


ROYAL BROMPTON & HAREFIELD NHS TRUST IS SET TO QUADRUPLE ITS COMMERCIAL RESEARCH INCOME OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, THANKS TO INTERIM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR FOR R&D GINETTE CAMPS-WALSH

Royal Brompton & Harefield 
NHS Trust

impact
executives

HARVEY NASH GROUP

Moving to a new beat



ROYAL BROMPTON & HAREFIELD (RBH) NHS Trust has a formidable reputation. A world leader in the treatment of heart and lung disease, it is also Europe's foremost respiratory research centre. Its cardiac, cardiovascular and critical care teams are among the top three health research teams in Europe.

Every year the Government had granted the Trust research funding of nearly £29 million, which represents 14 per cent of its annual turnover. So it came of something of a challenge to be told in 2006 that this automatic funding would be completely withdrawn by 2009. Instead, the National Institute for Health Research, a new body set up by the Department of Health, will allocate research funding on an entirely different, per project, basis.

"Plugging this financial hole, as well as ensuring we sustain our reputation for research excellence, clearly poses a

considerable challenge for the Trust," admits Finance Director Mark Lambert. "The funding is being gradually reduced until 2009/2010, when it will disappear completely. So far we have managed to balance our budget through a combination of cost cutting and

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additional government funding deriving from our new status as cardiovascular and respiratory biomedical research units. But we also have to earn our way out of trouble, and realised last year that an important way to do that was to significantly improve our revenue from commercial medical trials.”

Lambert and Professor Martin Cowie, Head of Research and Development (R&D) at the Trust, turned to Impact Executives for help. The agency fielded Ginette Camps-Walsh, who has deep knowledge and broad experience of medical research and marketing – plus an extensive network of contacts in the field as a result of her involvement with the medical marketing group of The Chartered Institute of Marketing. Camps-Walsh joined the Trust in July 2007 as Business Development Director for R&D.

She came into what Lambert admits was a difficult situation. "We received all this funding, but we had to prove very little to earn it," he said. "Because the funding was always automatic, we had little understanding of the capacity and capability we had in the field of research, or the hunger of our clinicians to do it. So Ginette had to spend longer than perhaps any of us had anticipated taking



THE ORGANISATION

Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Trust is a partnership of two specialist hospitals that are world-renowned for their expertise, standard of care and research success in the field of heart and lung disease. It carries out some of the most complicated surgery and offers some of the most sophisticated treatment available anywhere in the world. Every year it treats more than 90,000 outpatients and 26,000 inpatients from all over the UK and around the globe. On an annual basis staff perform over 3,000 angiograms/cardiac catheterisations, 1,800 thoracic surgery operations, 2,400 coronary angioplasties, 2,000 treatments for respiratory failure, and 1,200 heart bypass operations.

The Trust also works on numerous research projects that bring benefits to patients in the form of new, more effective and efficient treatments for heart and lung disease. It generates medical advances that are taken up by the NHS and by health providers further afield. Its main partner is Imperial College, London.

stock of the situation.”

Robert Craig, Director of Planning and Strategy at the Trust, admits: “Our research here was active and well regarded, but it was not well directed. We attracted and recruited bright young ‘academic’ clinicians and allowed them to develop their own interests and supported their academic aspirations, but it was all a bit random. Ginette quickly established that our record on recruiting patients to trials and on planning and delivering timely research outputs was poor.”

So though she was hired specifically to help grow commercial income, Camps-Walsh found herself helping to create an infrastructure that was better designed to attract research funding generally, including from government.

“For example,” she explains, “we were wasting time and money going for funding for trials that would never get off the ground because there weren’t

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companies seeking research partners, an approach that is already bearing fruit.

The third strand to her assignment, which finished at the end of May 2008, was to create robust activity and income forecasts for the next five years.

“Ginette showed us that our commercial research income, which is currently running at about £1 million to £2 million a year, could rise to between £8 million and £9 million a year, provided we behave in the right way and do the right things,” says Craig. “She showed us what a business-minded research organisation looks like and gave us confidence to exploit what are significant commercial opportunities.”

The Trust is creating a full-time commercial trials team in order to sustain the momentum Camps-Walsh created. As Lambert concludes: “This is a medium-to long-term game, and we are dedicated to continuing all the good work Ginette has done for us.”

THE INTERIM

Ginette Camps-Walsh qualified as a biochemist, and her first job was in research in a company that is now part of GE Healthcare. She quickly gained postgraduate marketing and management qualifications, and progressed through a series of marketing and research jobs in big pharmaceutical companies including DuPont, Bristol Myers Squibb, Baxter Healthcare and Hoechst (now Sanofi Aventis). More recently, she ran the UK subsidiaries of two small pharmaceutical and medical device companies.

She also has extensive experience as a consultant and interim manager and has done major consultancy projects for clients including the Department of Health, St Helier Hospital and the London Clinic.

She has recently contributed to a White Paper on marketing in the NHS – *The Real NHS: The benefits of a marketing approach* – for The Chartered Institute of Marketing, where she chairs the medical marketing group.

enough of the right kind of patients.”

She then began to assess what commercial markets the Trust should be focusing on and developed a marketing plan to target them.

She explains: “I contacted all the major research organisations, as well as the big pharmaceutical and medical devices companies themselves, and we presented the Trust’s credentials to them. That in itself was a big step forward. We had these impressive facilities and expertise, but we had never really gone out and ‘sold’ them.

“These companies were also pleasantly surprised to be contacted by us and to be asked how we could help them. My approach was all about focusing on what the customer wants and how we could best deliver it to them.”

Camps-Walsh augmented this broad marketing activity with more direct matchmaking between clinicians who wanted to run particular trials and

THE CLIENT

“I was responsible for plugging the gap in our finances caused by the loss of government funding, and I turned to Impact Executives as we already had an excellent relationship with their parent company Harvey Nash. Ginette really impressed us when we interviewed her. She had great experience, drive, enthusiasm and contacts.

We believed we needed an interim manager at this stage because although all the plans for growth were positive, we didn’t want to run the risk of hiring someone permanent only to find the opportunities weren’t actually there. What’s more, interim managers are very senior and experienced, so they can act quickly, cut through the politics and get things up and running for you very fast. The challenge then is to sustain the momentum.”

Mark Lambert, Finance Director, Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Trust.