



## Department of Nursing & Midwifery Research Newsletter



**Welcome to our first research newsletter from the Department of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of the Highlands and Islands.**

This may seem a strange time to launch a newsletter, but whilst we remain in uncertain times one thing is for sure - any return to 'normality' will require doing our work in a different way. Much of this change will be initiated from the lessons learnt during lockdown as well as evidence generated from research. This quarterly newsletter will share information on our current research activity from academic staff and students. The aim is to provide an insight into our work and showcase how we are contributing to improving the health of people in our local communities and beyond, including our response to COVID-19. The newsletter will also provide links to our staff profile pages to enable people to contact us for study opportunities or to develop collaborative work.

We look forward to connecting with you.

Dr Michelle Beattie  
Lecturer and Assistant Head of Research

### What do we do?

Our research aims to foster a strong research community in the Highlands and Islands and build research collaborations nationally and internationally. This enables us to address key health questions relevant to Scotland and beyond and conduct high quality research that improves health and wellbeing within the Highlands and Islands. We conduct research to improve health and wellbeing in remote and rural regions that has international significance and spans urban populations. Our research expertise includes:

- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Active health

- Health and social care interventions and evaluation
- Improvement science
- Nurse education

See links to our academic staff and PhD student profiles.

## Covid-19 Study: Covid Health and Adherence Research in Scotland

**Researchers in the department are part of a 40-member strong consortium Covid Health and Adherence Research in Scotland (CHARIS) who will conduct the following study:**

Protecting population physical & mental health during the coronavirus pandemic: A representative national weekly survey to understand changes.

This study aims to understand people's adherence to measures to reduce transmission of the coronavirus (social distancing, handwashing, facemasks) and their mental and general health during the Covid-19 pandemic. We will describe people's adherence and their mental and general health during the pandemic in Scotland. We will also provide psychosocial explanations for levels of adherence and health that we observe each week over a 17 week period of the pandemic.

It is the largest study in Scotland about the pandemic - aiming to recruit 8000 adults in Scotland. It is also the only telephone conducted survey, which makes it more likely to include older people and people living in deprived areas compared to surveys being conducted online.

The study key findings will be regularly submitted each week to the Scottish government to inform policy and practice.

## PhD Students Reflect and Adapt to Covid-19

### Health literacy and behaviour change in cardiac rehab patients



**Ronie Walters tells us more about the changes she has made to her research as a result of Covid-19**

My PhD is researching the impact of health literacy on behaviour change in cardiac rehab patients. People with inadequate health literacy can struggle to access and understand information, have effective conversations with medical staff, ask and respond to questions, play an active part in decision making and apply information to actively manage their health. Given that many cardiac patients can benefit from changing health behaviours to reduce the risk of

recurrence, health literacy seemed a potential critical element to the process. I started in 2018 and at the time Covid-19 hit I had completed a cross-sectional survey of health behaviours, health literacy, illness beliefs, and self-efficacy and motivation for physical activity in all NHS Highland patients referred between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. I was 2 months into data collection for the same survey which would have been collected within 2 weeks of referral to rehab and again 6 months later for all patients referred within NHS Highland and NHS Grampian. [Read more.](#)



### Will digital self-management be more acceptable in a post-covid world?

#### **A reflection on the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on my PhD thesis by Rebecca Hunter**

In early March, I was given ethical clearance to proceed with my study. I was now able to recruit NHS patients and staff for a series of recorded interviews and focus group to discuss theories around digital self-management programmes for people with chronic low back pain (CLBP). Then, on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020, to prevent the spread of Covid 19, the United Kingdom went into 'lockdown' and life as we knew it changed. Suddenly, ethical clearance for my study was meaningless. My research felt meaningless. That said, at a time when more healthcare consultations are being

conducted virtually than ever before in the NHS's history, perhaps my research around digital self-management has never been more important. [Read more.](#)



## The role of technology in supporting dementia education needs



### By Kevin Muirhead

I am in my second-year of a full-time PhD that explores the role of technology in supporting the dementia education needs of health and social care practitioners in rural Scotland. My project is funded by ESIF until December 2021. COVID-19 first impacted on my research in February this year when an international conference that I was due to attend was cancelled due to concerns about the new virus. In March, my research was suspended as it involves significant input from health care professionals and face-to-face contact with people with dementia and their families. The timing was unfortunate as I had just received a positive ethical opinion and was poised to start data collection.

[Read more.](#)

## Research Projects

### SIPA2: Improving the Pharmaceutical Care of Older People with Sensory Impairment

Professor Annetta Smith and Dr Leah Macaden are co-investigators on this interdisciplinary project along with academic colleagues from the University of Strathclyde funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust. Many older people use multiple medicines and the more medicines a person uses, the greater the likelihood of them having a medicine-related problem. In addition, many older people develop sight and/or hearing loss (hereafter referred to as sensory impairment) due to their age and struggle to identify individual medicines because they are unable to read labels and/or information sheets, or they use their medicines incorrectly because they have been unable to hear information provided about their medicines by community pharmacy personnel. [Read more.](#)

### Co creation with Academic – Digital & Dementia Care Experts

Dr Leah Macaden led this project along with Giulia Melchiorre from CogniHealth as the industry partner funded by The Standard Innovation Voucher that facilitates academic – industry collaboration. Kevin Muirhead (PhD student) supported the project as a part time Research Assistant.

CogniCare from CogniHealth is the first app of its kind, integrating all aspects of dementia care into one single tool, while keeping both the person living with dementia (PwD) and carers at the heart of the solution.

[Read more.](#)

## PhD Student Profile – Aniéle Viljoen-Steele

**In each issue we will find out more about the Department of Nursing & Midwifery PhD students and their research projects.**

South-African born Aniéle Viljoen-Steele lived in Cape Town until she was 19 before she moved to London where she spent the next 13 years before coming to the Highlands for a better quality of life. Cantray-based, she lives with her husband and a wee rescue Staff, is passionate about preservation and conservation and has a keen interest in culture and humanities.

Her undergraduate dissertation in Psychology, which explored positive psychology and tourism at an outdoor winter festival, achieved an Excellence Award in qualitative research from the British Psychological Society and introduced her to practical fieldwork. She began her PhD in September, at the Centre for Health Science, working on "Physical Activity in Older Adults with Sensory Impairment" within the Nursing and Midwifery team.



### The project

Data for older adults with sensory impairment is very limited and innovative approaches are necessary to encourage activity, especially when our population is ageing, and the prevalence of sensory impairment increases with age. The study will focus on physical activity in this population group by completing a systematic review drawing on levels of influence within a Social Ecological framework.

The project is being undertaken at the University of the Highlands and Islands and funded by the European Social Fund and Scottish Funding Council as part of Developing Scotland's Workforce in Scotland 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment (ESIF) Programme.

Visit our [website](#) to find out more about PhD students within the Department of Nursing and Midwifery at University.

## Interested in doing a PhD?

If you are passionate about an area of healthcare practice and want to make a research contribution to your field, a PhD could be the route for you. Doing a PhD provides you with the opportunity to go to the depths of critical enquiry into a chosen topic enabling exponential personal and professional growth. Doctoral studies are challenging, but we provide you with support and encouragement every step of the way. Our department research team gets to know you which enables tailored supervision to your individual learning needs and styles. We can also provide inter-department and across University supervision to ensure students have access to the right supervisors. Students also have access to the University's Graduate School which provides access to training and guidance on administrative procedures.

Anyone interested in conducting a PhD please contact Dr Michelle Beattie [michelle.beattie@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:michelle.beattie@uhi.ac.uk) for informal enquiries.

## In other news



Earlier this year, our Head of Research [Professor Gill Hubbard](#), was appointed a Deputy Director of the Scottish School of Primary Care. This is a funded 3-year post. Gill looks forward to supporting and developing academic primary care in Scotland.

### Conference Presentation

Kevin Muirhead, PhD student, presented at the University of the Highlands and Islands Learning and Teaching Academy Conference at the start of the year. Presentation Title: Technology-Enabled Learning for Rural Education through the lens of Dementia Education The Conference Programme with more details can be viewed [here](#).

## Recent Publications

Ryde, GC, Atkinson, P, Stead, M, **Gorely, T** & Evans, JMM (2020), 'Physical activity in paid work time for desk-based employees: a qualitative study of employers' and employees' perspectives', *BMC Public Health*, vol. 20, 460, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-08580-1>

**Hubbard, G**, Thompson, CW, Locke, R, Jenkins, D, Munoz, SA, Van Woerden, H, Maxwell, M, Yang, Y & **Gorely, T** (2020), 'Co-production of "nature walks for wellbeing" public health intervention for people with severe mental illness: Use of

theory and practical know-how', *BMC Public Health*, vol. 20, no. 1, 428, 1-12.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-08518-7>

Booth, J.N., Chesham, R.A., Brooks, N.E., **Gorely, T** & Moran C.N. (2020) A citizen science study of short physical activity breaks at school: improvements in cognition and wellbeing with self-paced activity. *BMC Med* **18**, 62.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-020-01539-4>

Smith, L., Allen, P., Pardhan, S., **Gorely, T.**, Grabovac, I., **Smith, A.**, López-Sánchez, G.F., Yang, L. and Jackson, S.E., (2020). Self-rated eyesight and handgrip strength in older adults. *Wiener klinische Wochenschrift*, 1-7.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00508-019-01597-6>

Thomson, P, Rushworth, G, Andreis, F, **Angus, NJ**, Mohan, ARM & Leslie, SJ (2020), 'Longitudinal study of the relationship between patients' medication adherence and quality of life outcomes and illness perceptions and beliefs about cardiac rehabilitation', *BMC Cardiovascular Disorders*, vol. 20, no. 1, 71.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12872-020-01378-4>

**Hubbard, G**, Taylor, C, Watson, AJM, **Munro, J**, Goodman, W & Beeken, RJ (2020), 'A physical activity intervention to improve the quality of life of patients with a stoma: A feasibility study', *Pilot and Feasibility Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, 12, 12.  
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**Gorely, T**, Crabtree, D, Muggeridge, D & Leslie, SJ (2020), 'High-intensity interval training in patients with heart failure', *British Journal of Cardiac Nursing*, vol. 15, no. 4, 1-13.  
<https://doi.org/10.12968/bjca.2019.0058>

Mcghee, S, **Angus, NJ**, Finnegan, A, Lewis-Pierre, L & Ortego, J (2020), 'Assessment and treatment of cutaneous leishmaniasis in the emergency department', *Emergency Nurse*, 1-7.  
<https://journals.rcni.com/emergency-nurse/evidence-and-practice/assessment-and-treatment-of-cutaneous-leishmaniasis-in-the-emergency-department-en.2020.e1993/print/abs>

López-Sánchez, G.F., Pardhan, S., Trott, M., Sánchez-Castillo, S., Jackson, S.E., Tully, M., **Gorely, T.**, López-Bueno, R., Veronese, N., Skalska, M. and Jastrzębska, J., (2020). The Association Between Physical Activity and Cataracts Among 17,777 People Aged 15–69 Years Residing in Spain. *Ophthalmic Epidemiology*, 1-6.  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09286586.2020.1730911>

**Hubbard, G**, Cherrie, J, **Gray, J**, Kyle, RG, Nioi, A, Wendelboe-Nelson, C, Cowie, H & Dombrowski, S (2020), 'Sun protection education for adolescents: a feasibility study of a wait-list controlled trial of an intervention involving a presentation, action planning, and SMS messages and using objective measurement of sun exposure', *BMC Public Health*, vol. 20, no. 1, 131.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-8265-0>

Knoery, C, Heaton, J, Leslie, SJ, **Polson, R**, Bond, R, Iftikhar, A, Rjoob, K, McGilligan, V & Peace, A (2020), 'Systematic review of clinical decision support systems for pre-hospital acute coronary syndrome identification', *Critical Pathways in Cardiology*, 1-30.  
<https://doi.org/10.1097/HPC.0000000000000217>

Chalkley, AE, Routen, AC, Harris, JP, Cale, LA, **Gorely, T** & Sherar, LB (2020), '"I Just Like the Feeling of It, Outside Being Active": Pupils' Experiences of a School-Based Running Program, a Qualitative Study', *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, vol. 42, no. 1, 48-58.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.2019-0037>

Thomson, P, Howie, K, Leslie, SJ, **Angus, NJ**, Andreis, F, Thomson, R, Mohan, ARM, Mondoia, C & Chung, ML (2020), 'Evaluating emotional distress and health related quality of life in patients with heart failure and their family caregivers: Testing dyadic dynamics using the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model', *PLoS ONE*, vol. 15, no. 1, e0227129.  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0227129>

Beecher, C, Richard, R, O'Dwyer, L, Ryan, E, White, M, **Beattie, M** & Devane, D (2020), 'Measuring women's experiences of maternity care: protocol for a systematic review of self-report survey instruments', *Systematic Reviews*, vol. 9, no. 4, 11, 1-7.  
<https://systematicreviewsjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13643-019-1261-8>

A full list of publications can be viewed on [PURE](#) (the University's Research Database)

## Meet our Research Staff

- [Neil Angus](#)
- [Jonathan Gray](#)
- [Julie Munro](#)
- [Dr Michelle Beattie](#)
- [Hannah Hollinger](#)
- [Robert Polson](#)
- [Marie Cameron](#)
- [Professor Gill Hubbard](#)
- [Dr Michelle Roxburgh](#)
- [Dr Clare Carolan](#)
- [Dr Leah Macaden](#)
- [Professor Annetta Smith](#)
- [Professor Trish Gorely](#)

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