



# Megaphone Online

July 2020

the voice of Health Sciences' staff and students

## Black Lives Matter

Staff and students took part in an interesting debate around Black Lives Matter and there are a number of initiatives being worked on moving forward.

The Department also welcomed Beverley Brathwaite virtually. Beverley is the editor and contributing author of the book "Diversity and Cultural Awareness in Nursing Practice" and has recently written an article on Black Lives Matter and the Disparities and risk of COVID-19 in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) nurses which was published in the British Journal of Healthcare Assistants on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

Beverley talked about her research around the issue that COVID-19 does not discriminate but people do, and evidence clearly identifies that in society BAME communities are disproportionately negatively affected in education, work, housing, criminal justice system, and health. Inequalities based on ethnicity, institutional racism and unconscious racial bias has a part to play in the higher death rates due to COVID-19 in BAME communities.

Staff and students took part in a thought provoking discussion after Beverley's talk. We hope to be able to host another event on campus next year and invite Beverley back to talk to staff and students again.

A big thank you second year nursing student Khiera Haffiane who got in touch with Beverley via Twitter and invited her to visit York. Congratulations also to second year nursing student Nisha Reynolds who did an amazing job of chairing the talk from Beverley.



### In this issue:

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## Student News

### PhD student wins York 3 Minute Thesis Competition

Congratulations to PhD student Zainab Kidwai who has recently won the 2020 University of York 3 Minute Thesis competition. Zainab was awarded both 1<sup>st</sup> place and the People's Choice Award for her presentation. Over 400 people tuned in live for the event from countries across the world.

3MT® challenges PhD candidates to articulate the importance of their research to a non-specialist audience in 3 minutes. The process of condensing their research enhances both their communication and presentation skills but also forces them to think about what, why, and how they are conducting their research. The three winners will also present at the York Graduate School Induction in September 2020.

To view the web results please visit <https://www.york.ac.uk/research/events/three-minute-thesis/>

To view the event visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suJAmS2He1Q&feature=youtu.be>

## Teaching News

### Nursing Programme Update

Jess Powell, BSc Nursing Programme lead writes: "The modifications made to the pre-registration nursing programmes under the Emergency Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) Education Standards will be coming to an end over the coming months. In anticipation of their withdrawal, a significant amount of contingency planning has been underway with students, to plan and prepare for the upcoming academic year."

"In the most part our plans are to maintain the integrity of the existing course plans wherever possible. Summaries of the proposed changes have now been sent to all existing cohorts, including students on Leave of Absence for their feedback. A summary of the proposed changes to Stage 1 of the programme will also be made available to offer holders over the coming weeks."

"As a result of the changes to practice experience modules this spring and summer, many students will be progressing with deficits in practice hours that need to be made up, by the end of their programmes, to meet regulatory body requirements. Contingency plans have been shared with students and staff about how we plan to support them to make back these deficits."

"The Fitness to Practice committee, alongside our occupational health providers are continuing with individual assessments of students to screen for health problems or characteristics that may increase their risk when on practice placements during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Practice Team are working hard to develop a portfolio of non-patient facing placement opportunities so that we can continue to support these students to progress."

"The timetabling of the autumn term is progressing at speed and module leaders and teams are working hard to prepare synchronous and asynchronous sessions in addition to face-to-face mandatory training and clinical skills training. Minor adjustments are also being made to existing assessment guidelines to make them suitable for completion at distance."

"I'd really like to thank everyone who is continuing to work so hard to support the nursing students in unpredictable and challenging circumstances."

### 7th In the UK

The Department of Health Sciences confirmed its place among the UK's most highly regarded departments for nursing. The Department is ranked 7th in the UK in the Complete University Guide 2021.



# Complete University Guide

Published annually since 2007, the Complete University Guide ranks 130 UK universities, 14 Arts, Drama and Music colleges and conservatoires, and 70 subjects by quality measures important to students.

The Department's ranking is based on a range of measures including graduate prospects, student satisfaction and research quality. The Head of Department, Professor Karl Atkin, said: "We are delighted to be recognised among the very best nursing departments in the country. This is welcome news to our staff and students who work hard to continually improve nursing and midwifery education at York."

Professor Paul Galdas, Head of Nursing and Midwifery, added: "It's fantastic news that the quality of our nursing education has been recognised in the CUG league table this year. The ranking reflects the hard work of our team of passionate academics and our regional NHS and healthcare provider partners, who work in close partnership to support our students to become highly valued practitioners who make a real difference to people's lives."

In total, six departments at the University were ranked in the UK top ten: Chemistry (5th), English (6th), History of Art (6th), Social Work (6th), Nursing (7th) and Archaeology (9th).

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### National Student Survey 2020

The Department of Health Sciences has received excellent results for nursing and midwifery in the 2020 National Student Survey (NSS), supporting our top 10 position in the Complete University Guide 2021.

The NSS is a nationwide survey of final-year students in higher and further education that encourages them to give honest feedback about a variety of aspects of their university experience, including their department and course. This helps prospective students to make informed choices and also influences real change in future students' experiences, from institution-level to course-level.

Over 90% of our nursing and midwifery students agreed that they were satisfied with the teaching on their course. Over 90% of our students were also satisfied with the learning opportunities and learning resources offered by the department.

Professor Paul Galdas, Head of Nursing and Midwifery, said: "These results reflect the tremendous hard work of our passionate staff and students, to ensure that York offers one of the most enriching and highest quality learning experiences for nursing and midwifery students in the country. Our students are an ambitious community of learners who will help shape the future of nursing and midwifery in years to come."

# Teaching News

## Service User and Carer Involvement

Beth Hardy, Academic Lead for Service User and Carer involvement in health professions education, writes “The Service User and Carer Involvement (SUCI) Forum, in the Department of Health Sciences, is for people who use health and social care services and wish to influence and be involved with the education of health professionals.”



“The Forum is made up of Service Users, Carers, Students and Health Sciences staff. The Forum meets twice a year and members have the opportunity to contribute to a diverse range of activities and consultation, having a direct influence and impact on our healthcare programmes.”

“Our most recent Forum was in June and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we held our first virtual SUCI Forum via Zoom. The meeting included virtual round-table discussion and consultation on the Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing led by Alison Foster-Lill, Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) Apprenticeship facilitated by Donna Barnett, and discussion on how to develop the Forum itself, led by Beth Hardy. The meeting generated some excellent discussion and despite participants having to provide their own tea and cake, received positive feedback from all who attended! Many thanks to the service users, carers, and students involved and their vital contributions. “

If you are interested in finding out more about the Forum, and other SUCI activities in the department, please contact Dr Beth Hardy, Academic Lead for Service User and Carer involvement in health professions education ([beth.hardy@york.ac.uk](mailto:beth.hardy@york.ac.uk))

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## Staff wins YUSU Excellence Awards

Congratulations to Jo Rose, Programme Leader – MSc in International Humanitarian Affairs for winning the YUSU Excellence Award in the category of ‘Most Inspiring’.



## Research News

### £3m funding boost for mental-physical illness research

The University of York has been awarded £3m to develop a treatment for people suffering from diabetes and depression in South Asia.

The grant will be used to explore how 'Behavioural Activation' (BA), a psychological talking treatment, can be made culturally and economically suitable for people suffering from the illnesses in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Diabetes and depression are a growing problem worldwide, particularly in South Asia. This relatively simple treatment helps people make the link between what they do and how they feel and supports them to make changes to improve their health.

Our researchers will work with 'community advisory panels' providing a crucial link to people with long-term mental-physical illnesses, relevant health care organisations, along with policymakers who will all contribute to ensure the treatment can be delivered effectively.

The project, funded via the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Global Health Research Programme, is an extension to research already conducted at the university.

Project Lead, Dr Najma Siddiq from the Department of Health Sciences said: "It builds on work by researchers in the IMPACT programme, within the mental health group in health sciences. This project, also funded by NIHR, is improving outcomes for people in South Asia suffering from two or more long-term mental and physical health conditions."

"It will build our research capacity and enhance our relationships in the two countries. We look forward to working with existing and new partners - Advancement through Research and Knowledge Foundation, Bangladesh Diabetes Association, the National Institute of Mental Health in Bangladesh and Institute of Psychiatry and Khyber Medical University in Pakistan. The research programme provides a valuable opportunity to improve the lives of many in South Asia."

The University of York will also be working with several UK institutions including the University of Southampton, University of Leeds, University College London, Teeside University and the Esk and Wear Valley Foundation Trust.

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### Researchers to study the effectiveness of an intervention aimed at helping older people isolated during COVID-19

Food Researchers are to trial an intervention aimed at preventing and mitigating the onset of depression and loneliness among the most vulnerable in society as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown. Enforced isolation, whether this is due to shielding or self-isolation, causes disruption to daily routines, loss of social contact and loneliness which can lead to mental ill-health. Many more people will now be isolated as the lockdown continues for particular sections of society.

Isolation is likely to impact significantly on the mental health of vulnerable populations. Older people, and those with long-term conditions, represent a high risk group, whose risk of depression is already increased by around a factor of 2-3 times.

The researchers have developed an intervention, delivered by trained support workers, over the telephone, and over up to eight sessions. The impact of this intervention will be evaluated to see if depression symptoms can be prevented or improved, during the time of lockdown, and whether the intervention is acceptable to older adults and to support workers. Researchers will also evaluate whether this reduces levels of anxiety and feelings of loneliness.

The trial is being led from York by Professor Simon Gilbody, Director of the Mental Health & Addictions Research Group (MHARG) at the University of York, and Professor David Ekers, Honorary Professor, University of York Clinical Director of Research and Development at Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust.

Professor Gilbody said: "Our University-NHS partnership is ideally placed to respond to new societal challenges of COVID-19. Older people and those with long term conditions have now entered enforced isolation, and this risks an explosion of loneliness and depression for this vulnerable population. We propose to rapidly adapt an existing programme to test whether our intervention can prevent and mitigate the onset of depression and loneliness among older people."

Professor Carolyn Chew-Graham, a GP and leading researcher in the mental health of older people, based at Keele University added, "COVID-19 will inevitably impact on the mental health of older people. We know that social isolation does not inevitably lead to depression and loneliness, but having physical health problems is a risk factor for depression, and the additional stress of social isolation or shielding may well cause people to suffer from low mood and anxiety. In this study, we will test how we can maintain older people's mental health during this difficult time".

The research team hope to deliver a very brief and manualised intervention that can be delivered at scale in the UK and overseas.

Professor David Ekers, who works both at the University of York and the Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust, added: "We have been researching in this area for the past 10 years, and we are ideally placed to help establish 'what works' in maintaining good mental health during the lockdown. This represents a great alliance between the Universities and the NHS to address one of the major challenges posed by COVID."

The project is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

## Research News

### PROMETHEUS SWAT Webinar

On 29<sup>th</sup> June the PROMETHEUS group in collaboration with Trial Forge hosted a webinar on studies within a trial (SWATs). The webinar was well attended by over 100 delegates internationally.

York Trials Unit coordinates the MRC Funded PROMETHEUS programme. This enables researchers to apply for up to £5000 to embed a SWAT to test a recruitment or retention strategy in their randomised controlled trial. To date the programme has funded 42 SWATs. York Trials Unit is a Trial Forge SWATs centre which is part of the Trial Forge initiative. Trial Forge is aiming to increase the evidence base around trial decision making to improve trial efficacy and reduce research waste.

The webinar focused on disseminating the results of PROMETHEUS and showcasing the collaboration with Trial Forge.

The webinar featured talks on the specific methodological consideration needed to implement SWATs including the different designs and SWAT interventions that can be implemented.

Work undertaken to create recruitment and retention evidence packs in response to COVID-19 was also showcased. The evidence packs detail strategy effectiveness, implementation and practical advice and cost effectiveness information where possible, to enable researchers to quickly implement these strategies. More information can be found here: <https://www.trialforge.org/covid-19-resources/>

There was a discussion around the challenges and barriers of implementing and publishing SWATs, including gaining ethical approval, and solutions to these challenges were considered.

The question and answer sessions and web chat were very successful during the webinar with experiences and publications shared between delegates.

These discussions will be integral in shaping future events. The team are currently collating feedback to plan further SWAT training and dissemination events which will be advertised in due course.

A recording of the webinar is available here: <https://youtu.be/efhFjORxc8U>

## Research News

### Writing Week takes a bite of Cadbury Chocolate

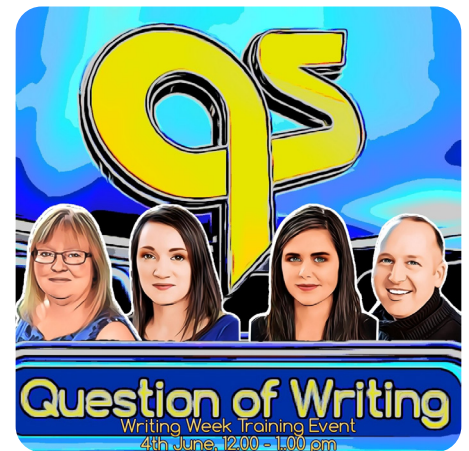
York Trials Unit (YTU) holds a series of three Writing Weeks each year with a different theme. This year the theme was 'Chocolate', hosted by Sarah Cockayne.

Writing Week provides an opportunity to work on outputs other than those required for a main trial, that people don't always get the chance to work on. It helps build personal and professional development as well as building a strong relationship within the Unit.

During the year there have been a few helpful training sessions such as insights from an associate editor of what one journal editor looks for in a submission. Our very own 'YTU Egghead's' session was led by David Torgerson, Catherine Hewitt, Catriona McDaid and Joy Adamson on how to peer review and provide feedback to the reviewer's comments.

The last training session was 'A Question of Writing' virtually hosted by Sarah Cockayne, Stephen Brealey, Catherine Arundel and Arabella Scantlebury. This session went over some case studies highlighting how to get extra papers from a trial apart from the usual protocol, clinical, Health Economic and qualitative papers.

The last Writing Week held in June was very different compared to previous weeks, this time it was completely virtual. Despite some facing extra challenges whilst working at home, this did not stop the teams from making some excellent progress with writing papers including SWAT papers, progressing systematic reviews, analysing data and planning for future papers.



Congratulations go to the team winners 'PICNIC' led by Natasha Mitchell who get to take home the trophy by exceeding their original plans and doing very well during the final Writing Week. For some members of the team, lockdown helped with productivity and some felt it was easier to concentrate on the writing as

there were fewer distractions. Congratulations also to our final 'Master Chocolatier', Laura Clark from team 'Fruit and Nut' who achieved all her goals and managed to get a paper submitted.

When asked about her experience of writing week Laura said "Writing week this time has been very different within the present climate. Our training event was held virtually along with our team meetings. Despite remote working there has been a huge amount of collaboration and it has been a really

successful writing week for YTU. I was delighted to be this writing week master chocolatier, I worked with a great team and this writing week success is shared with them."

Sarah Cockayne, this year's host of Writing Week writes "Many congrats to all the prize winners and everyone who has taken part and made good progress throughout the three Chocolate Writing Weeks. Particular thanks to the Team Leaders for all of your hard work and support."

The next theme for Writing Week is '90's Pop' and will be hosted by Arabella Scantlebury.





### Lack of support for people with motor neurone disease leaves some suicidal, study shows

A lack of palliative care provision for people with motor neurone disease (MND) following diagnosis can cause emotional distress and, in extreme cases, lead to people experiencing suicidal thoughts, new research shows. The research review, conducted by the University of York concludes that palliative care is commonly restricted to the last few days of life, despite MND being a terminal illness. The research which was undertaken in conjunction with St Leonard's Hospice, also indicates that early access to palliative care would enhance emotional support for patients and their unpaid carers.

The research – co-funded by charity Marie Curie and the MND Association - highlights the experiences of many people with MND who reflect on the issues they have experienced through the course of their illness, including suicidal thoughts following diagnosis. Professor Kate Flemming, from the Department, said: "To imagine that some people feel so unsupported after a diagnosis of MND that their distress may extend to suicidal thoughts is heart-breaking. It is a really hard time and this review shows that more needs to be done earlier to support people and make sure they get all the care that they and their loved ones need. For some people there is still a sense of 'there is nothing more we can do for you' around palliative care, however this is far from the truth. Palliative care is care tailored to the individual, leading to more empowered decision-making and improved management of symptoms, be they physical or emotional."

Throughout the review, early integration of palliative care was shown to improve people's ability to adopt coping strategies during the continuous sense of loss and uncertainty they felt, alongside bouts of low mood that extend across their whole experience with the disease.

Samantha Bolsher whose husband, David, died of MND in 2014, assisted with the research by commenting on her own experience as his carer. She said: "I think having palliative support earlier would definitely make coping with MND easier. In our case it wasn't driven through any of the caregivers until it really needed to be, and with this disease and the speed at which it progresses, you are always having to play catchup. I think if we'd started talking about things earlier, we perhaps could have got our heads around what we were facing a little quicker."

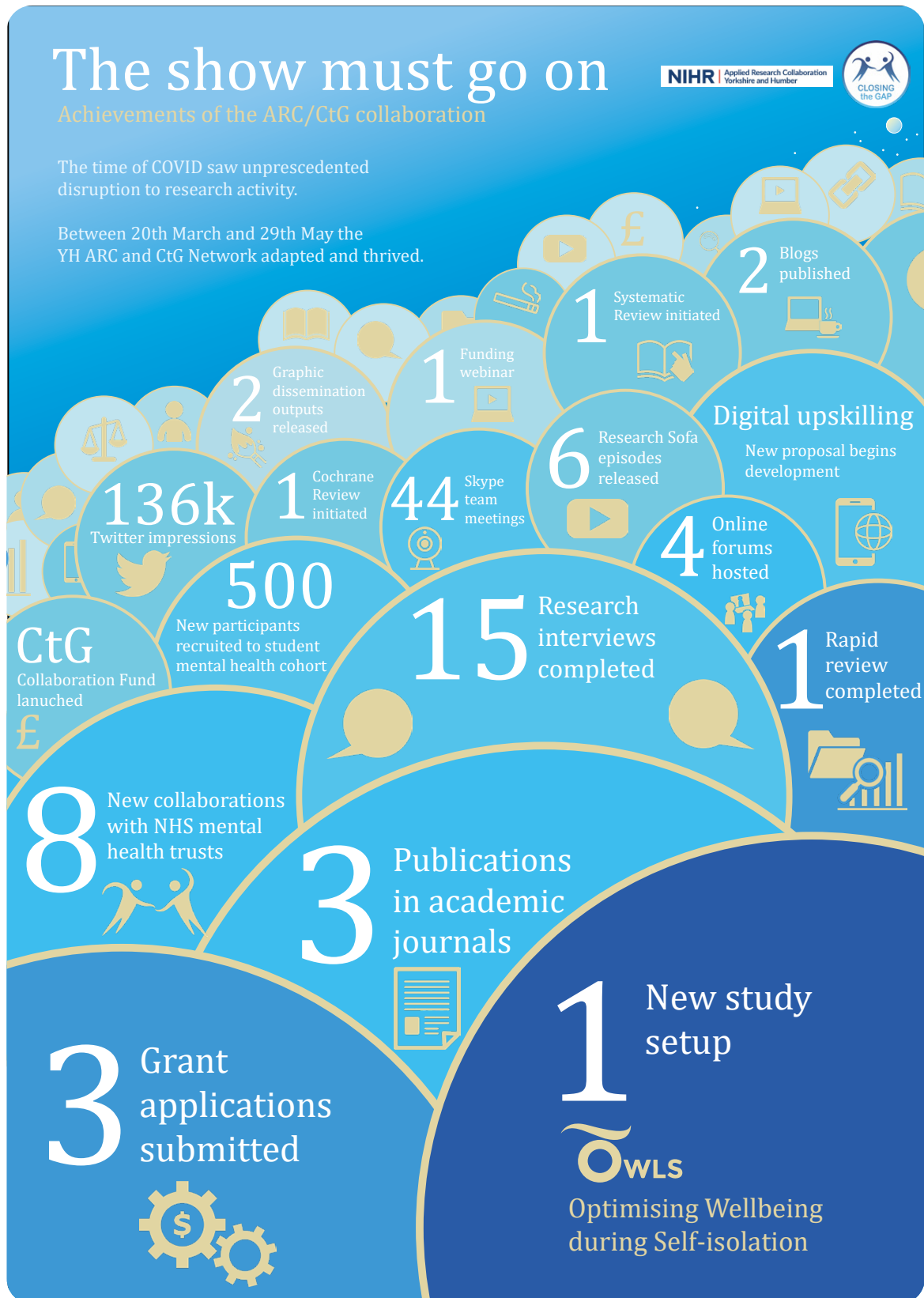
"If this disease is treated the same as other terminal diseases and people can have access to palliative care at an appropriate time, it would give both the patient and their family valuable decision-making time. That was so important to David. When you are told that nothing more can be done and that the person you love is going to die you both want to have some say and control over how things are going to happen."

Dr Brian Dickie, Director of Research, MND Association, said: "MND is a disease of low prevalence, but high need. This comprehensive review, covering studies from several countries around the world carried out over two decades, drills down into the real world of the many challenges faced by individuals and their families following a diagnosis of this devastating disease. Given the speed at which MND can progress, care must not only be timely, to support the physical and psychological changes through the disease course, but ideally also anticipates the needs of people in advance, to avoid a crisis from occurring. The findings of this review will serve as an important benchmark to help drive further improvements in care and support."

Dr Adrian Tookman, Medical Director at Marie Curie Hospice, Hampstead said: "Many people I meet in my clinics, who have MND, have articulated the same feelings of a lack of control, fear around the progression of their disease and in the most extreme cases, suicidal thoughts. Thankfully the team at the hospice can help people move forward with a greater feeling of control but this is dependent on timely referrals to the right specialists."

## Closing the Gap strive on during Lockdown

Emily Peckham, writes: “The Closing the Gap- ARC collaboration of Emily Peckham, Suzanne Crosland, Paul Heron, Liz Newbronner, Thenao Pavlidou, Panos Spanakis, Lauren Walker and Ruth Wadman have created a snapshot of what their team has achieved throughout the lockdown to illustrates the power of solidarity; ‘through dark times, we’ve stayed together and we’ve carried on.’”



## Research News

### Funding received to research COVID-19 in Uganda

Rob Newton, Professor in Clinical Epidemiology, writes: “The Ministry of Health in Uganda has requested support from the UK Government for SARS-CoV-2 diagnostics and for further research on the virus.

The UK Research & Innovation (UKRI) approached the Uganda Unit (where Rob works) directly with an emergency call for funding and a request for a scientific strategy. Rob submitted an application direct to the CEO and Senior Leadership Team of the Medical Research Council for community surveillance and long term follow up of cases in our population cohorts. We were successful in obtaining £1.2 million for the surveillance/follow-up studies and £1.5 million for diagnostics.”

“In collaboration with many others, we were also successful in an application to the Wellcome Trust for a project called AFRICO19 (with collaborators in the Gambia, Glasgow and Kilifi in Kenya) which we submitted in March. The proposal included some SARS-CoV-2 surveillance activity in Uganda, which I will coordinate.”

For more information visit

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/grant-funding/people-and-projects/grants-awarded/african-covid-19-preparedness-africo19>

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### Senior Lecturer appointed by Royal College of General Practitioners

Dr Liz Glidewell, a Senior Lecturer in Patient Safety and Quality Improvement, has been appointed by the Royal College of General Practitioners as a Quality Improvement Clinical Support Fellow.

NHS England and the General Practitioners Committee England of the British Medical Association have commissioned the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP), NICE and Health Foundation to develop quality improvement modules for potential inclusion in the General Medical Services (GMS) contract (Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF)).

The improvements will support practices to implement quality improvement modules and the RCGP and partners have been asked to develop support materials and practical resources. Liz will be working with partners to rapidly develop guidance for directors of Primary Care Networks, webinars, illustrative case studies, and top tips to support quality improvement in primary care. Liz said: “I’m delighted to be appointed to work on a collaborative project to support practices to make improvements that align with both the needs and preferences of practice staff and their patients.”



Professor Patrick Doherty, Professor of Cardiovascular Health and Deputy Head of Department (Research), said: “Post Covid, health service change and innovation is more important than ever as there’s a risk that the quality of proven services could be diminished and emerging services may not meet quality markers. Dr Glidewell’s fellow status, bestowed by the Royal College, shows that quality improvement in clinical practice is seen as paramount in establishing an effective and meaningful health service in the modern era.”

# Research News

## Lockdown competition time at York Trials Unit

York Trials Unit (YTU) have been running competitions during lockdown.

Firstly we had the 'Best weekend make/creation', which showcased how creative people in the Trials Unit can be. After much careful deliberation by our official competition team, the winner was announced.

Well done to Rachel Herdsman who won the best weekend make/creation for her newly built Guinea Pig runs.



The second competition was a 'YTU pet competition' which had a total of 30 entries ranging from cute kittens, playful dogs, visiting hedgehogs, shy fish and even a snail! The deadline was set and everyone took to google forms to place their vote. The response was brilliant but there could only be one winner!

Congratulations to Sophie James and her beautiful Border Collie Roxy who has been crowned the official YTU Pet.



The next competition is a 'YTU Best Bake' in July. We are sure Amazon will see an increased number of sales on cookbooks, particularly the 'Great British Bake Off' themed ones. No soggy bottoms allowed so let's get baking!

# Staff News

## Hello

We wish a very warm welcome to new members of staff who have joined the department recently, these include: Brian Ferguson, Mary Abboah-Offei and Olamide Tadowede.

## Goodbye

We also wish a very fond farewell to those who have left, including: Ellen Kendall, Jenny McCaffery, Charlotte Endacott, Duncan Stewart, Christine Appleton, Stephanie Morris, Abby Dunn, Beth Jones, Lu Han and Trevor Sheldon.

## Congratulations to:

Vev Gaunt, Junior Web Developer in York Trials Unit, who has raised £1,185 for Black Minds Matter by shaving her head. <https://oxfordshire.charitycheckout.co.uk/pf/shave-vevs-head>

## Remembering:

The Department is said to report the death of Jenny Bradford. Jenny worked at the University of York in the Department of Politics as Departmental Administrator from 1981 until 2002 when she retired. Jenny returned from retirement to work as Nursing & Midwifery Student Records Secretary in July 2004 before retiring (again) in June 2006.

## Help required from staff and students

Amanda Perry, Chair of the Athena Swan Committee, is looking for help from students to complete a short cultural survey. Please circulate the link below to your students.

<https://www.menti.com/eaafp5nrwg>

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