To explore the impacts of research led by these healthcare professionals, we carried out a systematic review of the existing literature and qualitative interviews with managers and research-active clinicians at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust (ICHT).

### Positive impacts

Reported positive impacts were classified as six overlapping and interlinked categories, which described their research activity as:

#### Contributing to positive organisational reputation
- **Staff recruitment**: applicants attracted by research opportunities and reputation of clinical academics
- **Patient satisfaction**: choose ICHT services, report positive experiences

#### Improving services and approaches to patient care
- **Pathways of care**: effective and evidence-based
- **Patient and public involvement**: research addresses pertinent questions

#### Creating local research culture
- **Engagement in service improvement activities**: including audit and QI
- **Evidence implementation**: change practice in response to new evidence
- **Mentorship**: provide formal and informal research guidance and support

#### Aiding knowledge transfer and collaboration
- **Shared research knowledge and expertise**: locally, nationally, internationally and across disciplines
- **Academic outputs**: publication and presentation of research findings
- **Social media**: active dissemination and engagement in clinical and academic discussions

#### Promoting and developing the professions
- **Contribute to national clinical bodies**: develop national guidelines, teaching and education, mentorship and guidance
- **Peer review** – for journals, funding organisations, healthcare charities

#### Generating research income
- **Win research funding and support others to apply**: maintain and promote research activity and provide resources

### Opportunities

The lack of career options for individuals wishing to combine research and clinical practice was identified as a limitation. An ideal clinical academic career pathway would have:

#### Clear routes and steps for progression
- **Common pathway**: available for all disciplines outside medicine
- **Protected time**: for research, dissemination and implementation, limiting the need for short periods of backfill

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