

# UK Health Data Research Alliance



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**Dear Alliance Member**

We hope you enjoyed reading the first of our Alliance Community Bulletins.

This month, we put QResearch and Research Data Scotland in the spotlight. Both are relevant to themes that came up at our latest board meeting (primary care data, secure data environments and synthetic data) where we also agreed some changes to the Alliance. We also bring you a selection of updates from across the ecosystem, including the latest on the NHS Digital merger with NHS England, two great blog posts on TRE's, details about how to reserve your **free** spot on a selection of workshops organised by our Training Team [HDR UK Futures](#), plus much more.

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**News from the [UK Health Data Research Alliance](#)**

## ***Blog from QResearch – high-quality data for world-leading research***

The latest in a series of blogs that discuss the background and impact of each of the Trusted Research Environments (also known as Secure Data Environments) that have been part of the COVID-19 Data and Connectivity National Core Study. Through a Q&A style approach, Julia Hippisley-Cox told us about QResearch and what it is helping to achieve. [The blog](#) can be found on the '[Opinion](#)' page on the HDR UK website along with the first of the series [Scottish National Data Safe Haven](#).

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## **Research Data Scotland to implement synthetic data strategy**

[Research Data Scotland](#) (RDS) is working to improve access to public sector data for researchers. Within this remit, RDS has developed a [strategy](#) to move forward the production and research use of synthetic data in Scotland and has set up a synthetic data working group.

RDS, along with [HDRUK](#), Administrative Data Research UK ([ADRUk](#)) and [DAREUK](#), has also set up a UK synthetic data group to identify areas of common interest.

>> [Find out more](#) about RDS synthetic data plans in this blog

>> [Find out more](#) about ADRUK funding opportunity that is coming soon:  
Operationalising scaled production and sharing of synthetic data

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## Alliance Governance - updates approved by Alliance Board

At the January Alliance Board meeting, Members approved the proposed changes to the Alliance governance and ways of working as we embark on the next five years of the Alliance. The main changes include:

- Extend membership beyond data custodians.
- Transition Alliance Board to become the **Alliance Council**.
- Establish new **Alliance Executive Committee**, who will help shape the strategy and development of the Alliance.

The team will now focus on developing Terms of Reference for the Alliance Council and Alliance Executive Committee and update relevant documentation.

>> [Click here to read more about Alliance Governance updates](#)

>> [Download Alliance Board Meeting minutes here](#)

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## In other news

What's been happening across the ecosystem....

### European Groundshot—addressing Europe's cancer research challenges: a *Lancet Oncology* Commission

Mark Lawler and colleagues describe challenges for cancer research in Europe, including difficulties in implementation, poor infrastructure, and lack of real-world data. The authors also provide new analysis on disparities between and within countries in Europe, advocating for a pan-European approach to overcome this issue.

>> [Access article here](#)

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## NHS Digital merger with NHS England

On 1st February 2023, **NHS Digital** merged with **NHS England** bringing the NHS's national data and technology expertise together into one organisation, to support the best care for patients.

>> [Read full news article](#)

>> [Guidance for researchers](#)

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## Five projects funded to drive more coordinated secure use of sensitive data for research across the UK

Over £2 million has been awarded by UK Research and Innovation – the UK's largest public funder of research – to fund a series of Driver Projects as part of the DARE UK (Data and Analytics Research Environments UK) programme.

>> [Find out more](#)

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## The Royal Society - Data for emergencies

The report, chaired by Professor Chris Dye FRS, entitled '**Creating resilient and trusted data systems: The public perspective and recommendations for action**' makes five calls to action on public engagement; data protection guidance; stress testing; standardisation; and trusted research environments. In particular, it calls for a continual programme of public engagement and for regular stress testing of the data readiness of public and private sector organisations.



## Upcoming events

- [Researcher Roadshow: Exploring health data science](#) - 1 March  
This free to attend event is aimed at researchers and others working with health and social care datasets who would like to increase their understanding of roles of health data scientists and value of health data science.
- [HETT North](#) - 2 March  
Bringing the UK's leading Digital Health and Technology event to Manchester
- [National Conference for Health and Care Analytics](#) - 11-12 July  
The aim of Health and Care Analytics 2023 is to recognise analysts are influencers and shine a spotlight on the importance of our work, and how we're using analytics to lead the way in improving health and care for all. Do you have an outstanding piece of analytical work to share with conference-goers? [Submit an abstract](#) by 13th March.

**Free** to Alliance Members:

- [Health Information Engineering Workshop 2023](#) - 3 April, 27 & 28 April, 5 May  
This three-day expert-led workshop allows you to discover and use the latest Health Information Engineering tools. Attendees of the workshop will gain experience managing data and get to grips with relevant software engineering techniques.
- [Data Engineering for Health Research Workshop](#) - 3 & 24 April  
This 1.5 day workshop will be run by expert tutors Alan Davies and Iliada Eleftheriou from the University of Manchester and will give participants a grounding in Data Engineering in Python in a health data context.
- [Introduction to R Workshop](#) - 20 & 27 April  
A two-part workshop providing a complete introduction for anyone looking to get started in R in a health data setting, regardless of background or prior programming experience.

A limited number of free tickets have been set aside for Alliance members so contact us now at [learn@hdruk.ac.uk](mailto:learn@hdruk.ac.uk) to secure your place.

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## Thank you for reading!

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If you have any news or updates from across your organisation, that you'd like us to share with other Alliance Members please send details to [ukalliance@hdruk.ac.uk](mailto:ukalliance@hdruk.ac.uk) and we will look to include this in the next community bulletin.

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