

# Research In General Practice

*Why Getting Involved in Research Might Be Easier—and More Rewarding—Than You Think*

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For many GPs, the idea of research can feel a bit distant. It often brings to mind academic institutions, complex jargon, and a mountain of paperwork. In a busy practice, with clinical demands coming from every direction, adding “research” to the list can feel unrealistic—or even intimidating.

But here’s the truth: research is becoming an increasingly accessible and rewarding part of general practice. And it’s not about being a world expert in trial design—it’s about curiosity, collaboration, and improving care.

## Paperwork

Yes, the paperwork is real. There are protocols to follow, approvals to obtain, and sometimes what feels like an endless trail of forms. It can seem overwhelming at first—but the key message is: **you’re not expected to do it all yourself**.

The R&D team at the ICB and our local research delivery network (RDN) are both extremely helpful. They offer practical support with admin, governance, data management and actual research activities.

So, while the paperwork isn’t going anywhere, you don’t have to tackle it alone—and with support, it quickly becomes manageable.

## Why It’s Worth It

Despite the admin, research brings real, tangible benefits. Patients feel empowered knowing they’re contributing to something that could improve care for others. And being part of research brings fresh energy and learning into the practice. Depending on the type of research that you end up participating in, it can also grant your patients access to cutting edge medications that they may otherwise not be eligible for.

Research also can give you something you rarely get in standard appointments: more time with patients. Research consultations are often longer, allowing space for deeper conversations and more meaningful relationships. It’s a refreshing change of pace—and a reminder of why so some of us chose general practice in the first place.

## You Don’t Have to Start Big

Getting involved doesn’t mean running a trial from scratch. There are lots of ways to begin to get involved and it can start quite light touch. The first practical step is

usually getting in touch with someone else who's already active in the sphere (that includes me if you'd like). Even small steps make a big difference.

### **Research Is for Real-World Practice**

Research is no longer something that only happens in academic centres. It's happening in GP surgeries, with real patients and real-world problems. And it's shaping the future of care.

So yes—there's paperwork, there's jargon, and it can be a bit daunting at first. But with the right support, research becomes not only doable—but genuinely rewarding.

If you've been considering it, now's a great time to take that first step. Help is there, patients benefit, and your practice might just find a whole new sense of purpose in the process.