



Megaphone Online

October 2023

the voice of Health Sciences' staff and students

Department welcomes Professor Chris Whitty

Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England, received an honorary degree from the University at our ceremony in July. Ahead of the ceremony, he gave a short talk to staff and research students on current priorities followed by a Q&A session.

Before becoming Chief Medical Officer, Chris was Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department of Health and Social Care, head of the National Institute for Health and Social Care Research (NIHR), interim Government Chief Scientific Adviser and Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department for International Development.



Picture shows L-R, Professor Kate Flemming, Professor Chris Whitty and Professor Una Macleod.

A practising NHS consultant physician and epidemiologist, Chris was also Professor of Public and International Health at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and undertook research on malaria and other infectious diseases in Africa and Asia as well as the UK.

Picture shows L-R, Professor Kate Flemming, Professor Chris Whitty and Professor Una Macleod.

In this issue:

- Welcome new students
- Student news
- Research news
- Staff news

Farewell Mid20 and Hello Mid23

On the 7th September we said goodbye to our Mid20 cohort at their celebration event.

A very warm welcome to our Mid23 cohort who started with us in September.

We wish you all the very best of luck as you join an amazing programme and profession.

Pictured right, Mid20 and below Mid23.



Welcome to our new intake of Nursing Associates



Welcome September 2023 Nursing Cohort

A warm welcome to our September 2023 nursing cohort. We wish you every success and hope you enjoy your time with us.



Student News

July Graduation

Congratulations to all our graduates who attend our graduation ceremony in July. As well as PhD, postgraduate and undergraduates, our second cohort of Foundation Degree in Science in Health and Social Care: Nursing Associates also graduated.



Pictured left and below our nursing associate graduates



Pictured above our staff ahead of the procession and right, L-R Jen Brown, Tiffany Damon (Masters in Health Research graudate) and Sarah Blower



Mid22 celebrate the end of stage 1

Our second year midwifery students celebrated the end of stage 1 and shared their reflections and achievements from their first year.

Good luck in stage 2.



Student takes on Council of Deans Student Leadership programme

Congratulations to adult nursing student Becky Nisbet who has successfully gained a place on the Council of Deans Student Leadership programme.

Becky is one of a number of nursing students who have been selected as part of the 2023-24 cohort. The programme is a partnership between the Council of Deans of Health and the Burdett Trust for Nursing.

The programme aims to promote and develop leadership skills in future nurses, midwives and allied health professionals by working with first and second year pre-registration students. The programme has a mix of teaching styles, networking events across the UK with other members of the cohort and individual meetings with an allocated coach.



Becky said: "I am really honoured to have been selected to be part of the programme and I'm really looking forward to it."

Professor David Barrett, Deputy Head of Department (Teaching) said: "I'm thrilled that Becky has been selected to be part of the programme which will provide additional development skills outside of the nursing curriculum here at York. Congratulations Becky and good luck."

To find out more about the programme visit the programme's [website](#).

Becky is also standing as a candidate for the RCN Professional Nursing Committee. Voting is now open so if you are a UG nursing student, please support Becky and [vote via the website](#).

Good luck Becky.

Student News

Student shares Summer School experience

Ben Allen, former MNursing student, shares his experience of a Summer School at the University of Konstanz, Germany, situated in a beautiful area called Bodensee by Lake Constance - the 3rd largest lake in Europe, bordered by Germany, Switzerland and Austria.

Ben writes: “The Summer School was co-organised and partly funded through the European Reform University Alliance (ERUA); lecturers from universities in the alliance participated in delivering some of the teaching. The University of York has a partnership with the University of Konstanz (they’re both 1960s universities), so I was allowed to access some of the ERUA funding too.”

“It was about the topic ‘innovation and social engagement for Europe’, so we covered a whole range of topics, including: social innovation, graphic design, data management, digital health data, linguistics and careers skills.

There were optional modules too - I chose one on multi-morbidity, delivered by a Senior Lecturer from Roskilde University, Denmark and it was so interesting to hear about the multi-morbidity situation in Denmark and potential solutions for tackling this. We also did various group projects and group presentations.”



“In addition to the studying, we had a really fun, packed social programme - this included: boat tours to places on the lake such as Lindau, going to an Andy Warhol exhibition, visiting Mainau (a flower island), visiting Meersburg Castle, a tour of Konstanz city, visiting the very impressive Rhine Falls in Switzerland (which we timed really well as there was an incredible evening firework display for the Swiss National Day, the following day), watching a funny but also serious German film about social issues in deprived areas of Berlin, pizza nights/meal nights/games nights, going rowing & swimming in the lake and more.”

“I simply had the best time; it was a really enriching experience from being my first experience of solo international travel, to experiencing study abroad, to making new, lovely friends from countries all over Europe (of different backgrounds/degree disciplines) who I hope to be able to meet up with in the future. I would certainly recommend suchlike opportunities to students in Health Sciences and advocacy of these sorts of opportunities to students as well.”

Student News

New parking arrangements at Harrogate Hospital

Harrogate District Foundation Trust hospital have installed automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras across all of the Trust site car parks and details can be found on the Trust Intranet Home Page. All staff/students who require parking on site will need to apply online for a new parking permit which can be done by visiting: www.cpppermitsystem.co.uk/harrogatedistricthospital

Due to the limited number of parking spaces on site there is a points based criteria assessment centred on a number of factors including shift patterns and distance from site. Please note that where vehicles park in contravention to the Trust parking rules then a Parking Charge Notice (PCN) will be issued by Parking Eye.

I don't want to pay for a full-time permit as I don't park on site every day, what can I do?

For any staff/students that don't want to pay for a full-time permit, they can elect to choose a "payment via Evology Autopay" permit. Follow this link: <https://evologyparking.com/app/>

When using this Evology permit type, you will be able to pay for daily parking at the amount of £2.20. The Evology Autopay Permit allows motorists to sign up for an account either add money to their funds or link it up with their bank cards. Evology Autopay will then automatically take payment for the days that you park onsite using the ANPR cameras to verify when your vehicle arrives. Staff are not permitted to park in the visitors car park, or Fewston or Strayside car parks during the hours of 8am- 5:30pm, when using this app. Those doing so will risk being issued a parking charge notice (PCN). Evology App users are able to park in the Briary, Heatherdeane, Willaston or 26 Wetherby Road.

However, staff/students that use the Evology Autopay Permit and work on irregular shift patterns between 5:30pm-8am can park in Fewston car park and will not be charged. This is to ensure the safety of staff working late hours at Harrogate District Hospital. Alternative parking is available in residential areas surrounding the main hospital site - please park responsibly and be aware of any parking restrictions.

Careers support for Postgraduate Researchers

Did you know that PGRs can access tailored careers resources online and 1-1 careers appointments and application/interview advice ?

PGR careers resources on the [York Graduate Research School website](#) includes information on: career planning; career options in and outside academia; building skills and experience; job search; CVs, application and interview advice. PGR careers advice appointments can be booked with the PG careers consultant, Janice Simpson, on [Handshake](#). Appointments can be made at any stage of your PhD to discuss any aspect of career planning, from exploring ideas to building up skills and experience, re-positioning past experiences towards a new direction, or finding and applying for opportunities. Appointments can also be used for interview practice/preparation. If you would like an appointment but you cannot find a time to suit you, contact Janice directly (janice.simpson@york.ac.uk).

Central careers events and fairs are open to PGRs unless otherwise stated - search and register on [Handshake](#). Professional development and employability workshops for PGRs can be found in the [Researcher Development Programme](#).

Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education (CAIPE)

The University of York is now a Corporate Member of CAIPE (Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education).

CAIPE is the leading organisation for interprofessional education (IPE) in the UK and their website includes a wide range of resources that are easily accessible. To access these, go to their website at: <https://www.caipe.org/>.

Most resources are accessible but if you want full access then you can use a sponsored log in account'. Please feel free to also share this with your students:

Click on the link or type in the following into your web browser: [caipe.org/membership/organisation/add-login](https://www.caipe.org/membership/organisation/add-login)

Use the drop-down box to find the University of York, use the second box to add your own email address and click 'verify'. Add the required 'account information' on the following page and then press 'submit and confirm'. You will then receive email confirmation that you have successfully joined.

Free Forum Attendance

One of the many benefits of membership is the opportunity to attend their bi-annual forums where innovative ideas are shared and provides an excellent opportunity to meet others with an interest in IPE. The next forum will take place on 21st March 2024 at the University of Nottingham. If you are interested in attending then please contact Melissa Owens (melissa.owens@york.ac.uk) for further information.

We are restricted to the number of people who are allowed to attend, so attendance will be on a first-come-first-served basis.



Library Update

What's new from the library?

The new academic year is upon us and we've been busy making changes in the library.

New resources

We've recently purchased two new resources: an upgrade to the CINAHL nursing database and ClinicalKey ebooks for nursing and midwifery.

CINAHL Complete is now CINAHL Ultimate, a larger version of the familiar nursing database with more full text articles and references. Access it now through the Library Subject Guide:

subjectguides.york.ac.uk/health-sciences

ClinicalKey provides ebook versions of many core texts across both nursing and midwifery, including lots of titles which are available online for the first time. You'll find links to titles in YorSearch or from your module reading lists.

New self-guided tour

If you're visiting the library for the first time or need a refresher on where things are, our self-guided tour is for you. Follow our information and videos to find your way. Get started using the poster in the library entrance or on our website: york.ac.uk/library/visit/tour

New request form

We've made it even easier to request new items for the library, by bringing our three request forms into a single new form. Whether you need a new book, a journal article or a book chapter, the new form is your one-stop shop. Access the form on the library website:

york.ac.uk/library/resources/borrowing/tell-us-what-you-need

New booking policy

We've changed how you can book study rooms and desks, which you can now reserve up to 7 days in advance (rather than 3). Remember to cancel your booking if you no longer need it, plus there are lots of areas of the library where you don't need to book in advance at all. Book a space using our calendar or interactive maps: york.ac.uk/library/visit

Keep in touch

Follow us @UoYLibrary on Instagram, X and TikTok to keep up-to-date with changes in the library. You can contact us in a number of ways if you need help: york.ac.uk/library/contact.



GPs report working practices that still favour men

Women GPs are reluctant to take on senior partnership roles due to fears over maternity leave, sickness pay and work life balance, a new study has concluded. Becoming a GP partner means taking on extra responsibilities, but has benefits including control over the practice and generally higher pay.

The number of GP partners is falling, and there appears to be a reluctance amongst both men and women to take on these roles. Women, however, make up 53% of the UK general practitioner workforce, but only 41% of GP partners. This is contributing to a considerable gender pay gap in general practice.

Researchers at the University of York used interviews, online focus groups and social media data to explore the challenges that GPs face in career progression, exploring differences in men's and women's career progress in general practice and their thoughts around partnership roles.

Both men and women viewed partnership as likely to be significantly more work, with salaried, locum or private roles offering greater work-life balance - particularly appealing given current workload pressures.

Other common factors included a perceived lack of training in the business skills needed for partnership roles, concern about whether the partnership model would exist in the future, and a general feeling of being undervalued by the UK government.

Women, though, experienced additional barriers. They reported particular concerns about contracts and the impact of partnership on maternity leave - in particular how they get paid during this period as a business partner - and balancing the needs of work and family.

Attitudes from colleagues towards women who chose part-time work to accommodate childcare was viewed as largely negative, affecting how 'encouraged' they felt to apply for more senior roles, particularly those without a role-model to guide them on what was possible with their careers after having a family.

Women GPs also reported caring for a disproportionate share of female patients and children, and those in partnership roles tended to be given more HR responsibilities compared to male colleagues.

Dr Laura Jefferson, Research Fellow at the University of York's Department of Health Sciences, said: "General practice is one of the preferred career choices amongst women medical students, but even after adjusting for people who work part-time, a 15% gender pay gap exists for GPs - the largest of all medical specialties.

"Research has suggested this may be partly due to women GPs' lower likelihood to take on partner roles in practices. Our research has given us in-depth understanding of reasons for this, which we can now learn from to try to encourage more women into partner roles in future. It is clear from our study that long-standing challenges of balancing work and caring responsibilities still exert more influence over women doctors' career choices, though we also found discriminatory or prejudiced attitudes towards women's preferences that created barriers to their progression and lower confidence in negotiating pay."

"We noted one report, for example, from a female GP who was so grateful for paid maternity leave and flexible working arrangements around childcare that asking for more income was assumed to be a step too far."

Professor Karen Bloor, from the University's Department of Health Sciences, said: "There are many concerns around GP partner roles that exist regardless of gender, many of which need to be dealt with at a national level as well as within practices, if we are to maintain the partnership model of general practice into the future."

Research News

University of York researchers to lead new hub to support clinical and applied health and care research

Researchers at the University of York, together with partners at the Universities of Sheffield and Leeds, have been awarded funding to provide integrated research advice and collaboration to health and social care practitioners and researchers across England.

One of eight National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Research Support Service (RSS) Hubs, the partnership between the Universities of York, Sheffield and Leeds will bring together expertise in statistics, data science, randomised controlled trials, qualitative methods, health economics, evidence synthesis, research delivery and patient and public involvement in research across health, public health and social care.

The Hub, which is hosted by the University of York, will mobilise a critical mass of research methods expertise and make it accessible to health and social care practitioners. It will bring together interdisciplinary teams to undertake research in areas of strategic importance to NIHR, for the benefit of the public and patients including in under-served regions and communities with unmet health needs. The team at York includes researchers from the Centre for Health Economics, Social Policy Research Unit, York Trials Unit, and the Department of Health Sciences.

The Hub will foster and sustain a vibrant, diverse, interdisciplinary community of researchers, professional support staff, public and patient contributors and lay researchers. The funding will also facilitate development and innovation in research methods.

Catriona McDaid, Professor of Applied Health Research at the University of York and Co-Director of the Hub, said: “We are committed to making the outstanding research methods expertise across the three institutions accessible to practitioners and researchers working within NIHR remit, and to undertaking inclusive research that is relevant to population needs.”

Catherine Hewitt, Professor of Statistics at the University of York and Co-Director of the Hub, added: “This is also a fantastic opportunity to strengthen our capacity for methodological innovation and build research capacity in geographical areas, disciplines and topics currently underserved by research.”

[Find out more.](#)

Early years programme boosts young children's maths skills by three months

Researchers have shown that a maths programme can add three months of additional progress to the learning and skills ability of young children. Analysis also suggested that the programme, which focuses on the professional development of early years teaching staff, shows potential in closing the attainment gap between children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.

Children eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium who received the programme made, on average, up to six months of additional progress in maths. Costing just over £7 per child per year, the programme, called Maths Champions, offers inexpensive, evidence-informed support for nurseries looking to boost mathematical development in their early years setting.

The Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) independent evaluation of Maths Champions, delivered by the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA), and undertaken by a team from the University of York and Durham University, provides more evidence of the benefits on young children's learning and development of providing structured professional development and support to staff working in early years settings.

Principal Investigator, Dr Lyn Robinson-Smith, from the Department of Health Sciences, said: "This research has shown the Maths Champions programme to be a successful mechanism for improving the quality of early maths practice, and subsequently positively improving all children's maths and language attainment within the same year. Effective early years education is predictive of children's later attainment, and therefore it is important that early years interventions are rigorously evaluated."

Over 1,300 children, aged three and four, from 134 early years settings (both Private, Voluntary and Independent and school-based nursery settings) took part in the trial, which ran from October 2021 to June 2022. Co-author of the report Professor Carole Torgerson, from the Department of Education at the University of York, said: "Staff in nurseries were extremely positive about all elements of the Maths Champions programme. "They highlighted the increased mathematical confidence and engagement in numeracy activities of both children and nursery staff. We recommend wide implementation of this effective numeracy programme in early years settings."

Children's development was measured using the Assessment Profile on Entry for Children and Toddlers (ASPECTS) maths score. A smaller EEF-funded trial of this programme, completed in July 2018, found similarly positive results.

Co-applicant of the report Caroline Fairhurst, from the Department of Health Sciences at the University of York, said: "The results of this large, rigorously designed and conducted randomised controlled trial indicated that children in nurseries allocated to receive the Maths Champions programme made, on average, three months' additional progress in maths and language (reading and phonological awareness) attainment compared to children in the control nurseries. We found that the Maths Champions programme may also be particularly beneficial for children who are eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium, but this result would need to be confirmed in further studies as it was based on a relatively small number of children."

Professor Becky Francis CBE, Chief Executive of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), said: "Today's findings are hugely significant, giving early years educators a much needed, proven, cost-effective programme to consider when looking to make changes to their early numeracy provision. "Programmes like Maths Champions have the power to help us leverage this critical period in children's development, using it to make sure that they build the foundations they need to achieve their potential."

Owning a pet does not reduce symptoms of severe mental illness, study shows

A survey, conducted by the University of York, revealed that living with an animal - a dog, cat, fish or bird for example - did not improve wellbeing or reduce depression, anxiety or feelings of loneliness for owners with serious mental illness, such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia, compared to those who live without an animal.

The researchers, who followed up on an earlier survey conducted in 2021 on investigating aspects of animal ownership and mental health during COVID-19, say their findings counteract the increasingly held belief that animals boost mental health and wellbeing in all contexts. In a survey of 170 UK participants with serious mental illness, 81 reported having at least one animal, and more than 95% reported that their animal provided them with companionship, a source of consistency in their life, and made them feel loved.

Dogs and cats were reported as the most frequently owned pet, consistent with the general population. The majority of participants perceived the bond with their animal to be strong. However, compared to people with serious mental illness who did not have an animal, no statistically significant improvements in mental health and feelings of loneliness were found in the study.

In the 2021 survey, which used the same cohort of participants, the team had found that having an animal was, in fact, associated with a self-reported decline in mental health among people with serious mental illness which may have been due to pandemic restrictions and the challenges of looking after their animal in the context of the lockdown.

Dr Emily Shoesmith, from the Department of Health Sciences, said: "It is now increasingly assumed that companion animals are beneficial for all owners' mental health in most or all circumstances, but this may not be the case. The pandemic provided a unique opportunity in which to look more closely at this question, and we found that whilst many participants with serious mental illness reported that their animal was a 'lifeline' during this time, the benefits may have been outweighed by the additional stress and anxiety caused by caring for an animal in the lockdown context. These new data were collected after pandemic restrictions had been lifted, and although we found small improvements in terms of reported wellbeing outcomes since the previous survey, we did not find that animal ownership was significantly associated with enhanced wellbeing, depression, anxiety, or loneliness."

Despite this, most participants perceived there to be a strong human-animal bond with their closest companion animal, and reported their animal provided them with companionship and a source of constancy in their life. The researchers point out that companion animals may still be a vital part of the social network of people who have been diagnosed with a severe mental illness, but that more work is needed to understand the nuances of the relationship, such as whether the type of animal makes a difference, as well as other external factors that might cause additional stress.

Dr Elena Ratschen, from the Department said: "One possible explanation for our current findings could be that the added responsibility of animal ownership may still exacerbate other potential stressors experienced by people living with severe mental illness. This includes the cost of food, veterinary bills and uncertainty over housing."

"The findings suggest that the nature of human-animal interactions is complex. The bond between owners and animals was perceived to be high in this study and is undoubtedly very important in people's lives. It is not necessarily reasonable, however, to assume that it is a means to improve symptoms of serious mental illness or disperse feelings of loneliness in a highly disadvantaged population of people with these illnesses."

Research finds Basic Income scheme could save NHS tens of billions of pounds

A basic income scheme has the potential to save the NHS tens of billions of pounds by reducing poverty and improving the nation's mental and physical health, according to new research involving academics at the University of York. A basic income is a regular and unconditional cash payment to all individuals designed to reduce poverty, enhance economic security and improve overall well-being.

Researchers at the universities of Northumbria, York, Bath and Strathclyde, in collaboration with think tanks Compass and Autonomy, have looked at what the knock-on effects of providing a basic income would be for the economy and public health.

In their report called *Treating causes not symptoms: Basic Income as a public health measure* they reveal that even a more 'modest' basic income scheme (£75 a week, £3,900 a year) could have the following positive effects:

Economic impact:

Reduce child poverty to the lowest level since comparable records began in 1961 and achieve more at significantly less cost than the anti-poverty interventions of the New Labour governments.

Child and pensioner poverty down by at least 60% each

Working age poverty down by between 29% and 75% depending on the scheme

Inequality down 55% to the lowest in the world under the most ambitious scheme

Public health impact:

Between 125,000 and 1 million cases of depressive disorders could be prevented or postponed.

Between 120,000 and 1.04 million cases of clinically significant physical health symptoms could be prevented or postponed.

Between 130,000 and 655,000 quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) could be gained, valued at between £3.9 billion and £19.7 billion.

Based on depressive disorders alone, NHS and personal social services cost savings in 2023 of between £125 million and £1.03 billion assuming 50% of cases diagnosed and treated.

Kate Pickett, from the Department of Health Sciences at the University of York, and the author of *The Spirit Level*, said: "Given decades of policy failure, it should be clear that people in local communities affected by poverty, insecurity and lack of opportunity are the authoritative voice on what they need to enhance their health and wellbeing.

"We need to listen to their expressed needs and lived experience and create policies that support them to flourish."

The research, funded by the National Institute for Health and Social Care Research (NIHR), used a range of economic and health modelling, public opinion surveys and community consultation to present cutting-edge evidence on the impact of Basic Income schemes.

According to new polling, the report also found that the British public prefers a more generous Basic Income scheme that significantly reduces poverty and inequality and improves physical and mental health. They want to fund those schemes through new wealth and carbon taxes and increased corporation taxes, but also view small increases in income tax as tolerable.

Research News

Matthew Johnson, from Northumbria University, and the project lead, said: “The findings of this report are clear: there is no obvious alternative to Basic Income that has the same multipurpose impact across society.”

“These first indications of public health impact are debate shifting, while evidence on British public opinion present clear pathways to funding through wealth, carbon and corporation tax increases.”

“This should encourage administrations, such as in Wales and Greater Manchester, which have expressed support for policies like this.”

Dr Jonathan Coates, a GP in Newcastle upon Tyne and NIHR In-Practice Fellow, Durham University, said: “As a GP, I increasingly find that my patients are in financially precarious positions, regardless of whether they are in work or on benefits, and this has a clear impact on their physical and mental health.

“Basic Income represents an opportunity to follow in the footsteps of previous bold interventions to address the causes, not the symptoms, of illness.”

The report, a full copy of which can be found [here](#), was officially launched at an event held at Northumbria University’s City Campus East in Newcastle upon Tyne. It follows proposals from the research team to pilot a Basic Income in two communities – Jarrow and East Finchley – which attracted significant media interest.

Report highlights link between child poverty and poor educational attainment

University of York academics have contributed to a major report which highlights how a failure to address childhood inequality is creating a “conveyor belt of disadvantage.”

The Child of the North: Addressing Education and Health Inequity report highlights how children born into the poorest fifth of families in the UK are almost 13 times more likely to experience poor health and educational outcomes by the age of 17.

The report also highlights how northern schools are losing out on hundreds of pounds of funding per pupil compared to those in London. Over the last 10 years, ongoing inequalities in funding have meant schools in the North of England have received less money from the National Funding Formula (NFF) on average than their southern counterparts.

The new analysis, by academics from the Child of the North group – a partnership between Health Equity North and N8 Research Partnership - on behalf of the Child of the North All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), found that on average pupils in London received 9.7% more funding than those in the North.

Schools in London received an average of £6,610 per pupil compared to £6,225, £5,956, and £5,938 in the North East, North West, and Yorkshire and the Humber, respectively.

The Child of the North APPG members and report authors are calling for an overhaul of the current school funding formula, so it takes into consideration attainment inequalities and the health burden borne by schools, to prevent these disparities continuing to increase.

The report includes a chapter on how universities can be “Research and Development” departments for local authorities, an initiative championed by N8 Chair and University of York Vice-Chancellor, Professor Charlie Jeffery. The report reveals how at present, universities – and the world-class research, and researchers they produce – are disconnected from the societies they live in and alongside.

There is an urgent need to build relationships and systems that can hardwire universities into education, health, housing, social care, policing, and other public service systems. Universities will then be able to more effectively inform the development of these public services, as well as responding to what these services need.

The Child of The North consortium, led by the N8+ (a partnership of the eight most research-intensive and associated universities in the North of England), has developed two initiatives that demonstrate how to connect universities to public service organisations, and the benefits this can produce.

These are the Born in Bradford Centre for Applied Education Research (CAER) and the Child Health Outcomes Research At Leeds (CHORAL) programme.

The report recommends the methodology used by CAER and CHORAL should be rolled out across the North of England to bring public organisations together to improve outcomes for children and young people.

In addition, Professor Jeffery is exploring how integrated care boards across the North of England can make best advantage of the R&D work and create a model through which the UK’s public services can benefit directly from our world-leading university system

Research News

The report also highlights the SAMHE (Schools' Air quality Monitoring for Health and Education) research project being co-delivered by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) at York.

As part of the project, schools across the country are being asked to take part in a huge citizen science project to help monitor and evaluate the quality of the air in our classrooms.

It is hoped more than 1,500 schools will sign up and help provide important data to scientists studying the quality of classroom air. It is expected to be the biggest study of air quality in schools anywhere in the world.

Sarah West, Centre Director and Senior Research Associate, at SEI said: "I was delighted to contribute a case study about the SAMHE project to this important report, as citizen science projects like this can be an important way of empowering schools to better understand their environment and take low cost actions to improve it, thereby reducing inequalities."

The report illustrates how public services in the North of England have come together to create innovative approaches that bring health and education together to deal with the poor outcomes faced by children and young people. It includes examples of regional evidence-based collaborative initiatives that can provide a blueprint for transformational change nationally.

The report highlights groundbreaking projects in the North that showcase the power of working collaboratively and resource sharing to achieve transformational changes on pupils' educational achievement and lives. This includes a first-of-its-kind connected database in Bradford that contains the primary and secondary care health records of citizens linked with education records, social care, and policing data.

The tool allows scientists, working with policymakers, to undertake holistic data science that can shine a light onto critical social issues that span disparate services. This provides a proven methodology that can be scaled up across the North of England to inform a national approach.

In addition, there are also insights from young people and school leaders who give a first-hand perspective on how the issues highlighted in the report affect them.

One of the report's authors, Professor Kate Pickett from the University of York's Department of Health Sciences, said: "It's critical that the UK starts to invest in all children and close the gap between children in the North and rest of the country - investing early in children's educational wellbeing pays off for the whole society, so this is an issue of cost effectiveness as well as social justice."

Anne Longfield, CBE, Chair of the Commission on Young Lives, who wrote the report Foreword, said: "The link between health inequalities and educational attainment is undeniable. This report provides evidence-based recommendations offering political parties a route map for action. The costs of inaction during childhood are far too high for individuals, families, and society. The time to reverse the tide of growing inequality is upon us."

The report suggests practical steps that should be taken both at a local level and makes clear recommendations on the actions that central Government should take to improve outcomes for children and young people growing up in the UK.

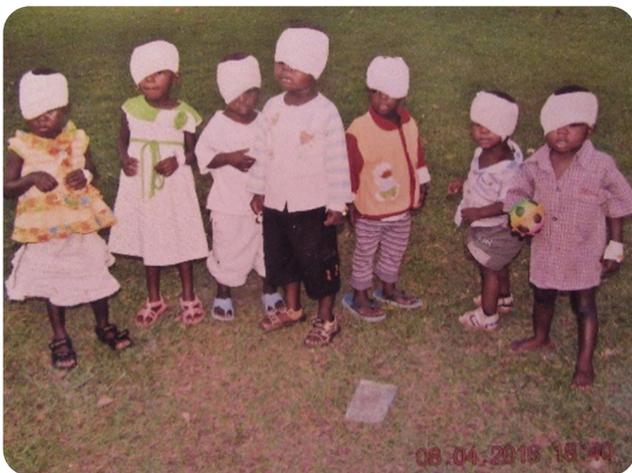
Research News

Childhood cancer treatment in Africa

Rob Newton from the Epidemiology and Cancer Statistics group writes: “Services for treatment of cancer are extremely limited in countries such as Uganda, in sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, cases are generally diagnosed very late. However, in some circumstances, it is still possible to achieve good results.

We previously introduced a safe, effective and cost-effective programme of treatment for the childhood eye cancer retinoblastoma in Uganda, that is context-specific and has resulted in substantial declines in mortality.

Our centre, in the city of Mbarara in south-western Uganda, has become the tertiary referral hospital for the whole country; the approach has been recognized by the World Health Organization as a model for treatment of certain childhood cancers in Africa and is being adopted by other regional centres. In 2021, we published, the 10-year follow-up of cases, demonstrating sustained and substantial improvements in survival. Next year we hope to publish our 15th year of follow up, making this by far the most successful childhood cancer treatment programme in Africa. To date, we have saved the lives of over 1000 children.



Picture shows The Retinoblastoma Survivors Club football team at Ruharo Mission Hospital in south-west Uganda

New Childhood Cancer Ward

Earlier this year, we opened our new childhood cancer ward. Creating the ward took twenty years, including ten years of fund raising. It is called the Keith Waddell Ward in honour of my good friend and long-standing colleague, who drove so much of this pioneering work.



All of the children pictured above have retinoblastoma and are in our treatment programme. The girl in the blue dress on my right, was patient number 3 in our treatment study – she is a long-term survivor and retains good vision in one eye. She is doing well at school and has ambitions to become a doctor in the future. For further information and updates, see:

DIDACT – breaking into collarbone fracture research

Researchers at York Trials Unit have been awarded a £1.1m grant by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Health Technology Assessment (HTA) programme to undertake a randomised clinical trial comparing surgery versus sling immobilisation in patients with a displaced fracture of the distal clavicle.

Fractures of the clavicle, primarily occur in young males. Distal clavicle fractures account for 20-25% of all clavicle fractures, and where the outer part of the collarbone breaks and separates are called displaced.

Working in collaboration with the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust, and Professor Harvinder Singh as the Chief Investigator, the team are going to recruit 214 patients aged 18 and above with displaced fractures of the distal clavicle across at 23 sites across the United Kingdom.

Patients will be randomly allocated to either surgery or sling immobilisation.

Treatment by surgery will be locking plate fixation, with or without coracoclavicular (CC) sling, or CC reconstruction alone when the distal fragment is very small.

The sling immobilization treatment involves upper limb support with a sling, typically for 2 to 4 weeks, followed by surgical fixation if symptomatic non-union of the fracture typically at the 3-month follow-up.

Patients will be followed up until 12 months after they are randomised. The primary outcome and end-point is the Disability of Arm, Shoulder and Hand (DASH) patient-reported questionnaire at 12 months. Secondary outcomes include shoulder pain, health-related quality of life, complications (e.g. infections, re-operations), bone healing and range of movement.

Both study treatments are currently used in the NHS, but we don't yet have the robust clinical evidence to decide if one is better for patients and their recovery. We also don't know whether one treatment is more cost effective than the other, so this study will assess both the clinical and health economic implications of the two procedures.



Research Showcase 2023: Networking opportunity for Early career researchers

Ana Castrol and Emma Standley write: “As a way of improving culture in the department and encouraging early career researchers (ECRs) to share their work with colleagues in other research groups, the department held the Research Showcase in July.”

“Over 70 ECRs met for a day of development in Alcuin East Wing. Professors Kate Flemming and Catherine Hewitt gave the opening talk on how ECRs fit within the departmental research strategy; followed by Hannah Roberts, life coach and founder of Intentional Careers™, who delivered a workshop on how to fail gracefully.



Posters were presented throughout the day, and were judged in six categories: behavioural activation; trials; healthcare delivery; mental health; public health; and family/child and adolescent. Each category had a winner who received a prize from our head of department. Two sessions of ECR and PhD presentations were held in the afternoon where the audience could choose their favourite presenter.”

“The day was closed by Professor Karen Bloor who delivered the key note talk where she delved into her career journey and some advice on how to make future career decisions.”

One of the attendees said “I think the department should do more events like this to highlight research. It would also be good to get some more nursing/midwifery involvement”. While another ECR highlighted “the general vibe was really positive throughout the conference, everyone was really friendly and chatty, and there were lots of smiles.”

“The Research Showcase is an event that seeks to promote research being done by ECRs and PhD researchers, improve research culture and offer networking opportunities within the department. This year’s event was organised by Emma Standley and Ana Castro. We would love if we could get more involvement from the nursing and midwifery researchers next year. Please, do get in touch if you would like to join the organising committee. We would like to congratulate and thank everyone who organised and took part in the Research Showcase for early career researchers and PhD students yesterday. The quality of the research posters and the presentations across the day was outstanding, as was the professionalism of the organisation and the smooth running of the day.”

Kate Flemming comments: “Particular thanks go to Ana Castro and Emma Standley for their leadership of the event and to the team who worked alongside them: Laura Barrett, Moe Byrne, Rachael Cheung, Grace Collum, Sarah Compton, Rachel Ellison, James Godwin, Lisa Huddlestone, Heather Leggett, Alex Mitchell, Kate Mooney and Gerado Zaval.”

“Congratulations go to the follow who were awarded prizes for their presentations/posters across various categories:”

Kate Bosanquet - Behavioural activation posters, Lois Armour - Mental health posters, Abayomi Sanusi - Public health posters, Katie Carlisle - Trials posters, Helen Anderson - Healthcare delivery posters, Katherine Pettinger - Family/ Child and Adolescent posters, Victoria Fisher - Oral presentation session 1, Steph Bramley - Oral presentation session 2 and Kalpita Baird - People’s choice award poster.

YTU (York Trials Unit) Goes Volunteering

In July, YTU dug out their wellies and gardening gloves for two days volunteering work at Chapman's Pond in Acomb, which was arranged on our behalf by YorkCares.

YTU were split into groups, with each group spending either a morning or afternoon putting their gardening expertise to the test, whilst keeping their fingers crossed that the rain kept away (the last group were not so fortunate). A variety of tasks were completed such as ground clearing, grass cutting, tree trimming, weeding and much more. There were even a few frogs rescued along the way!

Everyone who took part thoroughly enjoyed themselves mingling with colleagues old and new and found it a rewarding and worthwhile task. Stay tuned for what YTU get up to next.



Hello

We wish a very warm welcome to new members of staff who have joined the department recently, these include: Behnam Tajik, Sundas Mahdi, Emma Watson, Jennie Lister, Camila Piccolo-Lawrance, Radwa Abdelatif, Tonya Yakimova, Philippa Hearty, Farzana Akhtar, Saniaha Mehrose, Madeline Baxter, Georgia Irving, Michele Siciliano, Elizabeth Goodge, Ellie Fitzmaurice, Simona Manni, Eslam Elbaaly, Catriona Jones and Mark Shaw.

Goodbye

We also wish a very fond farewell to those who have left, including: Matt Lesch, Lorna Fraser, Claire Heathcote, Mo Wakefield, Aimee Woodward, Anna Marshall, Emma Clark, Melanie Barnes, Lisa Quinn, George Peat, Victoria Fisher, Anna Marshall, Joanne Newman, Nicola O'Donnell, Karen Innis, Ruth Hall, Matthew Faires, Lowri Davies, Hannah McGorman, Samarul Islam, Rachel McAllister, Grace Greenwood, Di Stockdale, Karen Harper and Jayne Lawrence.

TV interview

Christina van der Feltz-Cornelis and her teams here in Health Sciences and the University of Tilburg, have been working on a suicide prevention project in the Netherlands and have developed a program which has been estimated to cut suicide rates by a fifth.

Following the results of that study, Christina was interviewed by That's TV York to talk about the study. If you would like to view the interview, it's available [here](#).

Away day

In August, the Health Services and Policy Group went for an away day in Welburn, Helmsley. They welcomed a new member of staff, Michele Siciliano, as well as catching up on their research over the past year and their plans for next year.



They found out that Laura Jefferson has the most advanced chopstick skills and went for a five-mile walk in the area around Castle Howard.



If you would like to make a submission to future editions of Megaphone, please contact Jane Milsom (jane.milsom@york.ac.uk or tel 01904 321392).