

## NRS Network public survey on restarting research

### Aim

The NRS network managers were interested in garnering the public's perspective on restarting clinical research, particularly:

- whether research should restart
- whether some studies should be prioritised over others and
- public confidence in taking part in research studies.

The rationale was to have some understanding of the public's perspective and preferences regarding restarting research and participation in research studies, to inform decision making on study prioritisation and dispelling participants' concerns.

### Survey dissemination

The survey was distributed by NRS Network staff to established PPI groups, colleagues, friends and family through email and social media (Twitter, Face Book) as well as advertised on the NRS and CSO webpages. Irina McLean also distributed the survey to social care contacts and the SHARE emailed the survey link to 2000 people on their register.

### Results

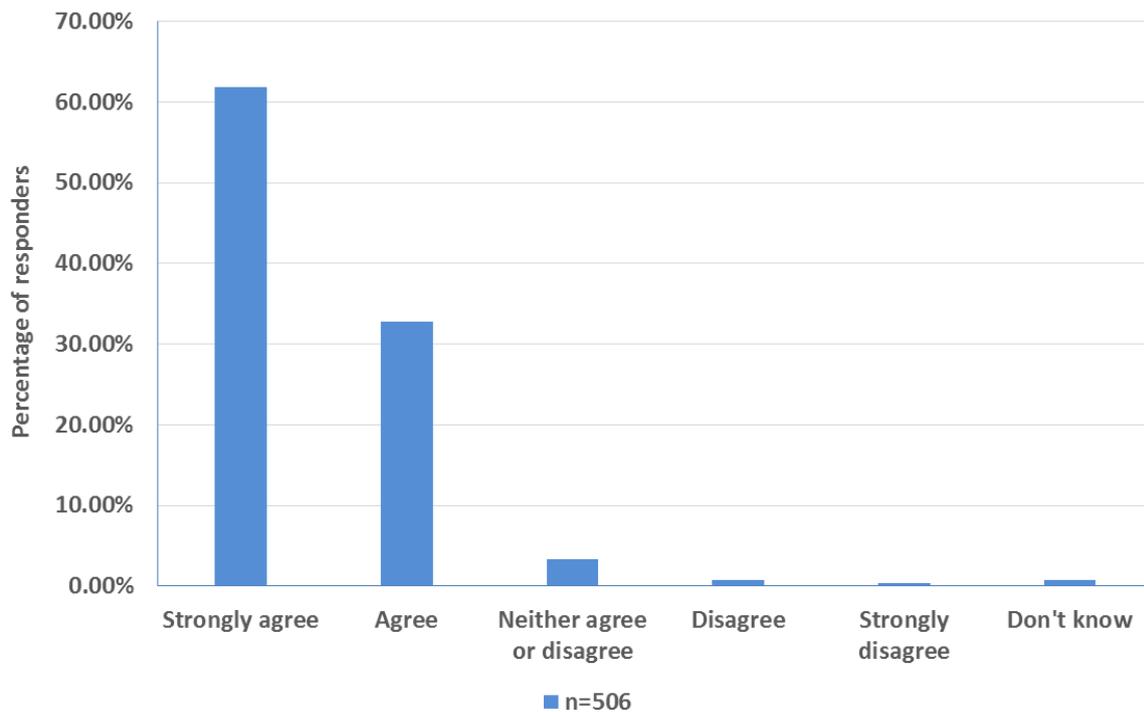
The survey was launched on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2020. The data was reviewed on four occasions: at the end of each month in July (n=74), August (n=165), September (n=473), The survey was closed on the 16<sup>th</sup> October by which time 506 people from across Scotland had responded.

In summary:

- The majority of responders were in favour of restarting research (95%)
- Most responders (72%) felt some research should be prioritised over others. See Figure 1
- Many responders were happy to attend research visits at hospital sites (73%) but preferred research visits at home (86%), at their GP practice (83%) or to coincide with an outpatient appointment (83%). See Figure 2
- When asked what would make them feel more comfortable to take part in research studies, people showed a strong preference for PPE (for research staff, 88%; for participant, 83%), having information on the safety measures undertaken (88%), and combining research visits with clinical appointments (76%). See Figure 3
- Although responders were also willing to take part in remote study visits (Yes, 72%, No 14.5%, and don't know 13.5%), remote visits alone was the least preferred option (38%). See Figure 3

- Responders reported they were aware of research before COVID-19 (83%) and that it is a requirement for the development of new treatments (37%). However, 11% of responders said they were now more aware of research, and that research is required for the development of new treatments (11%).
- The majority of people were moderately or a little worried about catching COVID (66%), but 26% of people were a great deal/a lot worried. 8% of responders were not worried at all. Figure 4
- The most responders were female (67% F, 33% M) and aged 30-64 (62%).

**Figure 1: Now that all research is starting up again, should some research studies be prioritised over others?**



**Figure 2: Which of the following would you be happy to visit to participate in a research study (n=506)?**

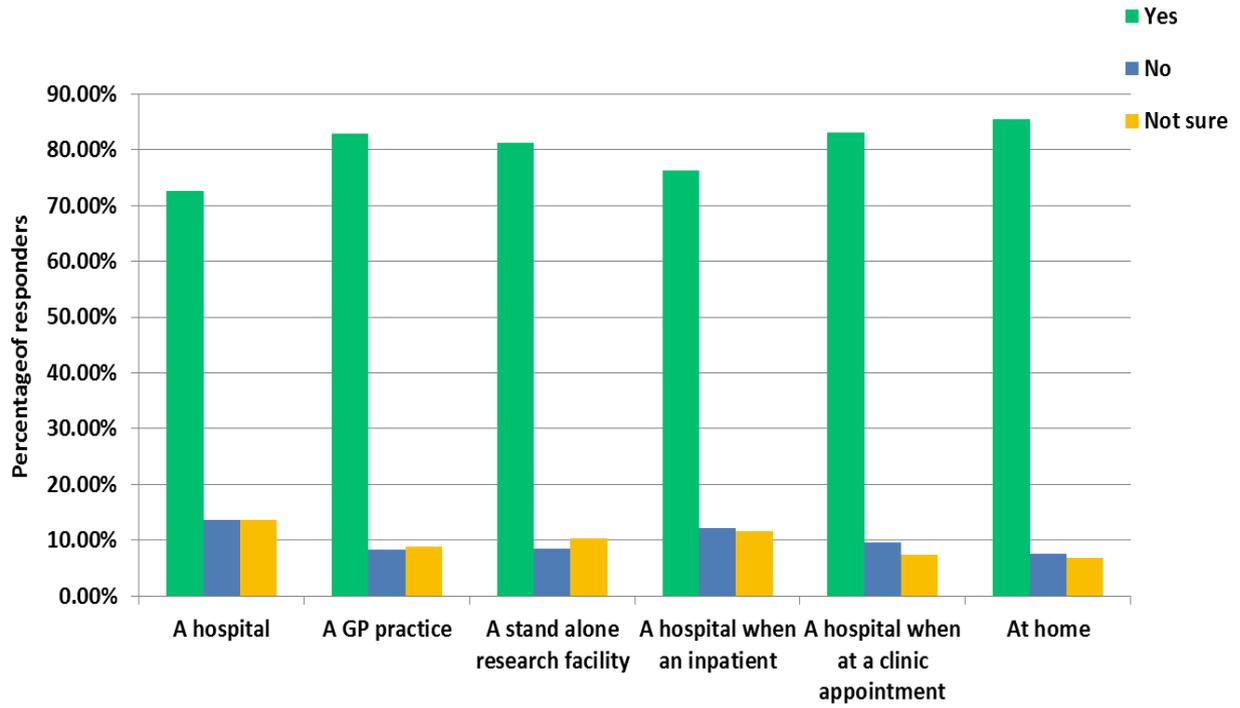


Figure 3: What would reassure you to feel comfortable to take part in research (n=506)?

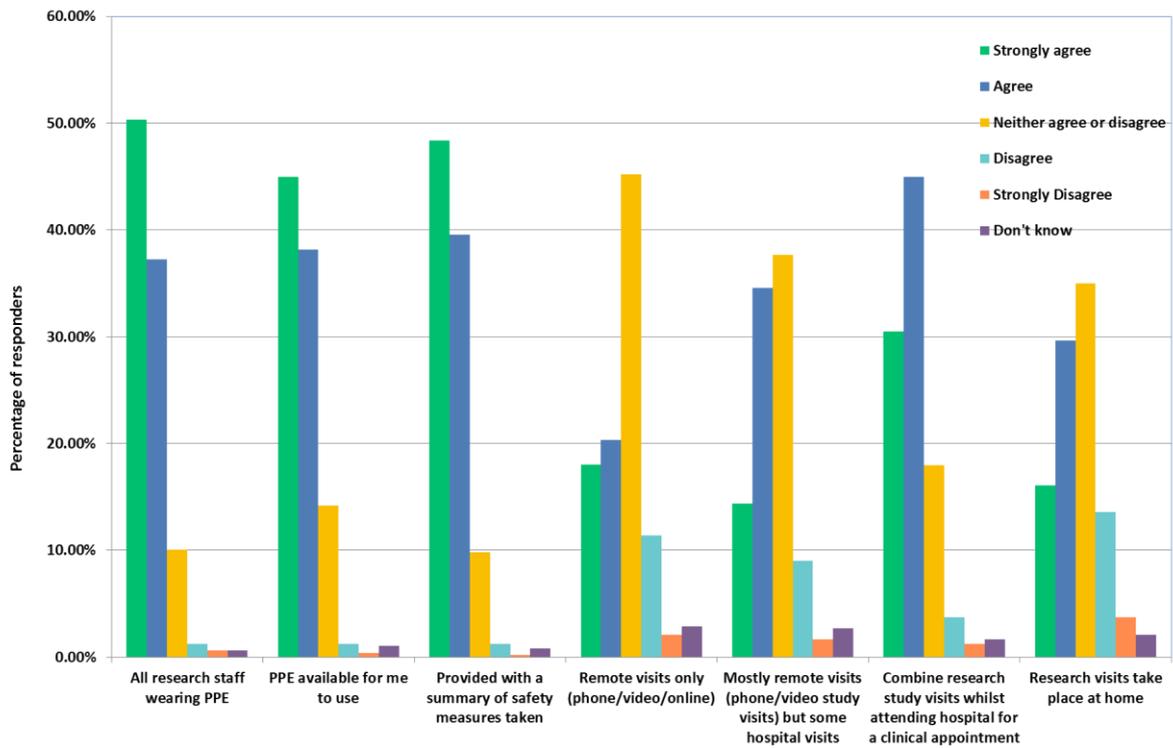
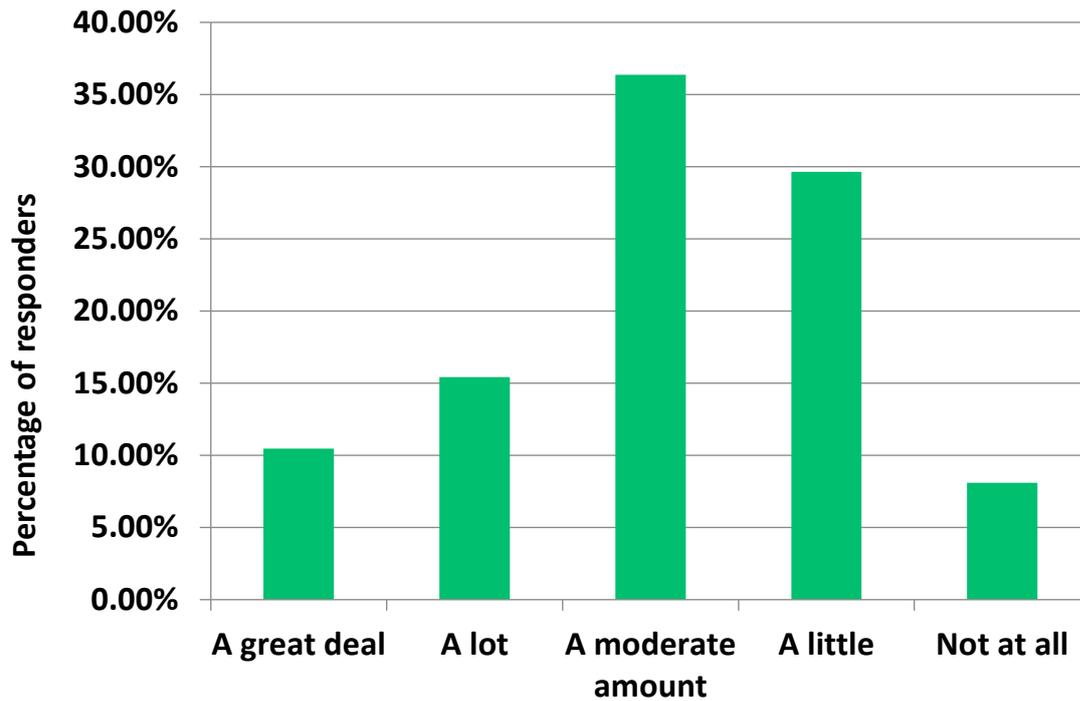


Figure 4: How worried are you that you might catch the COVID-19 virus (n=506)?



### Conclusions

From the 506 responses received, people were very much in favour of research restarting and that there should be some prioritisation. A small increase in the awareness of research, and the need for research for new treatments, was observed.

Responders were still happy to attend for research visits at NHS sites with some increased interest in mixed clinical and research visits or home visits, but very much with appropriate safety measures in place.

People were still concerned that they might catch COVID.