



Megaphone Online

February 2021

the voice of Health Sciences' staff and students

Alumni join Department as Nursing Clinical Academic Teaching Fellows

Megan Cook and Olivia Walsh have been appointed as Clinical Academic Teaching Fellow (Nursing), a innovative joint appointments between the Department of Health Sciences and York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. They will split their time 60:40 between the University and York Hospital.

Megan and Olivia, both Alumni from the Department, will support the learning and development of students on our nursing programmes in academic and clinical environments, strengthening the partnership between the Trust and University of York, ensuring an exceptional student experience, and positively contributing to the future healthcare professional workforce.

Professor Paul Galdas, Deputy Head of Department (Teaching) said: "I'm delighted to announce the appointments of Megan and Olivia. They will play a pivotal part in supporting our undergraduate nursing students in both academic and clinical environments. Their passion and enthusiasm for the profession will be an inspiration to our existing and future student population. By remaining clinically active, their teaching will be firmly grounded in contemporary nursing practice and the issues that are important to services, which will make a real difference to students' experience on our programmes."

<https://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/news-and-events/news/2021/clinical-teaching-fellows/>



Above: Megan (pictured left) and Olivia (pictured right)

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New Departmental Community Coordinators appointed

The Department has appointed two student Departmental Community Coordinators (DCC) - Tinnie Louie (PG) and Kiera Warren (UG). Supported by Danielle Simpson, the roles will cover:

- Promoting existing activities and events, and encouraging students to attend these within their community networks eg York Strengths events, Academic Skills Community Groups
- Pilot new approaches to help develop community networks within academic departments, building on or making links with existing activities and events
- Supporting the formation of student communities within departments, ensuring this is joined up with initiatives taking place across the University, GSA and YUSU
- Encouraging students to take part in volunteering opportunities within their community networks
- Producing guidance and tips for students around engaging with community networks
- Working with department reps/course reps and staff to identify ways of building community, working with staff and reps to identify barriers and potential solutions.

Tinnie Louie

Tinnie writes: "I am excited to be serving as the Departmental Community Coordinator (DCC) for this academic term. I am currently pursuing a Master of Public Health full-time, and my role as DCC is to facilitate a sense of community amongst all PG students in the Department of Health Sciences.

As the majority of our studies are held virtually amidst this ongoing pandemic, I know that it has not been easy to connect with our friends, family, and classmates. For many of us, this unique time has obstructed our abilities to socialise which has affected our mental health. Therefore, I am proposing an interactive fitness programme so that we may be proactive with our health journey and keeping each other accountable. My idea is to incorporate a competitive aspect in the fitness program where participants can earn incentives (i.e. gift cards/cash prizes, pending department approval) and bragging rights. I also want to host virtual group activities, such as game nights, craft workshops, or cooking demonstrations. Hopefully, depending on the government guidelines, we can have socially distanced events in person later in the year.

Through this, I hope to connect students from all programmes in the Department of Health Sciences. Additionally, if anyone has ideas or events that fits the overall goal of the departmental community, please let me know, and I would be happy to discuss details with you."

Kiera Warren

"The department community coordinator (DCC) is a new initiative that will work alongside department reps/course reps and staff to help students feel connected to each other, especially during these challenging times. We recognise online learning has made it increasingly difficult to form these connections and to feel part of your academic community. We will be promoting existing activities as well as suggesting new and creative approaches to help develop community networks. We are also here to provide guidance and tips to support students and enable you to feel more engaged with your learning. Everyone deserves the chance to be heard and feel included. I am excited to be a part of this new initiative."

Library Update

Library services continue during the current lockdown, and the main Library buildings on Campus West will remain open with reduced hours. See the [Library's news item](#) for all the details of what you can do, where you can visit, and how you can help us all stay as safe as possible.

There are also lots of services available remotely if you can't visit the Library in person, including the [Book Takeaway service](#) to have books delivered to your door, and the [Library Home From Home](#).

#YorkNurse

The 1st edition of #YorkNurse, our undergraduate nursing newsletter has been released. The idea for this newsletter has been developed from collaboration with student representatives the newsletter will become a regular and useful resource for all students on the undergraduate nursing programmes. The newsletter will not replace urgent and module related information which will continue to be sent via the announcement boards in the VLE. The newsletter will contain more routine information about the programmes, and what is happening in the department and the University.

To read the first issue visit [#YorkNurse](#).

Research News

5* GRIP rated slip-resistant shoes reduced the rate of slips in NHS workers by 37%

The results of the SSHeW Study (Stopping Slips among Healthcare Workers: a randomised controlled trial) have recently been published in Occupational and Environmental Medicine. (<https://oem.bmj.com/content/early/2021/01/15/oemed-2020-106914>)

This study led by Professor David Torgerson, of York Trials Unit, in collaboration with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the University of Leeds and Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, found that staff

provided with 5* GRIP rated (most slip resistant, as assessed by the HSE) slip-resistant shoes had fewer slips, and falls resulting from a slip, than those staff wearing their usual work shoes. The slip-resistant shoes provided for the trial reduced the rate of slips by 37% and the rate of falls resulting from a slip by 49% among NHS employees.

Slips, trips and falls are a common cause of injury in the workplace and account for more than 100,000 injuries in Britain a year. The Health and Social Care sector has the highest rate-partly due to the smooth floors found in hospitals and clinics and unavoidable contamination such as spillages. Slips and falls can cause significant injury which may lead to time being taken off work. NHS dress code policies for footwear may recommend non-slip shoes, although shoes may be labelled slip-resistant without having been rigorously tested and may not be effective on smooth shiny floors as found in hospitals.

The SSHeW study randomised 4553 members of NHS staff, working in a variety of job roles, across seven NHS Trusts in England. Half the participants were provided with 5* GRIP rated slip-resistant shoes to wear at work, and the other half continued to wear their usual work footwear. (These participants received a free pair of the slip-resistant shoes at the end of the trial period). All participants provided us with the number of slips they had at work each week via SMS message, for 14 weeks. The study team also interviewed a sample of participants and found that most found the shoes comfortable and suitable for work.

The results of this study show that in situations where slip risks cannot always be eliminated, the wearing of appropriately tested slip-resistant footwear can reduce slips in the workplace. Professor David Torgerson said: "The NHS and particularly in the current climate, cannot afford staff to be off work due to injuries that could have been easily avoided. Therefore, staff should be encouraged to wear appropriate footwear for the variety of surfaces that NHS workers face. We must be clear, however, that not all shoes that claim to be slip resistant will be effective on these smooth surfaces, but shoes with this highest HSE grip rating does give the assurance that compared to the average shoe, it will prevent a higher number of slips and falls."



Reducing the Impact of Diabetic Foot Ulcers – The REDUCE Programme

York Trials Unit, in conjunction the University of Nottingham and the University Hospitals of Derby and Burton, are pleased to announce confirmation of funding from the National Institute for Research Programme Grants for Applied Research (PGfAR) for the REDUCE programme. (Reference: RP-PG-0618-20001).

Diabetic foot ulcers (DFUs) are poorly healing wounds below the ankle affecting 25% of people with diabetes. Current treatments to prevent and heal ulcers do not work well and the evidence for treatments to encourage healing is also unclear. Patient education is recommended to prevent ulcers, but education alone does not work.

Research suggests that people’s thoughts, feelings and behaviours can affect the risk of getting diabetic foot ulcers and how they heal. A treatment called REDUCE has been developed to help people change these ‘risk factors’ in order to lower their chances of getting DFUs, and encourage faster healing when they occur. REDUCE first helps people to start the process of changing these risk factors and then supports people to maintain these changes.

The REDUCE PGfAR will further develop and test the REDUCE treatment, will explore how the treatment works and for whom, will assess whether the treatment is good value for money and will willingness and ability of healthcare providers to implement this treatment.

York Trials Unit will lead the evaluation of the effectiveness of this treatment through an initial 20 participant pilot randomised controlled trial. This will be followed by a larger randomised controlled trial which will aim to recruit 544 participants with previously healed diabetic foot ulcers.



New clinical trial to explore the provision of two types of artificial eye

A new clinical trial is aiming to assess the acceptability of digitally-printed artificial eyes compared to traditional hand-painted artificial eyes at a local artificial eye service in Leeds. The work, led by Dr Jude Watson from YTU and Dr Taras Gout at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (LTHT), will test study procedures, explore participants' opinions of each type of eye, and assess the feasibility of scaling up to a larger trial in the future.

Over 60,000 patients in the United Kingdom are estimated to have an artificial eye equating to around 1 in 1,000 of the UK population. The National Artificial Eye Service (NAES) manufactures up to 5,000 artificial eyes each year with additional local artificial eye services substantially adding to this total. Around 11,500 artificial eyes need to be made each year to meet demand from new and existing patients. However, services are under increasing pressure due to demand, leading to delays in receiving first eyes and existing patients not receiving regular replacements.

A well fitted, life-like artificial eye helps rehabilitation. The NAES has hand-painted artificial eyes since its integration into the NHS in 1948. However, achieving a good colour match is difficult. Digitally printed artificial eyes have been developed at the Leeds Artificial Eye Service at LTHT. Early work demonstrates patients can receive a good match, with fewer clinic visits, and a shorter manufacturing time.

A large randomised controlled trial (RCT) is needed to evaluate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of digitally-printed compared to hand-painted artificial eyes in order to inform clinical practice. First, a feasibility RCT is necessary to see if it is possible to conduct a larger study.

This study is a cross-over, feasibility RCT that incorporates economic and qualitative evaluations. Thirty-five eligible patients who require an artificial eye will be randomised to receive either the hand-painted or digitally-printed eye first. They will be fitted for the eye, and wear it for two weeks, before returning to the clinic to complete the evaluations. They will then wear the second eye for a further two weeks and complete evaluations. Participant data will include questionnaires about wellbeing and quality of life, as well as interviews to explore experiences of the two treatments.

This study is sponsored by LTHT and also includes collaborators from the University of Leeds. The trial is funded by the NIHR Research for Patient Benefit Programme (RfPB) (NIHR201559). The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care.

Research News

Social media study reveals diabetics' fear of disrupted insulin supplies because of Brexit

Diabetics living in the UK worry about disruption to insulin supplies as a result of Brexit, new research shows. Insulin is the hormone that helps control the body's blood sugar level and is critical to the survival of many people living with Type 1 diabetes. Currently most insulin used in the UK is imported.

The research analysed 4,000 social media posts from the UK and the States in order to explore the experiences of living as an insulin-dependent person. Around 25 per cent of the posts relating to health were made by diabetics and about nine per cent of all the posts were about availability of insulin. The study looked at tweets posted in 2019 before the Brexit negotiations were concluded but researchers said that people were concerned regardless of outcome.

Dr Su Golder from the Department of Health Sciences said: "People talked a lot about stockpiling and being scared of not being able to get insulin whatever the Brexit outcome. Many of the tweets on this topic discussed the fact that insulin was a lifesaver for them as it is for so many other Type 1 diabetics."

The study also showed that the consequences to an individual's health because of the cost of insulin was the most discussed topic in the States. Some talked about how they manage having to pay for their own medication with many facing the choice of paying for their rent or paying for insulin.

The research also identified issues patients may conceal from healthcare professionals, such as purchasing medications from unofficial sources. Dr Golder added: "This research gives an insight into the real-life issues individuals face when taking anti diabetic drugs. It shows there is a fear of not having access to insulin, whether due to cost or physical availability and also highlights the impact of the sacrifices made to access insulin."

Type 1 diabetes is a chronic condition in which the pancreas produces little or no insulin by itself. The most common is type 2 diabetes, usually in adults, which occurs when the body becomes resistant to insulin or doesn't make enough insulin. The World Health Organisation estimates about 422 million people worldwide have diabetes. In the UK, more than a million people with diabetes in the UK rely on insulin, according to the charity, Diabetes UK.

Stephen Fry in conversation with Professor Christina van der Feltz-Cornelis for York Unlimited

The York Unlimited campaign of the University of York is aiming to transform mental health on a local, national and international scale, through supporting on the ground initiatives and the latest groundbreaking research. As a tireless campaigner, supporter and advocate for everyone experiencing mental health problems, the team behind the York Unlimited campaign thought Stephen Fry would be the perfect person to invite to speak with Professor Christina van der Feltz-Cornelis about the University of York's efforts to improve mental health and wellbeing in many forms, reaching out from the University to the city's communities and beyond.

As Stephen says, "it's always important to remember it's always OK to ask for help".

If you are interested, you can look watch this conversation here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1U0zdOVSQRc&feature=youtu.be>

Autism in Deaf Children & Young People Conference 2021 Summary

The Autism in Deaf Children and Young People International Conference, took place online in February. Hosted by the Child Oriented Mental Health Intervention Centre (COMIC), the day shared international research, knowledge and expertise on ASD in deaf children and young people. This was the first time the conference has been held online, and it proved to be a great success with 294 people attending from around the world.

Helen Phillips and Professor Barry Wright from the COMIC team opened the conference by welcoming everybody and introducing our wonderful interpreters for the day. It was important for us that the day was accessible for all participants and therefore we had British Sign Language, American Sign Language and International Sign interpreters available as well as live captioning of the whole event.

To kick things off, Professor Alys Young from the University of Manchester, presented her findings from qualitative research into parent's observations of the interactions between deafness and autism. Alys explained how in working alongside parents of deaf children with autism, identifying how a parent not just experiences but conceptualises the interaction of autism and deafness in their child is an important basis for individually tailored support and jointly developed goals and support strategies.

Next, we had Helen Phillips and Professor Barry Wright from the COMIC team who presented the results from the Diagnostic Instruments for Autism in Deaf Children's Study (DIADS) funded by the Medical Research Council. The study adapted 3 Autism assessment tools (ADOS-2, ADI-R and SRS-2) to be used with deaf children. It then validated them with a sample of 295 children and young people across England, UK. This is the first study of its kind to adapt and validate such tools.

Joining us all the way from Norway was Kristin Holseth from the Norwegian National Unit for Hearing Impairment and Mental Health. Kristin gave us an interesting overview of the assessment of deaf and hard hearing children with possible ASD in Norway.

Across the Atlantic, Dr Debbie Mood and Dr Angela Bonino from the University of Colorado gave us an exclusive look at their research into the co-occurrence of autism and hearing loss and a study that tried to ascertain the prevalence of both together.

Next up was Dr Aaron Shield from Miami University, who joined us to present his research into sign language development in deaf children with autism. Aaron highlighted the need for better instruments identifying ASD in deaf children and the great need for more deaf clinicians who can apply their intuitions about deaf children. He explained that deaf children with ASD may be more likely to reverse signs.

After a quick break, we were joined by Dr. Christine Yoshinaga-Itano from the University of Colorado. Christine presented on early diagnosis and treatment and the use of Language Environment Analysis (LENA) autism screen for deaf or hard of hearing children.

The final presentation of the day came from Dr Terrell Clark, Dr Ronald Becker and Nicole Salamy from Boston Children's Hospital. They presented their work on interdisciplinary assessment in the diagnosis of ASD in deaf and hard of hearing children. The interdisciplinary team gave an overview of the obstacles they overcame to deliver successful assessments online since the Covid19 pandemic.

Helen and Barry closed the day by thanking the speakers and the staff involved in putting the conference together. Helen pointed out the key points of the day, these being the need for support for families, improving assessments for deaf children and the importance of making sure that every deaf child who needs it has access to sign language. More deaf clinicians now work with deaf children than in the past.

Research News

More of this is needed around the world. Deaf and hearing clinicians working together could bring great benefits to children and their families. It really was an insightful day and a great opportunity to share knowledge and learn from researchers across the world. It was also good to see participants from a range of fields including education, social services, researchers, clinicians, parents, deaf people with ASD and interpreters.

The feedback from delegates was that the conference was very accessible with multiple interpreters online and the availability of plenty of time for Q&A sessions after each speaker. The speakers were also roundly praised for their interesting, knowledgeable and open-minded presentations. For more information on the DIADS study at COMIC, please visit our website: <https://www.comic.org.uk/research/diagnostic-instruments-for-autism-in-deaf-children>.

Presentation recordings from the day are available to view here: <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4G6UxsBGVVtiUdKiaUJ7vfxY7Aqwo7UR>

English validation of a Dutch Physical Symptoms Questionnaire

Professor Christina van der Feltz Cornelis writes: “Symptoms are subjective bodily sensations or mental experiences that are perceived as indicative of a change in health, due to an illness, injury or disease.

Often symptoms have no obvious cause, and in the absence of treatment, can be very distressing. When symptoms appear to lack an organic cause or exceed what would be expected from an illness, people are thought to be suffering from ‘persistent somatic symptoms’ (PSS). This is common in both primary care and specialised medicine and is associated with increased disability and use of healthcare services. Together with Dutch researchers, we are working on the development of a questionnaire to assess such symptoms.

There are a few widely available tools for assessing physical symptoms, particularly for use in studies that wish to examine somatic symptom disorders. However, so far, a questionnaire to assess the actual physical symptom burden of people in the general population is lacking.

The Physical Symptoms Questionnaire (PSQ) is a Dutch questionnaire which lists 51 physical symptoms often suffered in people with PSS. It asks people to indicate how much the symptoms have bothered them within the last week. The scale is currently only available in Dutch.

The team of prof. Christina van der Feltz-Cornelis wishes to make the PSQ available for use in the English language, which could be particularly useful in studies wishing to develop and implement interventions to reduce symptoms and illness progression in patients with multiple conditions, and in clinical trials testing new treatments. You can contribute to validating this English version by filling a [short survey here](#). Thanks a lot for your help!

Global health research: Challenges with data management and data sharing across continents webinar hosted by the Department

Mona Kanaan writes: “The Department hosted an online webinar series between 27 and 29 January 2021 entitled: ‘Global health research: Challenges with data management and data sharing across continents.’ The webinar was a collaboration between NIHR Global Health funded ASTRA (York), RESPIRE (Edinburgh) and RECHARGE (Leicester) data management teams.”

“The aim of the webinar series and related activities was to explore the barriers and opportunities about data management and data sharing when you have multiple international partners. This is against the backdrop that having robust systems in place for data management and sharing would enhance the research integrity and transparency of reported results, which in turn adds value to the data collected and ensures its longevity. These issues became even more prominent in the times of COVID-19.”

Mona continues: “It was a pleasure to see over 150 participants taking part in the webinar over the three days. Participants were spread geographically from Latin America to South Asia.”

“As part of the workshop, we asked attendees about their training needs across the Research Data management (RDM) journey. There is a demand for training across all components of the RDM journey, but in particular for data management planning, policy and data analysis (see image). There is also a need for more specific funding for training in data management and for a dedicated database manager. Full results of the survey will be presented at the IPCRG 10th World Conference.”

An example of the feedback that we received for the event: “I’m very pleased to have been able to join the sessions as I now feel better informed with regard to planning for data management in my own study.”

If you would like to contribute to the survey and/or to be involved in future events around the topic please get in touch with mona.kanaan@york.ac.uk.

If you would like to access the recordings please get in touch with emma.brooks@york.ac.uk.



Research News

York Trials Unit Writing Week returns to the 90s

This year the York Trials Unit's Writing Weeks are themed around '90s Pop' and are being coordinated by Arabella Scantlebury.

The week started with a guest lecture from Dr Naomi Lee, Senior Executive Editor at the Lancet on 'what it means to be an author.' After the training session, they all felt ready to 'reach for the stars' and to compete for the honour of becoming Top of the Pops at the end of the week.

Throughout the week a huge number of papers were progressed including a number of methodological papers, some of which had been started during previous writing weeks. They also saw reviewer comments being addressed, manuscripts submitted, analyses conducted and papers drafted.

Arabella writes: "Congratulations to team Bitter Sweet Symphony who were led by Caroline Fairhurst who knocked team S Club off the top spot and claimed the number one position in our charts. Congratulations also go to Andrew Mott from team 'No Doubt' who was our 'Chart Topper' of the week. Thank you once again to everyone for their enthusiasm and hard work during the week. I look forward to June 2021 when we will take one last trip back to the 90s."

Events

Faculty of Health Sciences to mark International Women's Day and Women's History Month

As part of the 2021 International Women's Day (IWD)/Women's History Month events, the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Hull is welcoming two exciting guests on the Thursday 4th March. The event is hosted by Professor Natalie Vanicek, who invites everyone interested to attend these inclusive talks.

14:00-15:00

Simone Magill: "My life in football"

The Department of Sport, Health and Exercise Science are excited to welcome Simone Magill, who plays for Everton Women Football Club and has more than 50 caps for Northern Ireland. In her talk, she will discuss pursuing her professional football career alongside her PhD research in Sports Sciences.

[Click here to join the meeting.](#)

15:15-16:15

Nicki Credland: "Tales from the Nightingale - Setting up an education programme in 5 days"

We are also excited to hear from Dr Nicki Credland, a Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department Paramedical, Peri-Operative and Advanced Practice at Hull. Recently, Nicki has led the Critical Care Nurse Educator at the temporary Yorkshire's Nightingale Hospital, which she will be highlighting in her talk.

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

The virtual talks will take place via Microsoft Teams, using the links provided.

Staff News

Hello

We wish a very warm welcome to new members of staff who have joined the department recently, these include: Vanessa Mendao, Chloe Dickinson, Amie Woodward, Jenny Sweetman, Liina Mansukoski, Wendy Burton, Cheyann Heap, Megan Cook, Olivia Walsh, Nicola Sawyer Rosell, Carla Vital and Rebecca Hudson-Tandy.

Goodbye

We also wish a very fond farewell to those who have left, including: Aisha Umar, Deborah Gibson-Smith, Cliff Riorden, Rachel Lavelle, Danielle Varley, Tracey Bywater and Anthonia James.

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).