

# Research Briefing December 2025

## News and Events

- **Inclusion and community research seminar**-The Inclusion and Community Research theme at the University of East Anglia warmly invites all those interested in community-based research and inclusive research methods to an informal virtual meeting. **Wednesday 21 January 2026, 12:00 - 13:00:** [Professor Gwyneth Boswell](#) will share her research into violent young offenders, both in the UK and abroad. [Please register here.](#)
- **East of England RRDN MSK & Orthopaedics Online Symposium on Wednesday, 11 February, 2026 from 14:00 - 15:30.** The meeting will be held on Microsoft Teams and will be chaired by Dr Gouri Koduri, East of England RRDN MSK & Orthopaedics Regional Speciality Lead. A full agenda will follow. Please register [here](#). If you have any difficulties registering, please email [eo.e.rrdn@nihr.ac.uk](mailto:eo.e.rrdn@nihr.ac.uk).
- [NIHR ARC East of England inclusive research and digital exclusion](#)  
**Tuesday 27 January 2026, 13:00 – 14:15 Virtual event**-Join the [ARC East of England's Inclusive Involvement in Research](#) team for their monthly Inclusive Research [Community of Practice](#), where Shanice Thomas and Gill Benedikz will explore the impact of digital exclusion on older people and health and care services.
- **REC Guides for inclusive engagement** Anglia Ruskin University with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and Norfolk and Waveney ICBs have developed a suite of Research Ethics Committee (REC) guides as part of their NHS Research Engagement Networks (REN) projects. While the guides are intended for RECs, they are also a useful tool for those designing and delivering studies where inclusion of unhoused, refugee and asylum seeker, Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, Showmen and Boater communities are being considered. [Access the guides »](#)

## New Funding and Training opportunities

- NIHR ARC East of England secures funding to support transformation of the health and care system  
The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) has [announced a £157 million investment](#) over five years for 10 NIHR ARCs. NIHR ARC East of England, hosted by [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust \(CPFT\)](#), has been awarded £15.3 million to advance high-quality applied research.
- Applications remain open until mid-January for the [RDN's Strategic \(15 January\) and Wider Care Settings \(23 January\) Funding Calls for 2026/27](#), the allocations to be announced on 27 February 2026. In the meantime, RRDN EoE team is on hand to advise you on your applications for either funding calls, and anything else you might need help with, so please contact [eo.e.rrdn@nihr.ac.uk](mailto:eo.e.rrdn@nihr.ac.uk) if you have any questions.

## New Research

- [A groundbreaking international trial for treating prostate cancer has launched in the UK.](#) The trial is sponsored by US company PROCEPT BioRobotics and supported by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). It's investigating whether a novel therapy using robotics, AI and real-time imaging is as effective as traditional surgery. Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is one of the recruiting sites.
- [Major menopause in nursing and midwifery study opens](#) A major new study has been launched to examine how nurses and midwives experiencing menopause can be better supported in the workplace across the East of England. Researchers at the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT) have secured a national grant from the NIHR to lead the BOOST project, which stands for Building Occupational and Workplace Support for nurses and midwives working in health and social care during Menopause. [Read more.](#)

## Research Findings and Reports

- [Research shows how school absences impact parent's mental health](#)-an ARC East of England study investigating the effect of school absenteeism has found its significant impact on parents' health and wellbeing, ranging from strained relationships to increasing stress and causing financial pressure. The findings call for schools to prioritise delivering training that provides parents with timely support to help them navigate these challenges. [Read more.](#)
- [Improving care for women experiencing psychosis during menopause](#)-Lizzie Kenedler, Clinical Nurse Specialist at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, has recently completed a Research Fellowship project with the ARC East of England. Her project examined the experiences of women facing first episode psychosis during midlife and menopause, a group often living with longer illness durations and harder to treat symptoms. Read more about her work in [this blog](#).
- [New GP approach could boost HIV testing and prevention](#) A new strategy called PATH-GP (Prevention and Testing for HIV in General Practice) aims to help more people get tested for HIV and access free preventative treatment (PrEP) via NHS sexual health clinics. Full paper is published in [BJGP](#).
- [Burden of Cardiovascular Diseases in England \(2020-24\): A National Cohort Using Electronic Health Records Data](#)-a research paper published in the [Lancet Public Health](#) on the patterns of heart diseases before, during and after the Covid 19 pandemic in 57 million people in England. The study showed the changing rates of heart diseases, differences amount ethnicities and geographical areas in England. The researchers have developed a detailed [Cardiovascular diseases data dashboard](#) (to help researchers, policymakers, and the public to access and interpret their finding which available. It's hosted on the BHF Data Science Centre's website.
- [New vaccine offers fresh hope for controlling whooping cough](#) A human challenge trial supported by the NIHR has shown that a new vaccine could offer better protection against whooping cough. This follows a new [report](#) from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), which highlights that 2024 whooping cough numbers were at their worst in 30 years.
- [Sleep deprivation makes us less happy, more anxious](#) according to a new study. The study was published in the journal Psychological Bulletin by the American Psychological Association and synthesised more than 50 years of research on sleep deprivation and mood. Researchers analysed data from 154 studies spanning five decades, with 5,715 total participants and found that all three types of sleep loss resulted in fewer positive emotions such as joy, happiness and contentment among participants, as well as increased anxiety symptoms such as a rapid heart rate and increased worrying.
- [New guide to raise awareness of food poverty among forced migrants](#)-Researchers from the ARC East of England have developed a free, informative resource to help professionals working with migrants to better understand the causes of food poverty among migrants and provide more effective support.
- [East of England study finds 3 tools can improve autism assessments](#) An NIHR study has found 3 screening measures which can help clinicians improve autism assessments. Findings from their service evaluation suggest that combining personal accounts from individuals and developmental history from their families or caregivers early in the process can help decide which type of clinical assessment is required.
- [Associations between gestational diabetes and cardiovascular disease largely operate independently of postpartum causal pathways: A population-based cohort study in England](#) -Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) is associated with increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease (CVD). This study explores whether the associations are mediated by development of type 2 diabetes and other CVD risk factors.
- ['Getting it write' in an era of online electronic health records access in primary care: A qualitative study exploring the needs and requirements of underserved patients and carers](#) Most adult patients in England now have access to their primary care electronic health record (EHR), including free-text consultation notes, via the NHS App or other online services. As EHRs were not designed for patient audiences, this study aimed to explore patients' and carers' perspectives and understanding of simulated consultation notes.