

Reflecting on this year's R&D Forum

Written by [Rebecca Harper](#).

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Below Rebecca Harper, Research Governance Lead, shares thoughts following this year's R&D Forum. You can contact [Rebecca](#) if you need help with the research governance process, or if you have queries about research taking place across our area. To find out more about the NHS R&D Forum visit <http://www.rdforum.nhs.uk/>.

This year's R&D Forum celebrated 70 years of the NHS and had a huge attendance from members of the R&D community from all over the UK.



The highlights for me (not to mention the beautiful venue) included an interesting presentation from Nigel Rees, Director of R&D, Welsh Ambulance Trust about Archibald Leman Cochrane and his life leading up to his work on the Cochrane Reviews. He experienced lots of family deaths in his younger life and was at one time an Ambulance Attendant. He began his work by bringing Marmite or yeast extract to the front line during the war. Noting its positive effect in treating jaundice, he then communicated this to all barracks to improve health on the front line. He dedicated his life to evidence-based medicine and he experienced backlash initially from experts who didn't agree with his methods or believe that he had enough expertise. Even so, he fought on to bring evidence-based medicine to the forefront of healthcare, informing better decisions and saving lives.

I attended the 'Building professional relationships' workshop. This highlighted many of the things that we are already doing to collaborate in West Yorkshire, and the benefits of those relationships in improving research in health.



John Hiley (Senior Manager of the Research Department, Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust), Jane Dennison (Research Support & Governance Manager, Research & Bradford Institute for Health Research), me (on behalf of the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Clinical Commissioning Groups) and Tracy Watson (General Manager, Research & Bradford Institute for Health Research)

The main focus of the Forum this year was on GDPR, the future of research, working relationships and collaboration, and the potential impact of Brexit – all big topics to cover! There was a take home message about Brexit – that whilst there has been some preparation, ‘Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed’. It was suggested that our main strength is the data held within our NHS, NICE, and the referencing of the UK by Global markets to influence pricing and medicine choices.

The conference was a great opportunity to network with our R&D counterparts and find out how R&D is working in other areas, as well as for sharing the challenges we are all facing. There was lots of good practice highlighted and ideas shared.

The evening gala entertainment was amazing, with ‘waitresses’ doing a surprise (beautiful) rendition of Nessun Dorma and music from Les Misérables, followed by a disco and copious amounts of celebration for the 70th birthday of the NHS.

The next R&D Forum is planned for May 2019, to be held in Brighton. See you there!