UNIVERSITY *of fork* Department of Health Sciences

Megaphone Online

the voice of Health Sciences' staff and students

Christmas message from Head of Department

"As 2023 draws to a close, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your ongoing support, enthusiasm and commitment to the Department."

"Whilst we are facing some challenging times as an organisation, as a Department we continue to develop and strengthen as a result of our collegiality and sense of shared endeavour. Thank you."

"I hope that you all enjoy the festive season and please do take time to have a proper break from work over the holiday period."

"I wish you all good health and happiness now and throughout 2024."

"I wish you all good health and Professor Kate Flemming Head of Department



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December 2023

Melissa Owens brings home Global Award for Interprofessional Team Working

Dr Melissa Owens attended the 'All Together Better Health', International, Conference in Qatar in November where delegates gathered from around the world to discuss the latest research and best practice in interprofessional education and collaborative working. Melissa co-presented and co-facilitated a workshop at the conference and collected an award.

Melissa is a Board member of CAIPE (Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education)



and was previously the Chair of their Research Sub-Group. During that time, she set up a writing group who successfully published a series of 8 articles for the British Journal of Midwifery on interprofessional education during lockdown. In total, 26 people were in involved in the series, from across different professions and from across the globe. Melissa contributed to 4 of the papers. The presentation and workshop focused on the setting-up of the writing group (the workshop) and the focus of the papers themselves (the presentation). Melissa was one of 6 of the original writing group who were able to collect the award in person in Qatar. Melissa has also co-presented an international webinar about the series and has been invited to create a podcast. Here are the references for the 8 papers:

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Wetzlmair, L. Fiston Kitema, G. O'Carroll, V. El-Awaisi, A. Power, A. Owens, M. Park, V. McKinley, M. Anderson, E. & Loder-Fink, B. (2021) The Impact of COVID-10 on the delivery of interprofessional education: it's not all bad news British Journal of Midwifery 29(12) 699-705

Sy, M. Park, V. Nagraj, S Power, A. & herath, C. (2022) Emergency remote teaching for interprofessional education during COVID-19: student experiences British Journal of Midwifery 30(1) 47-55

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Hutchings, M. McLarnon, N McDermott, J Watson, A Power, A Anderson, E Owens, M. (2022) Practicebased learning and the impact of COVID-19: doing it for real? British Journal of Midwifery 30(6) 333-344

McLarnon, N. Hutchings, M. O'Carroll, V. Wetzlmair, L. Blumenthal, S. Boyle, L. El-Awaisi, A. Greaves, J. Park, V. & Power, A. (2022) British Journal of Midwifery 30(10) 572-581

Coleman, T. Bennett-Weston, A. Sy, M. Greaves, J. & Anderson, E. (2023) Service user and carer involvement in online interprofessional learning during the COVID-19 pandemic British Journal of Midwifery 31(2) 104-111

Park, V. McLarnon, N Hutchings, M. Power, M. Blumenthal, S. Wetzimair, L. Sy, M. McDermott, J. Boyle, L. Herath, C. & Anderson, E. (2023) Interprofessional education after the pandemic: lessons learned and future considerations 31(9) 519-529.

Teaching News

Building an interprofessional field of mental health practice through film

Dr Melissa Owens writes: "November saw the launch of the first interprofessional initiative between mental health nursing and medical students. Students from both professions attended an event at the Everybody Cinema in York where they watched 4 short films, each with a focus on a different element of mental health as follows: 'Connection with Self'; 'Connection with Reality', 'Connection with Others' and; 'Instant Doctor'."

"They then discussed the issues in the films. The discussion focused both on the issues they saw within the film as well as considering the issues from different, professional, perspectives. The event ended with a buffet shared with all the students."

New Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) planned

The Department has recently won a bid from the RCN Foundation to produce a new Massive Online Open Course (MOOC).

The new MOOC which will focus on nurses' early interventions to support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people. It will be aimed at supporting non-Mental Health registered nurses who care for children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing throughout their clinical nursing practice.

The project will be led by Dr Sue Faulds, Reader, Department of Health Sciences in conjunction with the wider Faculty of Sciences at the University of York and the University of Huddersfield. Sue said: "I'm delighted to be leading and working on this exciting new project which will make information and support in this area accessible to nurses in all parts of the UK as well as learn to use the apps designed by the University of Huddersfield."

MOOCs are online courses available for anyone to enroll and they provide an affordable and flexible way to learn new skills, advance your career and deliver educational experiences at scale.

Teaching News

Staff and students attend Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) Conference

In November, BFI Lead Bex Hudson-Tandy attended the two day BFI conference in Harrogate along with Alison Smalley (Deputy BFI Lead) (Day 1) and Stage 1 student midwife Toni Sanderson (Day 2).

Bex writes: "This was the first in person conference for a number of years due to the Covid 19 pandemic and a great opportunity to meet those professionals who we had only met online or those who we had not seen for years."

"The speakers were inspirational, covering a range of topics" from supporting local communities, to the WHO code and extending breastfeeding support to paediatrics - a group we don't necessarily think of when considering breastfeeding. Professor Mary Renfrew received a standing ovation from her reflections considering breastfeeding practices over the course of her 45 year career and her thoughts regarding the future of



infant feeding - it was an honour and a privilege to hear her speak."



"As well as Professor Mary Renfrew, my own personal highlights were Dr Kajsa Brimdyr speaking about the 9 stages of instinctive behaviour that happens at birth and how this can be more spaced out in premature births, taking days or even weeks. She really captivated how women thought about this phase and how we as health professionals can really facilitate the mother - baby dyad to come together and initiate successful breastfeeding."

'On day 2 Dr Chris van Tulleken gave a fantastic

presentation regarding ultra processed food (this made me reconsider my own diet!) - an area where as midwives we don't particularly focus. However, my takeaway message from the conference was 'Where a birth takes place should not determine whether a (mother-baby) dyad breastfeeds' - Dr Nathan Nickel talking about health inequalities."



Teaching News

Staff present at conference

Jo Rose and Claudia Milena Adler showed the power of play and gamification for disaster preparedness and training others to be disaster-ready at the IEEE Technology for Humanitarian Responses International Conference in Colombia.

The conference participants and organisers found the 'Vulnerability Walk', Lego Island and Disaster Top Trumps innovative and thought provoking whilst learning how to improve disaster preparedness.



International Humanitarian Grant University of York, UK Dr b force or classe where Is the test

Jo Rose was also asked by The Humanitarian Programme Network to provide a 500-word response to the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Claudia and Jo submitted a piece which was published with some selected other humanitarian workers and organisations. Their piece entitled 'Saints Pay For Sinners can be found <u>here</u> (about the third down).

Nurses need a 'voice' in decision-making to improve retention, research shows

Nurses working in general practice during the Covid-19 pandemic felt largely 'forgotten' and undervalued, with many considering future career changes, according to the findings of a new study. Researchers at the University of York conducted interviews and focus groups with 40 nurses across England to understand how working during the pandemic had affected their well-being and the factors that contributed to job dissatisfaction.

The study showed that decisions on re-shaping general practice services during the pandemic, and going forward, were taken by GPs and practice management with little input from the nursing staff, despite most of their work requiring face-to-face interactions for the duration of the crisis.

General practice nurses in England see seven million patients a month, and 84 million in a year. A recent report, however, predicted that one quarter of general practice nursing posts in England could be vacant in 10 years' time, so retention of nursing staff has become vital for the future of the NHS, at a time when retention of GPs is also an issue.

One participant in the University of York study noted, for example, that nurses have lots of ideas on how healthcare can be delivered to increase the benefits to patients, but they are not invited to the decision-making table and so do not have the opportunity to share their experience.

Dr Helen Anderson, from the Department said: "Nurses have a very specialised role within general practice, which includes delivering the bulk of long-term condition management, such as diabetes and asthma care, immunisation and vaccination programmes, and other essential care that can't be delayed and requires in-person consultation, but this often goes unrecognised within the profession, by their employers and society in general."

A nurse in the study stated that the value and the benefits nurses can offer is not often publicly highlighted, and it is not widely known that they have specialist skills in things like diabetes, women's health, respiratory, and other long-term conditions. Dr Anderson said: "Despite considerable changes to general practice during Covid, which saw new technological interventions and an increase in phone and online consultations, much of the work that nurses carried out simply had to go ahead in-person, but against a backdrop of considerable stress, anxiety, and health risks, much of which has been undocumented in research on the pandemic so far.

"Many of the nurses we spoke to told us that they felt 'forgotten' pre-pandemic, but that this was further exacerbated during Covid-19, which led to nurses feeling undervalued and accelerated considerations to move out of the profession."

One of the areas highlighted was the setting up of Covid-19 vaccination centres and administering vaccines to patients - work that was largely delivered by nurses. Study participants stated that this was a significant undertaking, which they felt was unrecognised by colleagues, the media and general public.

Another way in which nurses in general practice felt undervalued was in their remuneration and terms and conditions of employment, including sick and maternity pay, which do not reflect NHS terms and conditions.

Many nurses reported that there were differences in their experiences of the pandemic compared to doctors, but that little provision was made for this, and therefore many felt this impacted their mental health and some faced burn-out leading to nurses leaving general practice, or the nursing profession altogether.

Dr Anderson said: "We found there were three key areas that could make nurses feel more valued in their position, which could help with future job retention rates beyond the Covid-19 pandemic.

"A key factor is being included in decision-making on significant changes to general practice. The second is for management to demonstrate understanding of the roles that nurses have, and remunerating them appropriately, as it was often pointed out to us that colleagues seemed to be unaware of what nurses were doing on a daily basis.

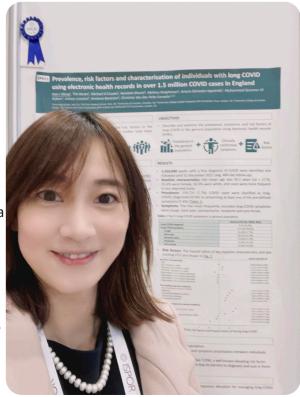
"Lastly it was important to our study participants that there was more awareness raising of the 'invisible' role they play with colleagues, the media, and general public, to improve understanding of the highly skilled work that they do."

Presentation wins award at International Conference

Han-I Wang presented CPRD database work on Long COVID of the University of York in collaboration with the STIMULATE consortium at the ISPOR conference in Denmark in November.

Her research presentation, Prevalence, Risk Factors, and Characterization of Individuals with Long COVID Using Electronic Health Records in Over 1.5 Million COVID Cases in England, authors: Han-I Wang, Tim Doran, Michael G Crooks, Kamlesh Khunti, Melissa Heightman, Arturo Gonzalez Izquierdo, Muhammed Qummer UI Arfeen, Antony Loveless, Amitava Banerjee, and Christina van der Feltz-Cornelis has been named Best Student Poster Research Presentation for ISPOR Europe 2023!

This achievement is truly a testament to Han-I Wang's hard work. All winners are shown on the ISPOR Europe 2023 website and within the December 2023 conference supplement issue of Value in Health.



Blood Cancer Open Day for Patients and Families

In October 2023, the Epidemiology & Cancer Statistics Group (ECSG), which is part of the Centre for Blood Research (CBR), had the pleasure of welcoming around 200 patients and their families and friends, as well as NHS staff, to an Open Day at the University of York.

The event included a series of talks from haematologists, patients and researcher/ scientists, as well as interactive areas and places to chat with blood cancer support groups and charities. Those attending were



able to learn more about ECSG's research - which they are part of and contribute to - including the data collected and how it is used. We then heard a patient account of his personal blood cancer journey and some of the drawbacks of treatment, which many audience members could relate to. Additional talks were given on clinical trials and childhood cancer. Links to the presentations can be found here, and to the photographs here.

Feedback about the Open Day was overwhelmingly 'excellent', with everyone saying they enjoyed the event, and especially the chance to learn more about blood cancer and chat to people with similar experiences, as indicated from the quotes below:



"An amazing, informative day. A great balance of research and patient views and stories." "I came to support my friend. I left speechless. Amazing knowledge, dedication and to think this is in York. So proud of you!"

"I am so please that we have all these people who are doing what they do. Huge thanks for the chance to attend. Excellent!"



Debra Howell, who leads on Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in ECSG said 'it was fantastic to be able to meet again with the people who are most impacted by our research. PPI is such a crucial aspect of our work; it helps us to learn about the issues that are really important to the people affected by blood cancer, and reminds us about the impact our work can have on the lives of others'.

Public Health and Society team Wins 'Dialogue and Change' award for their patient and public involvement work

Sarah Compton, Lois Armour, Steph Bramley and Sarah Blower have been awarded the 'Dialogue and Change' award from Investing in Children for their outstanding patient and public involvement (PPI) work. The independent award recognises projects that demonstrate meaningful dialogue where people with lived experience work together with researchers to make real improvements, leading to positive changes.

The award was granted for their PPI engagement as part of the Mental Health Navigators evaluation project. This project explores the impact and implementation of the Wakefield District Housing Navigators scheme to support those experiencing mental health difficulties to stay in safe and secure housing and improve their wellbeing.

The team worked with a panel of people who have had mental health issues and lived in social housing. The panel described their involvement in the project as meaningful and valued, as shown in the following quotes:

'I just felt like I was an equal part of the process'

"Often you get the feeling that you're just being ticked off in a box.... This is proper involvement, proper PPI. Here the involvement is so much more inclusive."

"How they've involved me; how they've listened to me; when they've said they're going to do something, that they'll go away and do it. I feel that I've been invested in, I've been heard. My opinions have been listened to and been acted on."

"For me, getting involved in this research, it's been liberating for me. I've got a use. I've got a purpose. I'm not just on the scrap heap, it feels like it's brought me back to life."

By fostering open communication and genuinely valuing PPI input, the research team created an empowering experience that enhanced the evaluation process throughout.

The PPI panel was setup and coordinated by Sarah Compton, and the research team is led by Dr Sarah Blower, both at University of York. Collaborators are from the University of Newcastle, Manchester University, NIHR ARC North East and North Cumbria and NIHR ARC Greater Manchester.

The project is funded via the ARC 'National Priority Consortium - Health and Care Inequalities' led by NIHR ARC North East and North Cumbria and NIHR ARC Yorkshire & Humber: https://arc-nenc.nihr. ac.uk/national-priority-consortium-in-health-and-care-inequalities/

For more information contact Dr Sarah Blower (sarah.blower@york.ac.uk).

A multi-centre randomised controlled trial of standard care versus an accelerated care pathway after cardiac surgery (FARSTER-care)

The increase in cardiac surgeries in the UK since 2010 has prompted a re-evaluation of postoperative protocols, specifically the delayed initiation of Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR). Currently, patients undergo their first outpatient review six weeks after discharge, with CR commencing at eight weeks. These timelines lack evidence-based support, potentially prolonging recovery and imposing unnecessary restrictions.

FARSTER-care seeks to test these standard practices. The existing gap between surgery and CR leaves patients vulnerable, leading to complications and readmissions. Studies indicate that early patient contact is associated with reduced readmissions and lower adverse outcomes, prompting a reconsideration of the current timelines.

Current guidelines for post-cardiac surgery (sternotomy) activities are critiqued for being restrictive, hindering the benefits of CR and contributing to physical deconditioning. The delay in CR initiation not only extends the recovery process but also increases dependence on caregivers, potentially causing anxiety and depression.

Inconsistencies in Sternal Precautions (SP) practices create a dilemma for patients, families, and healthcare professionals. The feasibility study demonstrated that advancing outpatient review and CR is acceptable to patients, paving the way for a full-scale Randomized Control Trial (RCT). The RCT aims to provide robust evidence for an improved post-cardiac surgery care pathway, emphasizing evidence-based practices to optimize recovery with enhanced patient outcomes. The initiative challenges the dominant role of SP in conventional practices and advocates for a faster, more efficient, and cost-effective approach to postoperative care and rehabilitation.

Funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), researchers from York Trials Unit (YTU) and Hull University Teaching Hospital will investigate whether, following cardiac surgery with sternotomy, an early specialist outpatient review at three weeks after hospital discharge, followed by CR initiation from four weeks, leads to improved outcomes and is cost-effective compared to standard care, where the outpatient review is at six weeks after hospital discharge, followed by CR commencement from eight weeks.

FARSTER-care is a multi-centre, two arm, parallel group, open RCT with an internal pilot and embedded health economic analysis. The trial will recruit 588 cardiac surgery participants who have had a sternotomy at UK centres over 24 months and will randomise participants 1:1 to the FARSTER-Care (intervention) or standard care (control) arms.

Participants in the intervention arm will have specialist outpatient review at three weeks after hospital discharge, followed by commencement of CR from four weeks. Participants in the standard care arm will receive standard post-sternotomy cardiac surgery care which includes specialist outpatient review at six weeks after hospital discharge, followed by commencement of CR from eight weeks.

At the start and end of CR, and again at six months post-randomisation, participants will undergo fitness testing using the ISWT during face-to-face appointments. Clinical data will be recorded at baseline and appointments up to six months post-randomisation. Participants will be asked to self-report outcome data by completing questionnaires from baseline up to twelve months post-randomisation.

Workplace health and wellbeing project recognised for its significant cultural contribution

<u>EMPOWER</u>, an international research project on which Professor Christina van der Feltz-Cornelis is the UK lead, has been awarded the 2023 Malaspina Award for organisations by the Spanish Embassy in Canberra, Australia.

The EMPOWER Consortium is a collaboration between researchers from nine different countries including the UK and aims to reduce the impact of mental health problems in the workplace. Other partner countries involved with the project are Australia, Belgium, Finland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and Switzerland and the project is partly funded by the European Union HORIZON programme.

The Malaspina Awards are honours bestowed by the Spanish Embassy in Canberra and the Association of Spanish Researchers in Australia-Pacific to individuals and organisations who have made a significant contribution to the scientific and cultural relationship between Spain and Australia.

Speaking about the award, Professor Christina van der Feltz-Cornelis, Professor of Psychiatry and Epidemiology at HYMS and the Department of Health Sciences, said: "The Malaspina award the EMPOWER project received is a prime example of the role of the Horizon Europe programme as a key enabler of international collaboration.

The collaboration with the Canberra team shows how well EMPOWER functions to improve international collaboration. It will help report on the impact of the new intervention app at the individual and social level. My team is very proud to be part of this."

As a part of the project, Christina and her team designed a digital intervention app that aims to help improve employees' well-being by supporting employees, managers, and employers to reduce work-related stress.

The app has been developed and tested with research teams from Spain, Finland, Poland and the UK. These four countries have recruited individuals to test and evaluate the effects of the app in a cluster randomised trial in which more than 800 people will participate. EMPOWER expects to report the findings in June 2024.

Fourth International Conference on Stepped Wedge Trial Design

The York Trial Unit are pleased to announce that the University of York will host the Fourth International Conference on Stepped Wedge Trial Design online from 13th-15th May 2024.

Abstract submissions are welcome and can be submitted <u>via this form</u>. Please submit your abstract by noon on 16th February 2024.

Registration is Free. More details for presenters and attendees, including how to register, will be released in the New Year.

Team win Inclusive Impact Award for Social Inclusion

Congratulations to the FixOurFood team which includes staff from Health Sciences, the Hull York Medical School and School for Business and Society who won an award at the University of York's Inclusive Impact Awards last week.

The FixOurFood team won the Social Inclusion Award which recognises an individual, a group or a particular activity or initiative that has advanced social inclusion for an identified, margnisalised or under-represented group.

The FixOurFood project is a Free School Meal Auto-Enrolment action-oriented project. It is led by Maria Bryant, Professor of Public Health Nutrition, supported by Dr Sundus Mahdi, Louise Padgett and Rob Oxley, alongside collaborators and partners at the Food Foundation and Bremner & Co.



The project is working with 20 local authorities to support the set-up of auto-enrolment processes for Free School Meals with implementation and impact evaluation. This work has already started to demonstrate substantial impact in the way that it is helping children entitled to receive free school meals to have access to a hot healthy school dinner, while ensuring that schools receive the necessary funding linked to Free School Meals. Not only is this likely to lead to health and academic benefits for children, it also has financial benefits to families and financial benefits to schools through pupil premium funding.

Professor Maria Bryant said: "I am delighted that the work we are doing on free school meals auto-enrolment has received this award. The project is already having an important impact on families, schools and local authorities. Interim findings suggest that about an extra 1000 children per local authority are now receiving a daily school meal that they are entitled to and I'm excited to see the final results at the end of next year."

Further information can be found at www.fixourfood.org.

Women in Research Networking Group win Gender Inclusion award

The <u>Women in Research (WiR) Network</u>, established in 2019, has thrived under the leadership of the Working Group, comprising Cynthia Iglesias, Fi Rose, Fiona Frame, Kristy-Lee Seaton, Beth Nelson, and Lorna Warnock. This group volunteers alongside their regular duties, fostering a sense of belonging, supporting nearly 200 members, including diverse backgrounds and identities. Their continuous improvement approach involves organising events, training, and the Annual WiR Conference, aligned with the University's Athena Swan commitments. Acknowledging the distinct experiences of women, they address barriers and empower the community. Recognition through an Inclusive Impact Award would honour their tireless dedication, signalling the University's appreciation for their invaluable efforts. Participant testimonials highlight the tangible impact, fostering optimism, confidence, and career transformations.

Team nominated for Pioneering Inclusivity Initiative for the Reverse Mentoring Scheme Pilot

The team from the Department of Health Sciences and Hull York Medical School initiated a groundbreaking project inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, aiming to address the lack of understanding of diverse lived experiences in higher education.

The project introduces a reverse mentoring scheme, where more senior staff actively learn from junior mentors, particularly those from minoritised backgrounds. The goal is to enhance awareness and drive positive change towards diversity, inclusion, and equity within the University. The team, navigating through the complexities of introducing the scheme, collaborated extensively, learned from external organisations, and developed comprehensive training materials.

The pilot scheme, launched in 2022, successfully recruited participants, ran for six months, and underwent a thorough evaluation. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, affirming participant engagement and learning. The team's commitment and innovative approach make them deserving nominees for their exceptional work in advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion in higher education.

Contacts: devi.nannen@york.ac.uk (Health Sciences) and matthew.morgan@hyms.ac.uk (HYMS).

https://www.york.ac.uk/about/community/edi-exchange/awards/nominees-23/

Staff News

Hello

We wish a very warm welcome to new members of staff who have joined the department recently, these include: Georgia Patchett, Danny Downes, Rob Oxley, Joe Duckworth, Jo Welsman, Darren Dunning, Patience Gansallo, Hannah Bean, Jenny Riga, Darren Dunning and Jo Welsman.

Goodbye

We also wish a very fond farewell to those who have left, including: Samarul Islam, Rachel McAllister, Fidan Turk, Luis Beltran Galindo, Andrew Moriarty, Mary Madden and Andrew Bartlett.

Congratulations to:

Devi Nannen (pictured right), who received a Doctor of Education from Sheffield Hallam University.

Pete Coventry who has taken over as Director of the Mental Health and Addiction Research Group. Pete says: "At the 'End of an Era Party' we celebrated Professor Simon Gilbody's (pictured left) 18-years at the helm





of MHARG. Everyone who came along, friends, colleagues past and present, all had a great time, hearing about Simon's greatest achievements and foibles (including his unerring ability to wing it even when we think he is not listening)."

"There was an even an ode to Simon sung to the tune of Barry Manilow's 'Mandy' (lyrics courtesy of Lina Gega!) and a ceremonial moment where the MHARG 'torch' (which was literally a torch borrowed from Kerry) was passed to Pete Coventry, as the newly appointed Director. More fun and drinking was to be had at the Duke of York pub. Everyone who came along had a great time and this is another moment to congratulate Simon for his outstanding leadership of MHARG and to wish him all the very best in his next endeavours."

Thank you

Molly Crosland sent the pic on the right of staff enjoying a wreath making session recently. Thanks to Jess Powell, Cathy Butler and Mike Parker for organising the session.



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).