CAREER CO-PILOT · DOMAIN DEEP DIVE · Q1 2026

Clinical Research

Career Intelligence Report · January to March 2026

66	14%	49	Band 5
Q1 ROLES	BAND 8+	EMPLOYERS	MODAL BAND

WHAT'S INSIDE

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DOMAIN PARTNER

Clinops Academy

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Overview

Clinical Research — Q1 2026 Snapshot

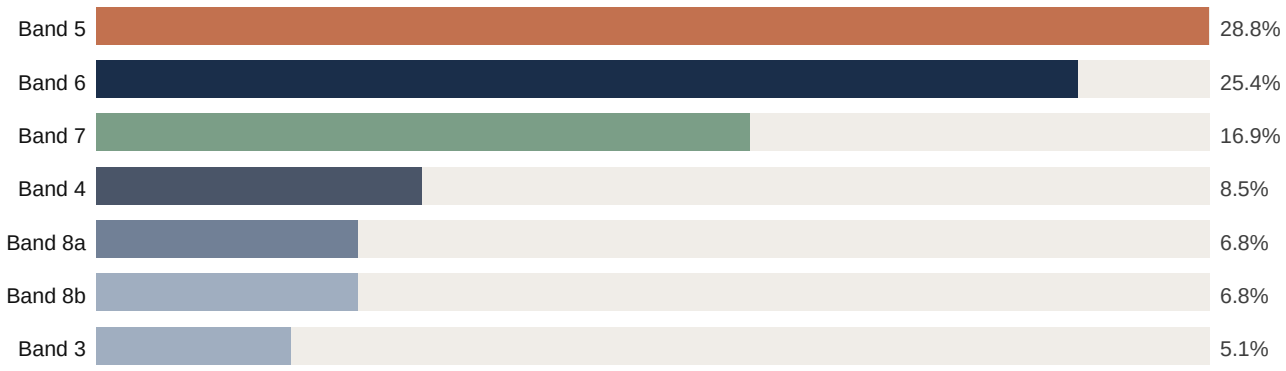
We tracked 66 roles in Clinical Research with closing dates in Q1 2026 (January to March 2026). With 14% of roles at Band 8 or above, this domain continues to offer strong senior pathways for professionals with the right experience. The Band 5 to 6 ratio stands at 0.59.

66 Roles tracked Q1 2026	**9 (14%)** Senior roles Band 8+
Band 5 Modal band	**0.59** Band 5 to 6 ratio

Band Distribution

Grade Profile — Q1 2026

The band distribution below shows how 66 tracked roles in Clinical Research were distributed across AfC grades in Q1 2026. Higher proportions at Band 7 and above indicate a domain with strong senior representation.



Employer Intelligence

Top Hiring Organisations — Q1 2026

Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was the most active organisation in Clinical Research during Q1 2026, accounting for 8% of the roles we tracked. Across the quarter, 49 unique organisations were recruiting in this domain.

Organisation	Roles
Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	5
University Hospital of North Midlands NHS Trust	3
Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust	2
The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust	2
Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	2
South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust	2
The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	2
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust	2

Geography

Top Hiring Locations — Q1 2026

London was the primary location for Clinical Research roles in Q1 2026, accounting for 15% of tracked roles. Roles were distributed across 37 locations.

Location	Roles
London	10
Cambridge	8
Liverpool	3
Stoke on Trent	3
Manchester	3
Cardiff	2
Torquay	2
Sunderland	2

Role Landscape

Most Common Job Titles — Q1 2026

The title landscape in Clinical Research reflects the range of entry points and seniority levels active in Q1 2026. Understanding which titles recur most frequently helps professionals identify the right keywords for job searching and CV positioning.

Job Title	Count
Research Nurse	9
Clinical Research Nurse	6
Research Programme Manager	3
Research Project Manager	3
Research Coordinator	3
Research Data Manager	2
Research Nurse/Clinical Research Practitioner	2
Research Assistant	2

Career Intelligence

What This Means for Your Career

ENTRY PATHWAY

Clinical Research is one of the most accessible NHS non-clinical domains for nurses and clinicians. Band 5 is the modal grade at 29%, with Band 6 at 25% — together accounting for over half of all roles. Research Nurse and Clinical Research Nurse are the two dominant titles, both of which explicitly value registered clinical professional status and clinical procedural skills including venepuncture and cannulation.

WHERE TO TARGET

Cambridge University Hospitals was the standout recruiter with 5 roles — the highest employer concentration in this domain. Cambridge as a location recorded 8 roles, second only to London's 10. This reflects the concentration of academic medical centres and NIHR research infrastructure around Cambridge. London and Cambridge together account for 27% of all Q1 2026 clinical research roles.

Q1 2026 VS Q4 2025

Q1 2026 recorded 66 Clinical Research roles. Senior representation at 14% is consistent with Q4 2025, reflecting the predominantly Band 5 to 7 nature of this domain. The Band 5 to 6 ratio of 0.59 indicates good mid-grade progression opportunities for research nurses building their portfolio. The domain's geographic concentration in academic centres has remained stable across both Q4 2025 and Q1 2026.

DOMAIN PARTNER

DOMAIN PARTNER: Clinops Academy (clin-opsacademy.com) — Supporting professionals entering and advancing in clinical project management across the NHS and life sciences sector.

Methodology

This report covers roles with closing dates between 1 January and 31 March 2026 (Q1 2026), tracked through Career Co-Pilot's jobs monitoring pipeline. Our pipeline tracks digital and non-clinical health roles across organisations in England and Wales — it does not represent the complete universe of NHS jobs. Band data is sourced directly from job postings; non-standard or missing bands are excluded from band analysis but included in volume counts.

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Explore this domain: careercopilot.academy/insights/clinical_research

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