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Newsletter

CHSS
University of Kent

Centre for Health Services Studies

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Congratulations Sally Kendall, MBE

On 31 January Sally, CHSS Professor of Community Nursing and Public Health, received her MBE at Buckingham Palace. It recognises 30 years' research in nursing and health visiting. She is renowned for practice-based research around parenting and maternal and child health. Her parenting work is internationally recognised and implemented from Kent to Japan.

Sally said: 'I am delighted and honoured on behalf of the nursing profession to receive the MBE. It is a particular privilege to be honoured for research in nursing. It has been an important part of my work to raise the profile of nursing and develop evidence-based practice.'



Excellence in health research

News and events round up

CHSS air quality work highlighted

High levels of daytime air pollution recorded at Canterbury crossings

CHSS Director Stephen Peckham is leading a team monitoring Canterbury air quality.

He told *Kent Online* that at peak times nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels are significantly higher than the upper UK average annual legal limit of 40 micrograms per cubic metre (pcm). The research uses sophisticated EarthSense Zephyr monitors. There are calls for the Council to invest in sensors like these, which provide NO₂ data every 10 seconds, as well as data on ozone (O₃) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). Diffusion tubes sited in Canterbury give annual averages for NO₂ only.



Two monitors have been placed at St Stephen's Road and St Dunstan's level crossings for a project with Professor Dominic Abrams from the University's School of Psychology. It is part of an experiment to assess the impact of signs which ask drivers to switch off engines while waiting at the crossing. On February 25, between 7am and 7pm NO₂ readings recorded at St Stephen's Road crossing averaged 75.9 micrograms pcm, shot up to 87 during the 8am to 9am rush-hour, 119.6 between 6pm and 7pm and peaked at 381.

Councils are legally obliged to report monthly NO₂ averages for areas where pollution is above national limits. Canterbury City Council has a wide network of indicative monitors but only two are DEFRA approved. Stephen says this doesn't go far enough: 'We are recording levels substantially higher than average, because at night it's very low, but much higher during the

day. It's all very well having an average that includes night, when levels are zero. In the daytime children walking to school along these roads are nearer to exhausts at ground level. Children breathe faster and take in more air and research suggests they can be exposed to pollution levels 50% higher than those recorded by monitors normally placed at least 2 metres above ground'.

Stephen and Dr Ashley Mills will be continuing to gather more accurate air quality data across the city with the Alliance of Canterbury Residents' Associations who, jointly with CHSS, have been awarded funding towards two additional monitors. They are also working with the Faversham Society on a study monitoring the town's pollution levels. Campaigners who petitioned the Department for Transport to force the building of a new A2 bypass, highlighted dangerously high levels of pollution, congestion and development in the area.



CHSS Research Fellows on the ball!

Kent FA, the governing body supporting football at all levels in the County, recently commissioned CHSS Research Fellows Dr Sarah Hotham and Dr Rowena Merritt to deliver a one day in-house training workshop.

Rowena's session focused on improving knowledge and understanding of social marketing and how it can promote participation among hard-to-reach groups. Sarah's presentation on behaviour change techniques highlighted practical tools that can be used to promote and maintain physical activity



Darzi project film launched to promote breastfeeding

A film to promote breastfeeding among Kent's Slovakian Roma community was formally launched on Thursday 25 April at the Turner Contemporary Gallery, Margate.

CHSS Visiting Darzi Fellow Philippa Burden co-produced the video which documents women's own views and experiences.

The event attracted over 70 people who participated in a workshop about next steps supporting breastfeeding within the Roma community. The celebratory launch – red carpet and all – was followed by a traditional Slovakian lunch.

Philippa said 'CHSS has been a welcoming, supportive place to be a Darzi Fellow – thank you all – and I'm ending my Darzi year on a very positive note. Do watch our film!'

You can view the film along with other CHSS videos here: www.youtube.com/channel/UCOLrhBamXnSy4uoGKljnXbw



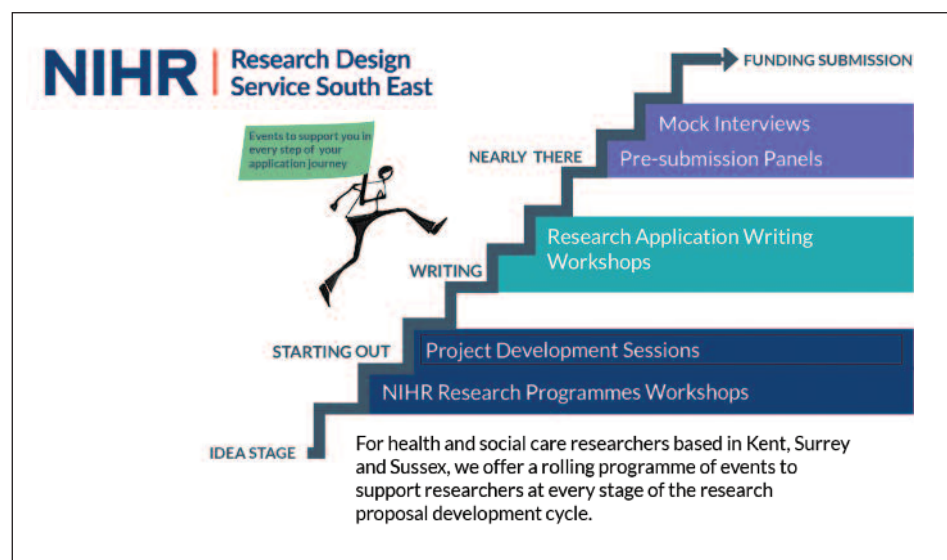
NIHR Research Design Service South East

Need help applying for health research funding?

RDS SE – FREE advice and support on all aspects of research design

Since 2008 CHSS has hosted the RDS SE at the University of Kent. The service also operates from Brighton and Surrey Universities. Funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) the RDS supports teams and individuals preparing applications for health and social care research funding.

See more at: www.rds-se.nihr.ac.uk



Upcoming events

Pint of Science is back!

20-22 May 2019
Doors 6pm, Event 7-10pm

The Foundry, 77 Stour Street,
Canterbury Kent CT1 2NR

Tickets (£4) are available for this year's Pint of Science taking place on consecutive evenings. CHSS has contributed for the past two years and we are delighted to be involved again.



Tue 21 May

Dr Rasa Mikelyte – Food for thought: what is a good mealtime for people with dementia and what can we all learn from it?

Rasa's session focuses on research which aimed to improve mealtime experiences in two dementia care wards. Rasa invites you to imagine yourself in the position of a person with dementia who has mealtime difficulties, and she shows that her findings bear relevance to us all – not just people with dementia.



For more details see <https://pintofscience.co.uk/events/kent>

#PintofScience

- 1 Tracy (centre) and the CHSS WHYSPEr research team
- 2 Whysper class teacher Nina Dhiman

CHSS research news

WHYSPEr: Workplace Hatha Yoga for Stress Prevention, Exercise and Relaxation



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Research Fellow Tracy Pellatt-Higgins leads the innovative WHYSPEr yoga research study, with fellow CHSS team members Katie Saxby and Kate Hamilton-West, and Nina Dhiman a yoga and mindfulness teacher.

The study explores the feasibility of a six-week Hatha Yoga course designed by Tracy and Nina, who are both yoga teachers and mental health professionals, using recommended yoga practices for stress, burnout and anxiety. Existing data suggest that over a third of University of Kent staff report 'often' or 'always' experiencing levels of stress that are unacceptable.

Yoga is known to improve well-being but there are no published trials which address the effective 'dosage' of yoga for stress and burnout, ways of maintaining yoga practice in the longer term and the impact of practising yoga at home. These are all important factors which could contribute to the effectiveness of yoga, and which the researchers want to explore in this feasibility study.

The WHYSPEr yoga course includes the repetition of posture sequences which can be practised at home and course materials and workbooks to help home practice. The project explores the feasibility of running the workplace yoga course for members of staff experiencing stress and anxiety, the potential impact of the programme on stress and burnout measures, and the uptake and impact of home yoga practice.

Thirty-nine members of staff from the University of Kent, including two CHSS staff members, participated in the WHYSPEr yoga courses between January and March 2019. The research team are now collecting data on outcomes following completion of the classes.



2

New projects

Identifying and improving the capacity of health service staff to conduct research

It is widely recognised that research undertaken by the NHS staff who will use the results can improve clinical practice.

A Royal College of Physicians' report '*Building a Research-Active Medical Workforce*' found that doctors want to engage more in research. However, the evidence suggests that there is a lack of time, funding and support to enable them – along with other professionals such as nurses and allied health professionals – to engage in research.

Professor Stephen Peckham leads a CHSS team in a new Cancer Research UK-funded, mixed-methods study to discover the scale of the problem. What action can be undertaken by practitioners, the organisations they work for, research funders and the NHS more widely to address the research capacity problem? Professor Sally Kendall, Dr Ferhana Hashem, Dr Catherine Marchand and Sarah Spencer are working with Stephen, alongside Kent Surrey and Sussex Clinical Research Network. The team are exploring questions such as why NHS staff lack capacity to conduct research and what barriers and facilitators exist that hinder or help them. What differences are there between different health care practitioners' ability to incorporate research into their clinical career? What training and development support is needed?



The team will conduct a staff survey, carry out case studies of specific groups of staff and specialities and conduct data analysis on existing research activity and support programmes. The focus is on finding ways of working which support research at individual,

organisational and system levels. The study will seek practical solutions to support policy-making in the NHS, research funders and UK Departments of Health to improve and optimise the health service research environment.

Do Multidisciplinary Meetings (MDMs) contribute towards improving patient outcomes and prevent the need for health and social care support?

CHSS Research Fellow Dr Sarah Hotham is carrying out an evaluation of Multidisciplinary Integrated Care Management meetings (MDMs) in the London Borough of Bexley, on behalf of Oxleas Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust, the Borough's mental health provider. MDMs unite relevant health professionals across health and social care, to discuss patients with complex multiple health and social care needs.



This evaluation uses mixed methods to discover the impact and effectiveness of the MDMs in improving patient outcomes and reducing need for health and social care

support. Sarah said: 'Integrated care requires professionals and practitioners from different sectors to work together around the needs of

people, families and communities. This evaluation takes an implementation science approach. By talking to multidisciplinary team members, stakeholders and GPs, we want to find out what works and what doesn't about these meetings and the way they are put in place. Do they achieve more joined-up care for those with complex social and mental health problems?

'We want to understand what works, for whom and in what circumstances, to enable maximum impact on patient outcomes and service use'.

CHSS people

And she would walk 500 miles!

Tracy Pellatt-Higgins, Research Fellow, Senior Statistician and NIHR RDS SE Research Adviser

Where were you born/grew up?

I was born near Glasgow in Scotland, the second oldest of four sisters. Dad owned a busy ladies' hairdressing salon attached to our house. Me and my sisters and friends used to play in the salon and style our hair. Mum was a housewife, but sometimes worked in the salon.



When I was 13 we moved to the Yorkshire market town, Pocklington. Everything was very different there, even the way people dressed, and nobody could understand what I was saying because of my strong Scottish accent! It took a while to get over the culture shock and I missed my friends, but I settled and grew to love the area. As a teenager, I listened to Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen a lot and was given my first acoustic guitar at 18, which I still play occasionally.

Were you always into maths at school?

I was good with numbers from a very young age. I liked school and in fact was once told off for doing too much maths homework! I was a bit of a geek and was thrilled to receive a scientific calculator for Christmas once. I also loved art, writing and needlework, and designed and made clothes for myself and my younger sisters.

Where was your first job?

My Dad's hair salon; sweeping up, shampooing, blow-drying and getting the hairdressers' lunches from the local bakery. During my A levels in the summer holidays, I worked in a local fruit packing company. It was fun because I worked with school friends, but I'd have hated it long-term!

How and where was University?

I studied Applied Statistics at the University of Sheffield. I didn't really know what I wanted to do, so stuck to what I was good at. I did a placement year at the University of York working on data analysis of the Rowntree longitudinal study. When I graduated I lived in Harrogate and got a job in pharma as an Assistant Statistician.

After five years I became Manager of the Statistics Department overseeing more than 20 staff, and after eight years my role was very management-focused. In 1997-9 I studied for a part time MSc in Medical Statistics at Leicester, to get back to more hands-on statistics.

What brought you to Kent?

In 2002 I was headhunted by Pfizer for a Pharmacometrician job in Sandwich. Much of the work involved using pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic modelling and simulation to design trials. I made great friends and enjoyed the work and travelling in the US and Europe. It was a good time to make a move and I felt at home in Canterbury very quickly.

Not long after, I began volunteering for the Samaritans. That led to me training as a Counsellor and a yoga teacher, and I became more interested in preventative healthcare.

How did you come to CHSS?

I had an interview with CHSS in February 2010 and joined the Research Design Service (RDS) as Statistician Research Adviser. I gradually became more directly involved with CHSS and RDS research through being a co-applicant on some projects.

What do you enjoy most about working here?

I like the variety of work, and finding out about new areas. There is always something new to learn. Being able to develop and carry out my own research is a big plus, it's a nice place to work with good people and the campus is lovely.

I have learnt a lot about the NHS and health and social care research, I am also able to contribute from my experience in statistics and trials. I've learnt a lot from being trial statistician on the SIPS junior, RISKIT-CJS and eGFR-C trials.

I was very excited to recently receive faculty funding to run my first yoga therapy feasibility study which will hopefully lead to more yoga research. It has been a new experience being involved in every stage of running a trial.



What are your passions/hobbies?

I am passionate about yoga and I love walking my two Scottie dogs. I enjoy creative writing and have been on retreats at the Isle of Iona and a couple of Arvon poetry courses. I don't have much time for writing these days with two young children though!

I enjoy spending time with my kids, and having days out and holidays with them and the dogs, it's great to rent a cottage and enjoy lovely scenery in Cornwall or the Yorkshire Wolds, where I can also visit my family.

What would be your dream job if not this one?

Being a Yoga therapist practitioner researcher, with enough time off to travel and write poetry.

What unusual fact can you tell us about yourself?

On our honeymoon we walked the whole 500 mile Camino de Santiago pilgrimage. It took five weeks. On the first day we walked up the Pyrenees and back down again — I've never felt such physical exhaustion! It was a real adventure and we met lots of interesting characters.

Back home we had a big wedding party where a former Pfizer colleague's band played the Proclaimers song 'I'm gonna be 500 miles' for us! It almost made the blisters worth it!

- 1 Professor Chris Farmer
- 2 Dr James Hadlow

Featured CHSS publications

Predicting kidney transplant rejection

The Medical Research Council Centre for Transplantation and the NIHR Guy's and St Thomas' Biomedical Research Centre have found a novel way to predict rejection of a transplanted kidney before it happens, by monitoring transplant patients' immune systems. Research published in journal *EbioMedicine* showed that a signature combination of seven immune genes in blood samples can predict rejection earlier than current techniques. Monitoring these markers could help doctors intervene before organ damage occurs.

Chris Farmer, Consultant in renal medicine at East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (EKHUFT), who is also a CHSS Clinical Professor, co-authored the article. He said: 'this large multi-centre study was seeking ways to improve transplant outcome through better surveillance. The results are very exciting and may pave the way to reducing the need for kidney biopsies in transplant recipients and improving tailored use of anti-rejection treatments'.

Around 3,000 renal transplants are carried out each year in the UK. They offer the best treatment for patients whose kidneys have failed. Acute rejection, a common complication in the first year after transplant, occurs when the body's immune system begins to attack the donated organ. Currently, acute rejection can only be confirmed by biopsy of the transplanted organ. It can be treated, but only once damage occurs.

Once validated further, this new technique has potential to offer clinicians use of a simple blood test to predict rejection. Ability to intervene before the event will help prevent damage and extend the life of the transplanted organ.

Development of a multivariable gene-expression signature targeting T-cell-mediated rejection in peripheral blood of kidney transplant recipients validated in cross sectional and longitudinal samples.
EBioMedicine ISSN 2352-3964

Christakoudi S, Runglall M, Mobillo P, Tsui T, Duff C, Domingo-Vila C, Kamra Y, Delaney F, Montero R, Spiridou A, Kassimatis T, Phin-Kon S, Tucker B, **Farmer C K**, Strom, T B, Lord G M, Rebollo-Mesa I, Stahl D, Sacks S, Hernandez-Fuentes M and Chowdhury P (2019).



1

Digital healthcare – let's not leave patients behind!

CHSS visiting Darzi Fellow Dr James Hadlow and Professor Chris Farmer have written a timely article highlighting ethical questions and dilemmas around 'AI' and digital healthcare. Published recently in *New Statesman Tech*, it stresses the vital need for meaningful patient engagement in the 'digital future':



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ethical dilemmas which might arise as the result of their design and implementation'.

The article was very well received and has led to plenty of social media discussion.

How do we ensure digital healthcare doesn't leave some patients behind? *New Statesman Tech*: CHSS Visiting Darzi Fellow Dr James Hadlow and Professor Chris Farmer <https://tech.newstatesman.com/emerging-technologies/digital-ready-citizen-health>

'Proper engagement of our patients to ensure fully informed consent is imperative. It is not good enough to innovate without engaging the public or properly considering the moral and



CHSS staff news

Information about all CHSS staff is available on our website: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/staff
Details of our current vacancies and studentships: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/vacancies.html

Welcome to:

Esther Mugweni, Honorary Research Fellow

Esther is Research Lead at the Institute of Health Visiting. She has led and published several studies with Professor Sally Kendall, and will be working with her in the area of maternal and child health.



Ann-Marie Towers

Ann-Marie recently joined us from the University's Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU). She brings with her a wealth of experience and expertise in social care research and in qualitative methods.



Congratulations

Dr Lindsay Forbes, Senior Clinical Research Fellow

Lindsay has been appointed Public Health Lead for the NIHR Clinical Research Network, Kent Surrey and Sussex (CRN KSS).



CHSS promotions (all effective from 1 October 2019)

Nadine Hendrie, Research Assistant has been promoted to Research Associate.



Dr Rasa Mikelyte, Research Assistant has been promoted to Research Associate.



Dr Eirini Saloniki, Research Associate has been promoted to Research Fellow.



Recent CHSS publications

Abrahamson V & Wilson P M (2019) Positioning the six-month review in the recovery process post-stroke: The ideology of personal responsibility. *Health & Social Care in the Community* 27 (1) pp249-259 ISSN 0966-0410

Saddi F C, Peckham S & dos Santos Mundim, P (2018) Pay for Performance, Formulation, Implementation and Policy Success: in Low, Middle and High Income Countries. *Sociedade e Cultura* 21 ISSN 1415-8566. E-ISSN 1980-8194

Kendall S, Nash A & Braun A et al (2019) Acceptability and understanding of the Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition, as part of the Healthy Child Programme 2-year health and development review in England: Parent and professional perspectives *Child: Care, Health and Development* 45 (2) pp 251-256 ISSN 0305-1862

Hudson B, Hunter D & **Peckham S** (2019) Policy failure and the policy-implementation gap: can policy support programs help? *Policy Design and Practice*

Hamilton-West K E, Gadsby E W & Hotham S (2019) Re: Helen Salisbury: Social prescribing and the No 17 bus. *BMJ* 364 ISSN 0959-8138

Early F, **Wilson P M**, Deaton C, Wellwood I & Dickerson T et al (2019) Developing an intervention to increase REferral and uptake TO pulmonary REhabilitation in primary care in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (the RESTORE study): mixed methods study protocol *BMJ Open* ISSN 2044-6055

Details of all CHSS current and past research is available on our website: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/research/current.html

About CHSS

CHSS is a centre of research excellence which undertakes high quality research into a wide range of health systems and health services issues at local, national and international levels. CHSS also supports and advises health care staff to develop and undertake research projects. CHSS collaborates with a wide range of partners in Kent, the UK and in other countries to improve the links between research, policy and practice.

Please see the CHSS website for details of current and previous research and publications.

Details of current CHSS vacancies and studentships can be found at: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/vacancies.html

