model of care for acute stroke.** We have helped partners across London implement a new cross-sector model of care for stroke that has significantly reduced mortality. In North Central London (NCL), our partners achieved all seven RCP quality standards (nationally, only 7% of units have done so). Mortality for stroke in NCL is now reduced to below 10% against a 22% national average; the thrombolysis rate is now 12%, against national rates of 3-5%. London can now reasonably claim to have the highest published thrombolysis rates of any major city in the world
- **New models of integrated care.** We have supported delivery for Whittington Health, helping create a single organisation spanning hospital, community and primary care, organised around the needs of patients and the local population. Other integrated care projects include creating an integrated cancer system across North London, working with our programmes to develop more community based services, and work to empower patients with long term conditions
- **Creating a platform to develop new treatments for brain cancer.** We have worked with our partners to improve neuro-oncology services for patient benefit. The solution included consolidation of neuro-oncology surgery with a collaborative ethos; strong patient and family involvement; pathway redesign; major charitable commitment to R&D; and new clinical facilities. This has created the opportunity for a globally relevant R&D programme to address the previously intractable challenge of improving brain cancer survival through new treatments

- **“Open Eyes”**. We have worked with Moorfield’s Eye Hospital and the Institute of Ophthalmology to extend the application of “Open Eyes” to other patient groups and areas of care. This ground-breaking initiative is a clinically-driven electronic patient record, which can be owned by the patient, and designed around the needs of both patients and clinical workflow.

OUR BUSINESS MODEL AND PROGRAMMES

Our strong emphasis on working with our partners is reflected in our **business model**, which sees solutions across the health care spectrum developed in four broad stages:

Stage 1: We work with our partners to *understand* and prioritise population and patient needs for the health care challenge in question, and collaborate to develop improvement ideas

Stage 2: We *co-create and test* solutions with our partners, starting to embed and operationalise those solutions

Stage 3: Solutions are developed and *adopted at scale*, with partner organisations taking on increasing ownership; partners’ involvement in the definition of the problems to be solved facilitates the adoption of the solution

Stage 4: Solutions become embedded in and across partner organisations as normal ways of working. They move out of the UCLPartners portfolio and are *disseminated* widely, nationally and internationally.

At any one time UCLPartners is working on many projects across different stages of this business model: some 36 have been launched to date. We deliberately invest in a diverse portfolio of research and improvement projects across the health care spectrum – creating a flexible space for innovation.

Most of these projects fall within one of UCLPartners’ eleven **clinical programmes**. These include Cancer, Cardiovascular, Child Health, Digestive Health, ENT, Eyes and Vision, Immunology and Transplantation, Infection, Mental Health, Neuroscience, and Women’s Health. Each programme is led by an outstanding clinical-academic leader who champions change across the whole patient pathway, as well as through research and education – thus acting as a role model for the broader clinical-academic community. While some programmes are focused primarily on research and education, others are closely involved in clinical delivery: the emphasis is driven by where there is greatest potential to have impact for patients and populations.

In addition, UCLPartners drives a set of **cross-cutting support programmes**:

- **R&D.** We are working to integrate across the three Biomedical Research Centres, streamline activities of clinical trials units, and speed up approvals – thus making it easier for industry to work with our partners. One aim is that any patient touching the UCLPartners system has access to any trial which may benefit them.

- **Clinical quality.** We are developing a practical approach to whole pathway outcomes and value measurement in UCLPartners' programmes, and we are bringing together clinical leads across partners to enable joint learning on quality and safety – for example, an initiative focused on deteriorating patients aims to halve avoidable cardiac arrests across partner Trusts
- **Integrated care.** We are breaking down silos to organise care around patient pathways and needs, working with providers across the whole pathway of care – spanning primary, community, social, hospital and mental health care. This has included developing community based models of care and building links between primary care and hospitals
- **Population health.** This newly established programme will identify the interventions, programmes and pathways most likely to improve population health and reduce health care inequalities, linking closely to the eleven clinical programmes
- **Innovation.** We are defining and tackling barriers to the uptake of practices which would reduce unwarranted variation and deliver greater value across health systems through initiatives such as “After the Lightbulb”. This focus on why useful innovation frequently fails to scale-up in the NHS
- **IT.** We are working with partners and external organisations to ensure the right information is available in the right form to the right people, with patients in control of their own information wherever possible. For example, our initiative in adolescent diabetes is developing patient-owned records drawing on smart phones and social networking technology for patients and their families
- **Education.** We are leading a major redesign of the delivery of education to clinicians to meet future workforce needs, at medical undergraduate level, in early postgraduate training (MDECS) and for senior leaders (the UCLP Staff College). We are also supporting UCL to develop a new approach to Continuing Professional Development, and to include quality and safety in undergraduate curricula.

WORKING TOGETHER: WHAT WE OFFER OUR PARTNERS

Working with UCLPartners offers distinct benefits to organisations across the health care spectrum, including:

- **Patient and voluntary groups.** We bring access to, and dialogue with, leading academics and key service providers. We are committed to empowering patients to co-develop services that best suit their priorities and preferences
- **Local authorities and the Mayor's Office.** We bring the best of academia and the NHS to address health and health care in a joined-up way, focusing on reducing inequalities. In partnership with the other academic health

science centres, we are working to establish London as a truly world-class biomedical base on every dimension

- **Primary care.** We bring clinically-led relationships to the table, helping develop pathways of care in partnership with hospitals, and supporting the development of clinical commissioners. Additionally, we offer greater potential for GPs and others to participate in community- and population-based education and research
- **Local hospitals.** We bring access to and participation in networks of care; access to opinion leaders and clinical advocates; and greater opportunity to participate in research and education. This will help ensure that, as the NHS faces resource constraints, local hospitals remain vibrant and continually improve how they serve their local populations
- **Hospitals with regional or supra-regional services.** We offer more targeted, streamlined research processes and improved industry relationships. We also bring the opportunity to work with other NHS hospitals and community providers to develop patient flows and expand excellent services to larger population catchments – helping deliver measurably higher quality and value for more patients
- **Universities and researchers.** We bring greater access to populations, better industry relationships, opportunities for additional grant funding streams and support, and higher impact for research outputs, both in biomedicine and beyond.
- **Industry.** We seek genuine partnerships with pharma and devices industries to co-develop innovative therapies and diagnostics from proof of concept to large scale trials. We offer a ‘single portal’ for industry contact and the support of our business affiliate UCL Business.

How you can get involved

UCLPartners wants to work with individuals and organisations who share our passion to improve outcomes for patients and population health. There is a range of ways in which organisations work with us, some tighter, some looser. Many of the organisations we are working with across our projects are not formal partners of UCLP. Further, many come from outside our “home geography” of London. If you share our values and are interested in exploring the potential to work in partnership with us, please contact us at: enquiries@uclpartners.com.

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