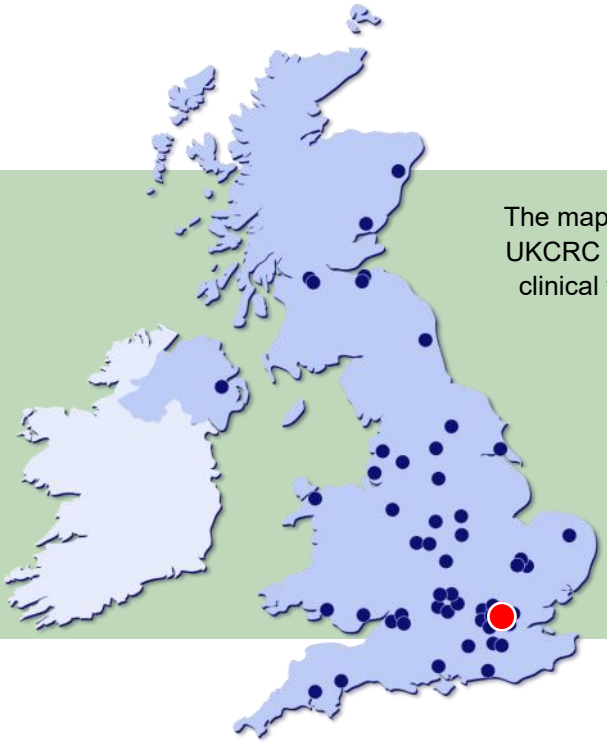
Royal Marsden Clinical Trials Unit (RM-CTU)

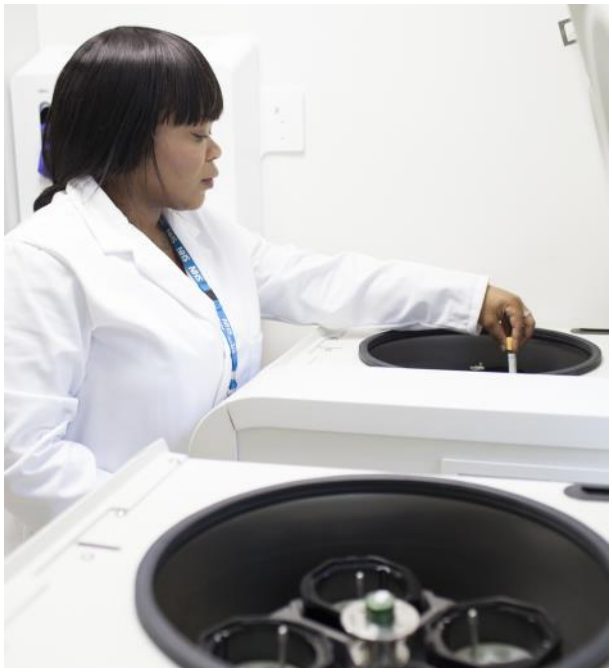
Better understanding of the underlying biology of COVID-19



The map shows all UKCRC registered clinical trials units

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Royal Marsden Clinical Trials Unit (RM-CTU) has worked at pace to develop and launch a study to describe the population characteristics and treatment outcomes of cancer patients with SARS-CoV-2 infection compared with those without SARS-CoV-2 infection.

In collaboration with the Francis Crick Institute, the CAPTURE study aims to shed light on interactions between a patient's immunity, COVID-19, the cancer, and cancer treatment.



Photograph courtesy of The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust

RM-CTU is embedded within the world leading cancer treatment centre, and the broader substantial cancer-focused clinical research and research governance infrastructure of The Royal Marsden.

Our UKCRC accredited CTU facilitated the rapid development and implementation of CAPTURE due to the ability to rapidly re-prioritise work and ensure an expedited sponsorship review. RM-CTU enabled funding to be rapidly agreed from our co-located NIHR BRC and The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity due to the recognised experience of the CTU and our track record in delivery. As a member of UKCRC CTU Network, we have benefited from access to training for our trial managers and the sharing of best practice from across the network of academic CTUs.

Patient involvement was key in developing this study, with four patient representatives as co-applicant for the study.

The value of CAPTURE arises from the lack of real-world clinical and epidemiological data focused on cancer patients, as well as a molecular understanding of the interaction between the host, cancer, virus, and the systemic anti-cancer therapies modulation.

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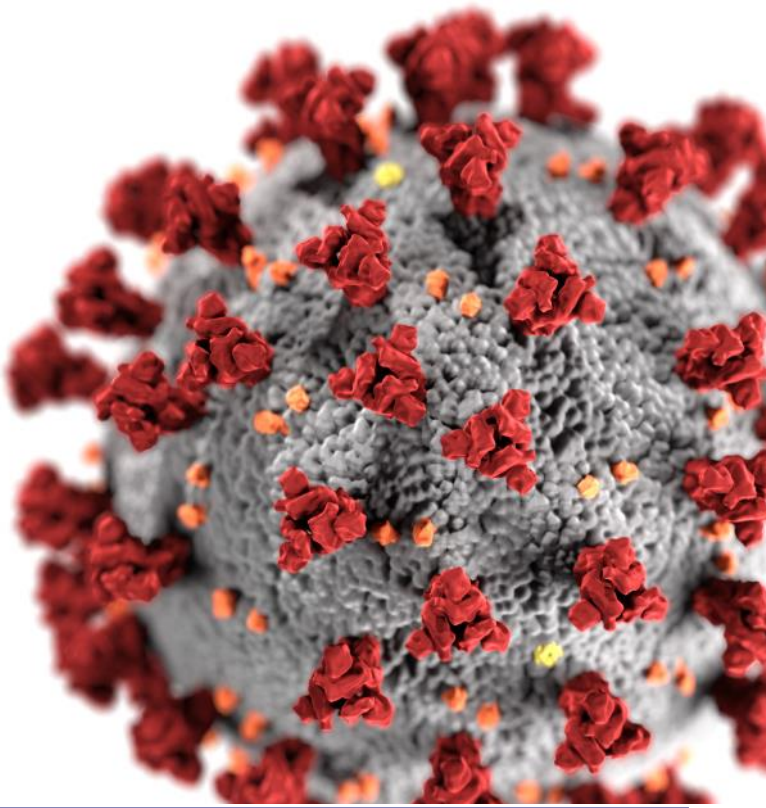
In the context of the COVID-19 global pandemic, cancer patients represent a population with distinct vulnerabilities given the underlying malignancy, high co-morbidity burden, advanced age, and compromised physiological reserve.

More importantly, whether systemic anti-cancer therapies such as chemotherapy, immunotherapies, targeted therapies impact anti-viral response, patient outcomes, and adverse events is unknown. Only a limited body of preclinical data is available to guide critical treatment decisions regarding safety, initiation, and cessation of systemic anti-cancer therapies in the context of COVID-19.

Whilst the study is long-term, researchers will aim to provide interim data six months after the study has commenced to help inform immediate clinical decision-making, with an overall aim of minimising risk of severe infection and maximising cancer control.



Virus image: CDC / Alissa Eckert & Dan Higgins