

# RESEARCH CENTRE FOR HEALTH

## Welcome

We invite you to join us at our 'Power of Partnership' event on 23 April which will highlight the essential partnerships which enable us to translate our research into action. Our programme includes contributions from Ms Jenni Minto, Minister for Public Health & Women's Health, third sector partners and people with lived experience of conditions who help shape our applied health research. Our interactive workshops focus on working with LGBTQI+ communities to improve health, include the opportunity to take part in a functional fitness MOT, and the chance to learn more about overdose prevention, living with leg pain, the pelvic floor, and patient and public involvement in research.

In this issue, we highlight our exciting new Fellowship opportunity. ReaCH and the Council for Allied Health Professions Research (CAHPR) Scotland have created fellowships giving practicing AHPs the opportunity to work with our world-leading research groups and receive help towards research costs. We also showcase important new grants to address diabetes-related foot ulcers and to develop the world's first national PrEP online service.

As always, we are inspired by the contribution of our PhD and Early Career Researchers, with news of a prestigious UKRI funded internship for Annamae Burrows to explore the importance of creative spaces for reducing loneliness and an award for Dr Will Johnston to discover new antimicrobials to treat bacterial vaginosis. Lived experience is also key. PhD researcher Ronald O'Kane was inspired to launch a study about pain in the workplace by his mother's experiences of chronic pain while a lived experience research team, including Rebecca Johnson, describe the importance of participatory research. We also feature our impressive ReaCH Crucible research leaders of the future.

Finally, the expertise of our leading health researchers is always in demand. ReaCH colleagues contributed to WHO rehabilitation packages for Stroke and Parkinson's Disease, and featured on TV testing mobile phones for germs, explaining how GCU has Scotland's only University Myopia clinic, how GCU has bucked the trend on student nursing numbers, how to 'walk like a penguin' to protect yourself from slipping in cold weather, and how women who suffer from prolapse can safely self-manage their condition from home.

***Prof Carol Emslie (right) and Prof Frederike van Wijck (left),  
Co-Directors of ReaCH***

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## Power of Partnership

Improving health and wellbeing  
through research

Tuesday 23rd April 2024 | 9.30am - 2pm

Glasgow Caledonian University, Annie Lennox Building

The Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) is holding a **'Power of Partnership - Improving health and wellbeing through research'** event to showcase the importance of partnership working in turning research into action.

The free event will be held in Glasgow Caledonian University's Annie Lennox Building on Tuesday, April 23 from 9.30am-12.45pm, followed by a networking lunch (event postponed from January 2024 due to transport disruption after two storms).

ReaCH, in the School of Health and Life Sciences, is home to 10 different research groups. The Centre works with the public and people with lived experience of a range of health conditions. Working with partners such as the Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, Public Health Scotland, industry and charities, the aim of the Centre is to use research to find new ways of tackling health conditions that may affect us all, from stroke to cancer, to substance use and women's health issues and infections.

Scotland's Minister for Public Health and Women's Health Jenni Minto MSP will support the event with a recorded message. Other key speakers are Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP) Director Elinor Jayne and Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) representative Caroline Sincock, who lives with multiple sclerosis (MS). The event, showcasing the importance of partnership working in turning research into action, will be opened by Professor Steve Decent, Principal and Vice-Chancellor at Glasgow Caledonian University, followed by a welcome from ReaCH Co-Directors Professor Carol Emslie and Professor Frederike van Wijck.

The audience will be treated to a series of interactive workshops from some of the Centre's key researchers showcasing how research is already changing and improving lives through the power of partnership. These include: *'Are you being served? How are GCU working with and for LGBTQIA+ communities in Scotland and Beyond?'* with Professor Jamie Frankis; *'Overdose prevention using take-home naloxone - everyone's business'* with Professor Andrew McAuley and Mariebeth Kilbride, from Scottish Drugs Forum; *'Functional Fitness MOTs'* with Professor Dawn Skelton and Professor Katrina Bannigan; *'Meet your pelvic floor: where is it and what does it do?'* with Professor Suzanne Hagen; *'Grin and bear it: understanding living with leg pain and arterial disease and why walking is so important'* with Dr Chris Seenan and Cathy Gormal, who lives with the disease; and *'Get involved! Patient and public involvement and engagement in research'* with Professor Alex Todhunter-Brown and Dr Kirsteen Goodman.

**[REGISTER](#)**



## New research opportunities for practising AHPs in Scotland

**Glasgow Caledonian University School of Health and Life Sciences' Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) has joined forces with the Council for Allied Health Professions Research (CAHPR) Scotland to give allied health professionals (AHPs) the chance to get involved in research.**



“CAHPR is the representative voice of 14 allied health professions on research matters. The Council's mission is to develop AHP research, strengthen evidence of the professions' value and impact for enhancing service user and community care. This is an excellent new initiative for CAHPR Scotland that will support four AHPs to develop capacity for their research.”

*Dr Chris Seenan*

Four one-year CAHPR Scotland-GCU ReaCH Fellowships are being offered this year to practising AHPs in Scotland, giving them the unique opportunity to work with world-leading experts across 10 different research groups in the University and receive £1,000 towards their research costs. **Deadline for applications is April 15, 2024.**

ReaCH research groups include Ageing Well, Musculoskeletal Health, Stroke and Neurological Rehabilitation, Child and Adolescent Health, Data Science for the Common Good, Molecular Mechanisms of Long-Term Conditions, Safeguarding Health through Infection Prevention, Sexual Health and Blood Borne Viruses, Substance Use and Vision Research.

CAHPR Scotland Consortium Lead Dr Chris Seenan, who is also a Senior Lecturer in Physiotherapy in the University, and Dr David Hamilton, who is Co-Lead of the ReaCH Musculoskeletal Health Research Group, have been the driving force behind the new fellowships. Those who are interested can [apply here](#). A [Q&A video](#) has been created to help answer any questions for potential applicants.

[Read more](#)

## Sexual health and HIV expert gives evidence to the Scottish Parliament

**Caledonian University's Professor of Sexual Health and HIV Claudia Estcourt warned a parliamentary committee that Scotland is falling behind the rest of the UK in plans to eradicate new HIV transmission.**

Holyrood's Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee heard that delays in tackling the stigma of the virus and a national action plan to prevent the spread is setting back “game changing” progress. Scotland was the first nation in the UK to roll out the PrEP (pre-expose prophylaxis) medication on the NHS in 2017. Research by Glasgow Caledonian University in 2021 found new diagnoses of the virus in gay and bisexual men had fallen by 20% since its introduction. Professor Estcourt told the committee: “Scotland was the first country in the union to roll out a national programme of PrEP in 2017. We were gamechangers at that point and we have slid back since then.” The Scottish Government now has a national target to prevent new cases of HIV by 2030.

[Read more](#)



## Safer consumption and drug checking facilities key to addressing drug harms in Edinburgh, study finds

**Glasgow Caledonian University substance use experts were involved in a study which showed that safer drug consumption facilities (SDCF) and drug checking could be key to addressing drug harms in the city of Edinburgh.**

The study, commissioned by the City of Edinburgh Council and the Edinburgh Alcohol and Drugs Partnership in the wake of concerns over drug-related deaths in the city, recommends that SDCFs be set up in a number of locations, and that facilities and staff are equipped to address significant changes in patterns of drug use in Edinburgh. The study was led by Dr James Nicholls, Senior Lecturer in Public Health at the University of Stirling, in collaboration with Professor Andrew McAuley and Dr Kirsten Trayner, from Glasgow Caledonian University, the University of Glasgow and Figure 8 Consultancy.

[Read more](#)



“While much of the focus of safer drug consumption facilities has been on their implementation in Glasgow, this study has shown that their need extends to other parts of the country where drug harms are prevalent.”

*Professor Andrew McAuley*

## Bioscientist plays major role in groundbreaking lung cancer research



“This study reveals new potential vulnerabilities in otherwise treatment-resistant lung cancer. It is an important breakthrough accomplished by a motivated international team, of which I'm delighted to have contributed my expertise.”

*Dr Tim Humpton*

**Cancer researcher Dr Tim Humpton played a major role in a new groundbreaking international study that has revealed potential targets for preventing lung cancer tumour reoccurrence and resistance.**

Dr Humpton, Reader in the School of Health and Life Sciences (SHLS) Biological and Biomedical Sciences Department and Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) was involved in the new study which focused on understanding mechanisms of drug resistance in patients with lung cancer. These findings, derived from the TRACERx lung cancer study conducted at the Francis Crick Institute, shed light on the critical importance of understanding the molecular consequences of interactions between cancer-causing mutations to better prevent tumour reoccurrence and drug resistance. The research on the project was led by Dr Deborah Caswell, from the Cancer Evolution and Genome Instability Laboratory at The Francis Crick Institute in London, and by Dr Trever Bivona, from the University of California, San Francisco and the Chan-Zuckerberg Biohub in San Francisco, USA.

[Read more](#)



## First step in tackling foot ulcers and amputation in areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland

**Podiatry researchers at Glasgow Caledonian University have been awarded £299,751 to tackle diabetes-related foot ulceration, particularly in areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland, using a new approach based on motivational interviewing.**



Drs Ruth Barn, Gordon Hendry and Jodi Binning have secured the grant from the Scottish Government's Chief Scientist Office (CSO) to carry out their research project entitled Motivational Interviewing For The Prevention Of Diabetes-Related Foot Ulceration In People Exposed To Multiple Deprivation: A Pilot Trial. The expert team hope that the new treatment, based on motivational interviewing, will empower patients to adopt new lifestyle changes and ultimately reduce ulceration, amputation and death rates among people with diabetes.

The three-year pilot trial is a collaboration with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Tayside, Ayrshire and Arran and Lanarkshire. The researchers will be training podiatrists on how to deliver motivational interviewing, specifically for people with diabetes who are at greatest risk of developing complications related to their condition. The researchers are based in the School of Health and Life Sciences' Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) and are members of the Musculoskeletal Health Research Group.

[Read more](#)

"Current treatment approaches are not effective. People with diabetes are well informed about their condition but this does not necessarily lead to behaviour change. We have developed a new treatment based on motivational interviewing and our aim is to undertake a small trial, comparing motivational interviewing to current care, to find out if a larger trial is possible and worth doing. We hope that this intervention could empower people with diabetes and foot ulceration, leading to improved self-care, and reduced ulceration and amputation rates, in the long run."

*Dr Ruth Barn*

## New study finds that behaviour change focussed rehab delivered to people waiting for surgery might help avoid the need for knee replacement

A package-of-care including weight loss, exercise rehabilitation and behaviour change treatments targeted to people with severe knee arthritis and multiple long-term conditions that are waiting for total knee replacement might substantially improve health outcomes and help delay or avoid the need for surgery. Adhering to these treatments is often a challenge, but the recently published OPPORTUNITY study, funded by Versus Arthritis, has demonstrated that offering these interventions when patients are most engaged and motivated to improve their health may optimise treatment results. Dr David Hamilton from the Musculoskeletal Health Research Group led the rehabilitative aspect of this clinical trial alongside colleagues in dietetics, behaviour change and orthopaedic surgery from Edinburgh, Glasgow and Leeds.

[Read the paper in Lancet Rheumatology.](#)



## Vascular disease expert helps to form best practice for patients

**Vascular disease expert Dr Chris Seenan made a huge contribution to a new European consensus statement summarising all the current evidence and best practice in caring for people with peripheral arterial disease (PAD).**



Dr Seenan, a Senior Lecturer in Glasgow Caledonian University's School of Health and Life Sciences' Department of Physiotherapy and Paramedicine, and key researcher in the Research Centre for Health Ageing Well Research Group, joined experts from across Europe for the study. He said the consensus statement would help to guide management of people with PAD across Europe and should enhance care for the 25 million people living with the disease.

Dr Seenan said: "I was invited to contribute due to my previous research, conducted at Glasgow Caledonian University, developing new interventions for people with this condition. I was delighted to be part of this European consensus statement that should benefit millions of people with PAD."

The consensus statement has been published in the [European Heart Journal](#), one of the top medical journals in the world. Dr Seenan's research has extended to include participatory methods, exploring how they can be used to collaboratively create, adapt, evaluate, and implement new healthcare interventions for people with long-term conditions.

[Read more](#)



"This just shows the confidence that the Scottish Government has in the team at GCU to provide the groundwork for world-class online sexual healthcare delivery which ultimately will lead to HIV transmission elimination along with other strategies."

**Professor Claudia Estcourt**

## Work begins on developing the world's first e-PrEP clinic for people with HIV in Scotland

**Award-winning researchers at Glasgow Caledonian University have begun work on a £400,000 Scottish Government funded project to develop the world's first national PrEP (HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis) online service.**

The three-year study, led by Professor of Sexual Health and HIV Claudia Estcourt, will pilot an e-PrEP clinic providing online prescriptions, and HIV and sexually transmitted infection (STI) check-ups, with the hope of rolling it out across Scotland. Experts working with Professor Estcourt on the e-PrEP clinic study are fellow researcher Dr Ross Kincaid, Dr Jo Gibbs from University College London, along with three experts from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's Sandyford Sexual Health Service Consultant Dr Ceilidh Grimshaw, Advance Nursing Practitioner Lesley Maxwell and Specialist Registrar Dr Lindsay Henderson.

[Read more](#)



## Short bouts of yoga may help prevent diabetes, new study reveals

**Three-minute bouts of yoga have been found to significantly lower blood glucose levels and reduce the risk of diabetes, a study from Glasgow Caledonian University has revealed.**

The research carried out by a team of physiotherapists investigated the effects of breaking up sedentary behaviour with short bouts of yoga and tai-chi on glycaemic control, concentration, and wellbeing in healthy individuals. The study, which involved 15 adults aged 26-28, found that the effects of short bouts of yoga to break up the working day significantly lowers glucose levels to reduce the risk of diabetes without compromising concentration or wellbeing. However, tai-chi did not provide the same significant effect on glucose levels but allowed better maintenance of concentration and wellbeing. The research concluded that these interventions provide effective ways to combat the harmful effects of prolonged sitting while maintaining concentration and wellbeing.

Lead author of the study, Alex Colvin, graduated with a Masters in Physiotherapy in 2020 from Glasgow Caledonian and became an NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde specialist physiotherapist. He began the research during his studies with fellow students Lynne Murray and Jillian Noble, under the supervision of Professor Sebastien Chastin, but results were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The study, entitled [Effects of Breaking Up Sedentary Behavior With Short Bouts of Yoga and Tai-Chi on Glycemia, Concentration, and Well-Being](#), was published in the Journal of Physical Activity and Health, which is part of the Human Kinetics Journals.

[Read more](#)

## Researcher explores importance of creative spaces for reducing loneliness in communities

**A Glasgow Caledonian University psychology researcher is exploring the importance of creative spaces for reducing loneliness and improving social cohesion in Scottish communities.**

PhD student Annamae Burrows, who is a member of the School of Health and Life Sciences' Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) Substance Use Research Group, has been awarded a Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities funded internship.

She is working on the project with [Creative Lives](#), a charity that works across the UK and Ireland to champion community and volunteer-led creativity in local communities, knowing the potential it has to improve physical and mental wellbeing, boost social connection, and promote inclusivity. The charity works alongside local communities including local creative groups and artists, organisations, policymakers and funding agencies to promote and advocate for the importance of creative spaces and resources in communities.

[Read more](#)



"This should be a really exciting piece of work as I'll have the opportunity to use creative research methods and have this be led by the voices and experiences of people living in the various local communities I'll speak to."

**Annamae Burrows**



## Researcher inspired by mum to tackle chronic pain in the workplace



**A health researcher at Glasgow Caledonian University was inspired to launch a study into tackling the problem of chronic pain in the workplace after witnessing his mum's suffering for years.**

Ronald O'Kane said his support worker mum Maureen struggled with chronic pain from osteoporosis for eight years before getting a knee replacement in 2022 and she wasn't given the support she needed at work.

Ronald, a PhD researcher in the School of Health and Life Sciences' Research Centre for Health (ReaCH), said: "From a personal point of view, I've seen chronic pain first-hand with my mum and the impact it can have on daily living. She was my inspiration and motivation to do something about it. It's a big issue across the country. There's a perception that it's an older person's disease but it affects 43% of the general population of all ages and their ability to stay in work."

Ronald wants to give a voice to workers and their employers at Scotland's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to help support people with chronic pain remain in employment. He wants to speak to them to identify the challenges and support that is needed to help reduce sickness absence and improve productivity at work. Ronald has already got six workplaces signed up for the study, including Green Fulfilment, a leading eco-conscious order fulfilment company in Glasgow, but is on the lookout for more.

[Read more](#)

## WHO Rehabilitation Packages for Stroke and Parkinson's Disease informed by University researchers

**An internationally-recognised team of experts from Glasgow Caledonian University have contributed to the development of the recently launched [World Health Organization \(WHO\) Rehabilitation Packages](#) for Stroke and Parkinson's Disease.**

High-quality rehabilitation shortens recovery time, prevents complications and improves physical and mental health, and WHO has defined rehabilitation as a human right and an essential component of universal health services. The WHO Rehabilitation Packages provide vital information for international countries on the core components, workforce needs, assistive products and equipment required to support the delivery of high-quality, evidence-based rehabilitation interventions for people living various health conditions. The packages help Ministries of Health to plan, budget, integrate and implement rehabilitation services into international health systems.

Research published by Professor of Stroke Care and Rehabilitation Marian Brady and senior research fellow Dr Pauline Campbell, from the School of Health and Life Sciences' Research Centre for Health (ReaCH), underpinned the development of the guidelines. Professor Brady was also appointed to the development group which included multidisciplinary rehabilitation experts from across 16 countries including Brazil, Canada, Estonia, Italy, India, Japan, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and the USA.

[Read more](#)





## Psychologist's Hearts and Minds book wins a people's choice award



**Glasgow Caledonian University psychology lecturer Dr Liza Morton, who was the world's youngest pacemaker baby, has won an award for her book *Healing Hearts and Minds: A holistic approach to coping well with congenital heart disease*.**

The book, which was co-authored by Dr Morton and US Clinical Social Worker Tracy Livecchi, was crowned 2023 Baby Hearts Press People's Choice Award in the Adult Book Category.

In the book, both women, who were born with congenital heart disease (CHD), share their own experiences of living with a lifelong heart condition, and the emotional and physical trauma associated with the condition. They have not only triumphed over their own challenges but have dedicated their professional lives to helping others navigate the mental trauma associated with living with a chronic illness.

One reader, Shelagh Ross, described the book as unique and much-needed, praising its foundation in years of research and interviews with patients and their families. She said the information and insights presented in the book were indispensable and cannot be found anywhere else. Anna Jaworski, owner of Baby Hearts Press, said: "Congratulations to Tracy Livecchi and Liza Morton for their outstanding achievement in creating a resource that will undoubtedly make a lasting impact on the lives of many."

[Read more](#)

## Bioscientist scoops second award for bacterial vaginosis research

**Bioscientist Dr Will Johnston has been awarded £20,000 from [Tenovus Scotland](#) medical research charity to boost his research into discovering new antimicrobials to treat bacterial vaginosis.**



In July, Dr Johnston was awarded the prestigious Scottish Universities Life Sciences Alliance (SULSA) ECR Prize for his research. SULSA only awards the ECR Prize to outstanding early career scientists whose work shows excellent potential to make an impact in the field of life sciences.

Dr Johnston said he was delighted to receive his latest award and revealed that the money will go towards vital lab supplies such as buffer solutions and titration reagents, and a new piece of equipment called a MinION™ Mk1C, which is an all-in-one, portable DNA and RNA sequencer.

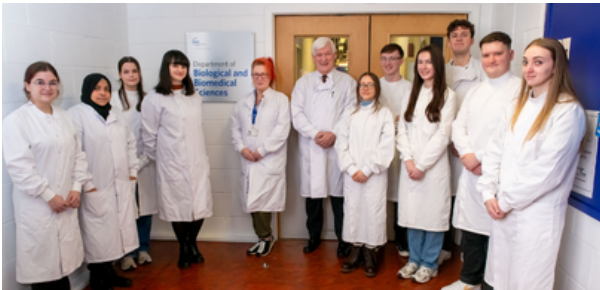
He won the funding for his project entitled Strategic drug repurposing for biofilm-associated bacterial vaginosis (BV) treatment, expanding on his work looking at discovery of new antimicrobials to treat BV. Dr Johnston is Principal Investigator on the project, while Lecturer in Clinical Microbiology Dr Ryan Kean is co-investigator and supervisor.

[Read more](#)



## Students to get hands-on experience at new Glasgow biomedical lab on campus

**Glasgow Caledonian University has teamed up with a local private laboratory to provide students with a unique opportunity to see how a working biomedical laboratory operates.**



The University is one of the top providers of Biomedical Science degrees in Scotland, and now the Biological and Biomedical Sciences Department, in the School of Health and Life Sciences, has an on-site private partner working in the area of diagnostics. The new partnership will give students the chance to experience the hi-tech and automated analysers used by [TFI Biomedical](#).

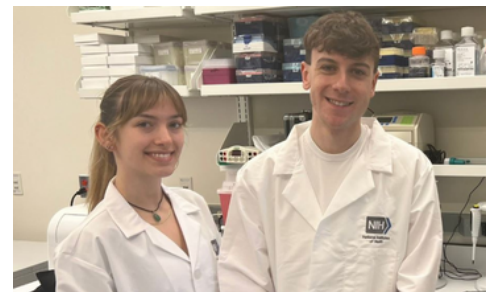
Professor Linda Scobie, Head of the Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences, and Dr Linda Walsh, a Senior Lecturer in Biomedical Science, were responsible for bringing the clinical industry link to the Department. "This is a brilliant opportunity to enable our students to experience first-hand applications for the position they are studying so hard for. We are delighted that this also enables an academic link to a developing local business," said Professor Scobie.

Professor Allan Jamieson, Director and owner of The Forensic Institute and TFI Biomedical testing lab, praised the support provided by the University. Professor Jamieson said: "For my team, this is just the perfect environment to deliver a first-class service, but also to become involved in the scientific research and education close to my heart." The lab currently performs biochemistry, haematology and immunochemical testing. After graduating from Glasgow Caledonian two years ago, Rachael Kyle worked at TFI Biomedical's COVID-19 testing lab in Cumbernauld before being part of the TFI team back at her Alma Mater. Rachael said: "It has been an amazing two years and to be back as an alumnus now doing the job I studied four years for and helping other students is just something I never expected."

[Read more](#)

## GCU students head stateside thanks to new partnership

**Two GCU students from the Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences have been given the opportunity to learn how researchers are helping tackle the world's most complex diseases.**



Karleigh Fraser and Scott Reid spent two weeks in September at the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) headquarters in Washington, which employs more than 18,000 people. The pilot project, set up in partnership between GCU and NIH, gave Karleigh and Scott a fascinating insight into clinical trials and the work being done to improve the health and lives of millions across America.

[Read more](#)





## Charity boost for University blood cancer research

**A Glasgow mum who set up a charity during her breast cancer battle has donated £7,000 to Glasgow Caledonian University to boost research into finding new targeted treatments for Acute Myeloid Leukaemia (AML) and Multiple Myeloma (MM).**

Eileen Hogg, 64, founded White Feather Charitable Aid in 2013 while receiving treatment for Stage 3 breast cancer. She realised that little luxuries can make a big difference to those living with cancer. She met blood cancer researcher Dr Mark Williams through his lawyer wife Lindsay's late grandfather William Downie and mum Ann Gaughan, who donated to the charity through events at the Wellcroft Bowling Club in Glasgow when Mr Downie was Club President.

Eileen was blown away by Dr Williams' passion, commitment and determination into finding new blood cancer treatments that she held two fundraising events this year to help support the purchase of crucial lab supplies, such as reagents for carrying out research studies using advanced cell culture and flow cytometry. She handed over the cheque to Dr William's Research Group during a visit to the University's Biological and Biomedical Science labs in the School of Health and Life Sciences. So far, Eileen and her team of two – her daughter Laura Hogg and friend Cathie Reilly – at the White Feather Charitable Aid have donated more than £100,000 to help improve the lives of cancer patients.

[Read more](#)

## Biothon fundraiser makes £310 for charities

Staff and students from the Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences have been raising funds while keeping fit. A team of 25 staff and students did 25 minutes of exercise every day in December, including Christmas Day, to support local charities. They raised £310 for Glasgow Children's Hospital and Tenovus Scotland. Senior Lecturer Gillian Hunter said: "A huge well done to everyone who took part. The weather in December was particularly horrible this year but everyone battled on to keep active and raise an amazing amount for our two chosen charities. I'm certain the money raised will be put to very good use".



## PhD viva success

**Congratulations to the following students on successfully defending their PhD theses:**



- Alicia Ware (pictured), "Understanding hospital transmission of the fungal pathogen *Candida auris*"
- Ben Butterworth, "Drinking to regret? A mixed-methods evaluation of the relationships between post-traumatic alcohol use and memories of traumatic events, among heavy drinking individuals"
- Zahra Al Jardani, "Navigating the 'Beautiful Tribulation': Exploring the Lived Experiences of Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Oman on the Journey of Educating Their Children: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis"



## Spotlight on Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) at GCU

If you would like to join the ReaCH PPI Group distribution list, please email [ppi@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:ppi@gcu.ac.uk)



Thank you to everyone who completed the PPI survey! Some really interesting views and points were made and it is great to hear about some of the PPI work going on throughout ReaCH and also identifying staff's PPI "wish lists" and areas to work on! We discussed some of the results at the ReaCH PPI meeting on the 14th of March and if anyone wants further information at this stage, please get in touch. We will use the survey results to update the ReaCH PPI strategy and can share this for comment to the ReaCH PPI group in due course.

### ReaCH PPI webinars

Preparations are starting for a series of PPI lunch-time webinars – I will let you know the date of this first webinar soon!

### ReaCH PPI knowledge sharing

Also in development is a knowledge sharing library for all things PPI that everyone can have access to. I would love to hear from you if you have some really novel and innovative ways of using PPI in your research or any useful documents that you could share to save reinventing the wheel! Please send over anything that could be added to the PPI knowledge sharing library.

### PPI in dissemination

One of our PPI participants from the TOPSY study championed to help us disseminate the results of the study in a more accessible way for women who the study results can benefit! Despite the study being [published in the Lancet](#), many people who research is designed for will not access these journal articles. We as researchers need to think innovatively in how we get our results to the wider community! Please see the link below to a short results video. Professor Carol Bugge and Professor Suzanne Hagen open and close with their thoughts and Margaret who has supported this UK-wide research with the team since 2017 is the star of the show! [Watch the video here](#)

### PPI in systematic reviews

Professor Alex Todhunter-Brown is Co-Chair of a newly launched Cochrane methods group focused on patient and public involvement in systematic reviews. This new 'Co-production Methods Group' has been founded by leading experts from round the world. The goal is to spearhead methods research to establish best practice in the involvement of stakeholders in producing, reporting, evaluating and disseminating Cochrane evidence. [Read more here](#)

**Dr Kirsteen Goodman, ReaCH PPI Group Lead**





**ReaCH Crucible:**  
Research Leaders  
of the Future



**Our ReaCH Crucible early career programme aims to identify and develop research leaders of the future, helping researchers to expertly communicate their ideas, and work with partners, practitioners and policymakers to deliver positive social change. We featured the first 6 of our 12 rising stars from the 2023 cohort in the December newsletter; the others are introduced below.**



## Karen Maxwell

Email: [Karen.Maxwell@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:Karen.Maxwell@gcu.ac.uk)

Research Online: <https://researchonline.gcu.ac.uk/en/persons/karen-maxwell>

I am a qualitative public health researcher with an interest in reducing social inequalities. I want my research to have real-world impact and to lead to real change for good in the world. My research interests centre around social inequalities in health, with previous research having focused on parenting and poverty, sexual health, and abortion access and stigma. I completed my PhD in 2018 looking at the impact of socioeconomic deprivation on men's fatherhood. I am currently working in the Substance Use Research Group on a project about public attitudes towards alcohol-related harms and the societal impact of extended nightlife opening hours. Prior to joining GCU, I worked for the MRC Social and Public Health Sciences Unit (SPHSU) for ten years on a range of projects related to public health, most recently as part of the team conducting the 4th National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (NATSAL) in the UK. I am co-chair of the SHLS Early Career Researcher Network, as I believe that developing strong networks and building career development opportunities for ECRs is crucial in allowing ECRs to reach their potential.



## Bryan McCann

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Research Online: <https://researchonline.gcu.ac.uk/en/persons/bryan-mccann>

As a senior lecturer in psychology within Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU)'s Department of Psychology, I am a BPS Chartered and HCPC Registered Sport and Exercise Psychologist with over 13 years' experience working in higher education. As an early career researcher my research interests focus on the interaction between adolescent physical activity and mental health, and I am interested in creative qualitative methods as a way of engaging hard to/hardly reached populations. I am currently Principal Investigator (PI) for a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) between GCU and Sport Aberdeen which focusses on embedding sport and exercise psychology knowledge within the Active Schools programme to enhance adolescent physical activity and mental health. I am also PI on a knowledge exchange and academic partnership between the Department of Psychology and the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) supporting SAMH to redesign and upscale their psychological wellbeing provision to the public to address the ongoing mental health pandemic. I am director of studies for a PhD focussing on the role of physical activity for the mental health of care experienced children and young people. I am passionate about knowledge exchange as a vehicle for generating impactful and meaningful research.





## Boatemaa Ofori-Frimpong

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In Ghana, Boatemaa completed BSc (Hons) Medical Laboratory Technology in 2007 and worked as an intern Biomedical Scientist at Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (2007-2008) assisting in the diagnosis of health conditions and interested in understanding disease molecular mechanisms. Boatemaa therefore pursued higher education in MSc Biomolecular and Biomedical Science at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) from 2008 until 2009.

Boatemaa was awarded a GCU PhD studentship & Scottish Overseas Student Association (SORSA) Scholarship (2009-2012) within the area of cell and molecular biology to investigate connexin and pannexin cellular communication in obesity in the Martin lab. In addition, Boatemaa worked on novel peptides targeting connexin function in the Martin lab in collaboration with Zealand Pharma, Denmark (2012-2013).

As a Post-doc (2014-2016), in GCU's Vision Science Department Boatemaa investigated Narrow Spectrum Kinase inhibitors in Dry Eye Disease within the Hagan lab in collaboration with Topivert Pharma, London.

Returning from a career break in 2019, Boatemaa worked as a Post-doc with Dr Patricia Martin (GCU) and Prof Gail McConell (University of Strathclyde) to investigate Diabetic skin whole mount Tissue image analysis.

Boatemaa hopes to investigate Diabetic biomarkers and therapeutic targets. Boatemaa is also keen to participate in Public Patient Engagement to promote health education.



## Jack Rendall

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Research Online: <https://researchonline.gcu.ac.uk/en/persons/jack-rendall>

Jack Rendall is a Research Fellow in the Yunus Centre for Social Business and Health. He has been at GCU since 2010 coming through his Undergraduate, Master's, and PhD. Having also spent time as a Research Associate at Nottingham Trent University, Jack has worked on a variety of different projects, but his research largely focusses on how community organisations impact upon health and wellbeing.

Jack uses a variety of methods in his work, but he has a particularly keen interest in the use of Q Methodology to elicit shared perspectives on different topics. In his doctoral work he used Q Methodology to explore the perspectives of those working in Scottish social enterprises and how they view job quality.

Jack is currently working as part of a UK-wide team funded by the NIHR which aims to evidence how community-led organisations impact upon the health and wellbeing of people in disadvantaged areas. He also runs a podcast about Q methodology and is Chair of Lingo Flamingo, a Glasgow-based social enterprise that focusses on delaying dementia in older adults through language learning.





## David Whiteley

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Research Online: <https://researchonline.gcu.ac.uk/en/persons/david-whiteley>

Dave qualified as a registered nurse in 2005 from the University of Dundee, and subsequently built his clinical career within the fields of infectious diseases and sexual health. After completing his PhD in 2017, he moved into academia joining Edinburgh Napier University as a lecturer. During this time, he was awarded his first grant from the Chief Scientist Office focused on decentralising hepatitis C treatment into primary care in Scotland. In 2021 he moved west, joining Glasgow Caledonian University as a lecturer, and soon after securing a 0.5 secondment to the Substance Use Research Group as a research fellow. This broadened his research focus into alcohol, securing a couple of small grants focused on alcohol use among sexual and gender minorities. In addition to his research activities, Dave is the lead for evidence-based practice within the undergraduate nursing curriculum, leads the third-year undergraduate research module, and supervises Masters and PhD students.



## Kathryn Wilson

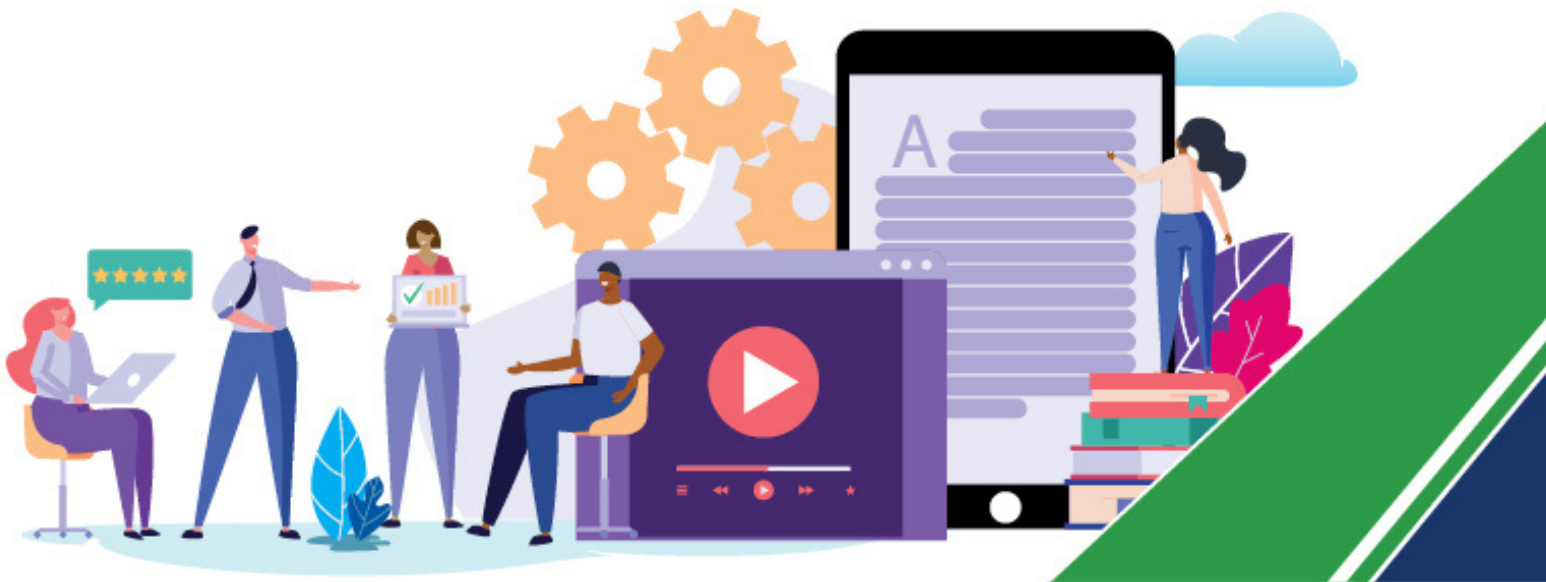
Email: [Kathryn.Wilson@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:Kathryn.Wilson@gcu.ac.uk)

Research Online: <https://researchonline.gcu.ac.uk/en/persons/kathryn-wilson>

After obtaining my PhD in cardiovascular biology from the University of Edinburgh I began my post-doctoral career at the Scottish Pulmonary Vascular Unit (SPVU) researching the life-limiting condition pulmonary hypertension, which affects the blood vessels transporting blood to the lungs. There is currently no cure for pulmonary hypertension and much of my research has been focused on the development of new therapeutic targets. After a successful research collaboration with a large pharmaceutical company I secured a highly sought-after British Heart Foundation Basic Science Immediate post-doctoral fellowship. This fellowship has enabled me to investigate the role of inflammatory pathways in the cardiac and vascular remodelling associated with pulmonary arterial hypertension. The SPVU joined the Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences at GCU in 2019 and after a period of maternity leave, I began my role as a research fellow in 2021. I have collaborators at GCU, the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde and Imperial College London and my research interests include vascular fibroblasts, fibrosis and cardiac remodelling and the development of novel cellular models of pulmonary arterial hypertension. Outside the lab, I am a keen participant in public engagement, outreach and STEM activities and have recently become co-chair of the SHLS ECR Network.

To find out more about the Crucible [please visit the programme webpage](#)





## Conferences and events

A round-up of all the latest and forthcoming event news from the Research Centre for Health.

### GCU to host largest science, exercise and nutrition conference in the world

**Glasgow Caledonian University has won a bid to host the largest behavioural science, physical activity and nutrition conference in the world.**

The winning bid to bring the International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity (ISBNPA) conference to Glasgow in 2029 was led by School of Health and Life Sciences (SHLS) Professor of Health Behaviour Dynamics Sebastien Chastin, in collaboration with the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde, and across the public sector.

Professor Chastin, who co-leads the Data Science for the Common Good Research Group, said: "I am delighted to bring ISBNPA to Glasgow in 2029 in logical continuation to Glasgow being host to COP26 and being the European Capital of Sports in 2023. ISBNPA is a major international scientific community with some of the most brilliant researchers in the world. Being able to bring it to Glasgow is a testament to the thriving research on physical activity and nutrition in Scotland which is amongst the most prolific in the world."



The ISBNPA was formed to bring together a cohesive group of individuals working across the globe in the field of behavioural nutrition and physical activity and to share their diverse experiences. Public sector backers include the Scottish Government Active Scotland and Healthy Diet Team, Glasgow Science Centre, Glasgow City of Science and Innovation, Glasgow City Council, Food Standard Scotland, The Scottish Alliance for Food, Public Health Scotland, Visit Scotland and SPARE network. The bid was supported and made possible by huge input from the SEC, Glasgow, where the event will be held, and the Glasgow Convention Bureau.

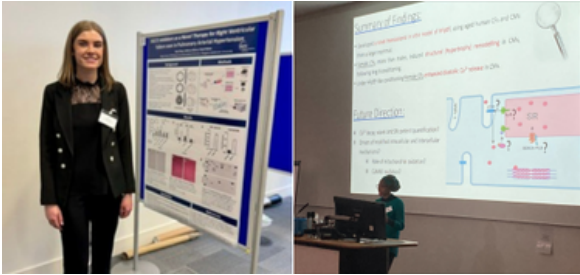
[Read more](#)





## Bio researchers get hearts beating at the Scottish Cardiovascular conference

**Glasgow Caledonian University Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences' PhD students Kate Sloan and Zainab Olatunji played key roles in this year's Scottish Cardiovascular Forum 2024 annual conference.**



Kate, who is a first year PhD student, presented a poster on her research into new therapies for heart failure in pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) and co-chaired a session at the event held at St Andrews University earlier this month. Final year PhD student Zainab was shortlisted for the prestigious Roger Wadsworth Prize and gave an oral presentation on her research into heart failure.

Dr Yvonne Dempsie, Chair of the Scottish Cardiovascular Forum, said: "Zainab and Kate did a fantastic job of representing GCU at the Scottish Cardiovascular Forum 2024 annual conference. The Scottish Cardiovascular Forum is focused on supporting and developing early career researchers. Over 50 early career researchers attended and presented their research findings. Zainab was shortlisted for the prestigious Roger Wadsworth Prize for significant contribution to cardiovascular research by a final year PhD student. Kate, who only started her PhD in October last year, presented a poster and co-chaired a session. It was great to see Zainab and Kate making such positive contributions to the meeting."

## Sport and exercise psychologists showcase research at conference

**Staff, students and graduates from Glasgow Caledonian University's Department of Psychology showcased their research at the recent British Psychological Society's Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology Annual Conference.**



The theme for this year's conference was 'The good, the bad and the ugly: Reflection and learnings from Applied Practice and Academia'. The audience at the Edinburgh event were treated to seven oral and seven poster presentations, a symposium and a workshop by staff, and past and present trainees from the University's DPscyh Sport and Exercise programme. Graduate Dr Zoe Black co-led the conference and Senior Lecturer in Psychology Dr Paul McCarthy was the keynote speaker. Dr Bryan McCann, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, gave a symposium on '*Creative ProActive Minds: Embedding sport & exercise psychology knowledge within Active Schools to promote mental health*'. Dr McCann teamed up with Sport Aberdeen in 2022 to develop a new ProActive Minds programme designed to promote mental and physical health in children and young people across the city. To develop the ProActive Minds programme, Glasgow Caledonian and Sport Aberdeen secured Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) funding of £173,000 to recruit a sport and exercise psychologist to become a KTP Associate and drive the project forward. Dr Ciara Reidy was awarded the role and assisted in the symposium. Dr Alex Oliver, Lecturer in Applied Psychology, gave a presentation on '*From teaching to trainee: reflections on the challenges faced from a student-centred pedagogical approach to an athlete-centred practitioner approach*'.



## Let's talk about 'Sex & Drugs & all that Jazz' at Professorial Lecture

**Glasgow Caledonian University Professor of Health and Society Jamie Frankis will deliver his Professorial Lecture entitled 'Sex & Drugs & all that Jazz (or How to crochet your way to health)' on Tuesday, April 9, from 5.30-6.30pm.**

Professor Frankis will showcase his work to improve the sexual health and wellbeing of gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBM) in Scotland and beyond. [Register here through Eventbrite](#) for the on-campus event. There will be a networking reception afterwards.



He is a Professor in the Department of Nursing and Community Health in the School of Health and Life Sciences, and co-leads the Sexual Health and Blood Borne Viruses Research Group in the Research Centre for Health (ReaCH). As a Health Psychologist, with over 20 years of research expertise, his work addresses sexual health, HIV, and the multiple health inequalities experienced by LGBTQIA+ folk in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and beyond.

In his lecture, Professor Frankis will explore how the landscape of GBM's health has radically changed over the last 20 years, as well as highlight the changes still needed to address the multiple challenges around both mental and physical health. The audience will learn how Professor Frankis' research has helped reduce sexual and mental health inequalities for GBM in Scotland and beyond. He will also give an insight into some of the cutting-edge LGBTQIA+ health research going on at Glasgow Caledonian, and he'll explain why crochet just might be the answer.

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## Do you believe in evidence-based practice?

**Professor Alex Todhunter-Brown, from the School of Health and Life Sciences' Research Centre for Health (ReaCH), shared her expertise on systematic reviews and why they are so important at her Professorial Lecture in February.**

Professor Todhunter-Brown explored some questions about evidence-based practice that she has asked, and been asked, during her career journey. She reflected on the importance of asking the right questions, and making sure that the questions addressed by systematic reviews are of importance to patients and the general public.



Professor Todhunter-Brown joined the University in 2008, having spent the previous 10 years in a role promoting evidence-based practice to allied health professionals working in stroke rehabilitation. Her role in the Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions Research Unit (NMAHP RU) has focused on the evaluation and the synthesis of evidence relating to the effectiveness of complex interventions, and she has over 100 peer-reviewed publications including several Cochrane systematic reviews. She has been an innovator in the involvement of the public in systematic reviews, as well as leading and contributing to a number of research prioritisation projects.



## Other events

Highlights from conferences and events over the last few months.



The SHLS ECR Network hosted a successful first coffee and catch-up event in February. ECRs and PhD students had the chance to network with peers, and they were joined by GCU Social Media Officer Lorna McKenzie who gave top tips for using social media as a researcher.



The Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences hosted a Glasgow Pharmacological Society seminar in March, supported by ReaCH and the British Pharmacological Society, where Professor Graeme Henderson (University of Bristol) presented on 'Opioid pharmacology: from molecule to coffin'.



Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) contributor Margaret Graham was awarded the PPI Impact Award at the NHS Research Scotland/Chief Scientist Office PPI event in Dundee in March for her work on the TOPSY study. ReaCH PPI Group Lead Dr Kirsteen Goodman collected the award on her behalf.



Professor Gordon Ramage was part of the winning Penrhos Bio, Pro3dure Medical GmbH and Unilever plc team at the Scotland's Life Sciences Annual Awards & Dinner in Glasgow in March. The team won the Innovative Collaboration Award for their work commercialising a novel anti-microbial technology and launching two products in 2023.



St Fillan's Primary School was recently treated to a visit from researchers from GCU's BIO and Vision Sciences departments. P1, P6 and P7 had the chance to use University science equipment and techniques in the school's STEM suite.





## Selected Publications

Some of the latest selected publications from GCU staff are listed below. To view an article, please click on the title.

- Association between quadriceps tendon elasticity and neuromuscular control in individuals with knee osteoarthritis
- Comparisons between group- and individual-based interventions to support recovery from stroke and ischaemic heart disease in the community: a scoping review
- Cancer microenvironment and pharmacological interventions
- Concept mapping to define components for an occupation-based intervention for Parkinson's disease and anxiety
- Conducting co-creation for public health in low and middle-income countries: a systematic review and key informant perspectives on implementation barriers and facilitators
- Creativity Research Overlooks the Study of Resilience among Young Children: A Bibliometric Network Review
- Delivering HIV prevention medication online: Findings from a qualitative study exploring the acceptability of an online HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) care pathway among service users and healthcare professionals
- Dynamics of Sedentary Behaviours and System-Based Approach: Future Challenges and Opportunities in the Life-Course Epidemiology of Sedentary Behaviours
- Exploring the contribution of case study research to the evidence base for occupational therapy: a scoping review
- Exploring the perspectives of healthcare professionals concerning the use and utility of the hospital gown to develop theoretically informed behaviour change interventions
- Identifying the prevalence of Parkinson's disease in Denmark using healthcare registries and self-reported survey data
- Improving HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) adherence and retention in care: Process evaluation and recommendation development from a nationally implemented PrEP programme

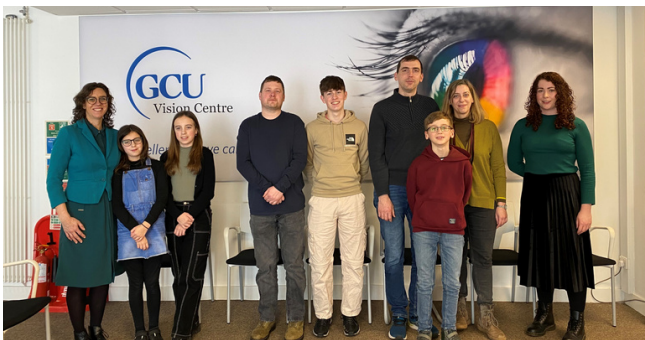


- Interventions for preventing or controlling health care-associated infection among health care workers or patients within primary care facilities: A scoping review
- Informed development of a multi-species biofilm in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Measuring care dependency in heart failure
- Plastic pollution as a novel reservoir for the environmental survival of the drug resistant fungal pathogen *Candida auris*
- Prevention and control of infectious diseases among people who inject drugs — 2023 update
- Sedentary Behaviour and Ageing
- Strategies used for childhood chronic functional constipation: the SUCCESS evidence synthesis
- Tailored implementation of national recommendations on fall prevention among older adults in municipalities in Norway (FALLPREVENT trial): a study protocol for a cluster-randomised trial
- The perception, understanding and experience of flourishing in young people living with chronic pain: A Q-methodology study
- Utilising electrodermal activity sensor signals to quantify nociceptive response during movement activities
- Women's Experiences of Urinary Tract Infections and Impact on Life: An Exploratory Qualitative Study

## STV focus on Scotland's only University Myopia Clinic

**An STV News team visited Glasgow Caledonian University's Vision Centre to find out more about the amazing work that goes on in Scotland's only University Myopia Clinic.**

One in five children in the UK suffer from myopia, or short-sightedness, which can affect a child's quality of life, their ability to perform in school and sports, and their self-esteem.



The TV crew spoke to our Vision Science researchers and myopia experts Dr Stephanie Kearney and Dr Mhairi Day, who are keen to raise awareness among parents about the tell-tale signs of the eye condition and encourage them to get their children's eyes tested. They also interviewed some of the children who are referred to the clinic and their parents about their experiences, and delved into the research that is going on at the University.

Myopia, or short-sightedness, is where the length of the eye increases and distant objects appear blurred. Wearing spectacles or contact lenses makes vision clearer, but left without these it can affect a child's ability to learn and play sports. Spectacles need to be made stronger until late teenage years and greater amounts of myopia could lead to eye diseases later in life. The number of children with myopia has more than doubled in the last 50 years. It is estimated that almost half of the world will become myopic by 2050. Myopia is also occurring at a younger age, and those who develop myopia between 6 and 13 years are more likely to have high myopia as an adult. Some of the myopia research includes looking into cost effectiveness of specialised spectacles that may slow how quickly myopia increases, the effectiveness of such specialised spectacles and contact lenses on myopia patients. They are also exploring natural light therapy as a new treatment for myopia in Scottish children.

[Watch the STV News report](#)



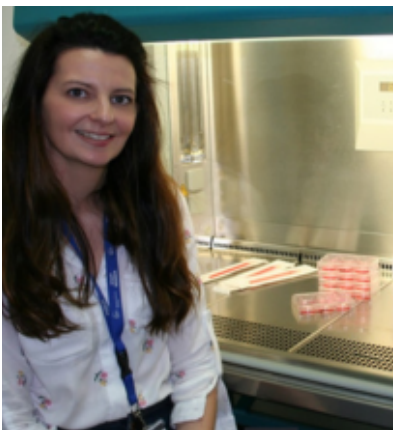
## Health experts explain the science behind 'walking like a penguin' to prevent slips on icy paths

**As temperatures plunged to below -13C in some parts of Scotland, health experts from Glasgow Caledonian University spoke to STV News to explain the science behind "walking like a penguin" to prevent slips and trips.**

An STV News film crew visited the School of Health and Life Sciences Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) Musculoskeletal Research Group leads Dr Gordon Hendry and Dr David Hamilton on campus in January after NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde produced a [video appeal](#) for people to "walk like a penguin" to prevent slipping on icy paths. Dr Hendry shared his expertise on why walking like a penguin actually works and appeared on the STV News at Six programme and STV News online.



[Watch the STV News report](#)



## Virologist shares her expertise as measles cases rise in England

Virologist Dr Claire Crossan shared her expertise in the Daily Record in an article looking into the rise in measles cases in England and how that was likely to affect Scotland. Dr Crossan, a lecturer and researcher in the School of Health and Life Sciences' Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences and the Research Centre for Health (ReaCH), said the higher vaccination levels in Scotland have helped prevent the spread of the infection north of the border so far. Last year, there was just one case in the entire year and in 2022 there was similarly just a single case.

[Read the full article in the Daily Record](#)

Dr Claire Crossan also features in the The Herald highlighting that action is needed to avert outbreak of the most infectious virus we know. [Read the full article in The Herald](#)

## Psychology lecturer writes two blogs to mark International Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day

Glasgow Caledonian University lecturer Dr Liza Morton, who was one of the world's youngest pacemaker babies, marked International Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day on 14 February with two blogs about her own journey and battle to improve the lives of others living with congenital heart disease

Dr Morton has written a piece for the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (THE ALLIANCE) entitled '[A win for patient involvement: Congenital heart disease standards in Scotland](#)' on how she played a huge part in new standards of care. Dr Morton's second blog has appeared on the Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) website entitled '[Congenital Heart Disease Standards – Bridging the gap between physical and mental health](#)'.



## Self-managing pessaries can improve care for women with pelvic organ prolapse

Professors Carol Bugge and Suzanne Hagen's research into the self-management of pessaries for women with pelvic floor prolapse was featured on an STV News at Six special report. [Read more at STV News](#)

## Morning Live

Dr Ryan Kean featured in a BBC Morning Live investigation into germs on your mobile phone. A BBC TV crew filmed him in the Biological and Biomedical Sciences labs testing Glasgow shoppers' mobile phones for germs. [You can catch up on BBC iPlayer \(at 47 minutes\)](#)

## Efforts to improve heart detection rates

Psychology lecturer Dr Liza Morton appeared in the Herald with an article on [Efforts to improve heart defect detection rates welcomed by Scots campaigner](#) and she was also on the front page of the Falkirk Herald after winning an award for her book - [Award for book written by Larbert mum who was born with congenital heart disease](#)

## Solving the problem of Scotland's middle-aged drinkers

Professor Carol Emslie was invited to contribute to the Herald's series looking at Scotland's relationship with alcohol. She commented on women's drinking, sober curiosity and drinking in midlife. [Read the article in The Herald](#)

## How to get your balance back

Professor Dawn Skelton was in the Telegraph giving advice on how to get your balance back - [Try 24 daily tweaks to make 2024 your healthiest year ever](#)

## Concerns over future of nursing as fewer students opt to join profession

Dr Val Ness and nursing students became TV stars when they featured in a story showing that the University was bucking the trend on student nursing figures. [Read more at STV News](#)

## Boris Johnson's body language at the Covid-19 inquiry analysed by expert

Psychology Lecturer Dr Gemma Stevens wrote a piece for the Herald Scotland after analysing former PM Boris Johnston's body language during the COVID-19 inquiry. [Read the full article in the Herald Scotland](#)

## Scotland could be on the brink of US-style opioid crisis fuelled by the rise of nitazene

Professor Andrew McAuley appeared on BBC Radio Scotland and other media including the Scottish Sun sharing his drugs expertise on the new synthetic opioids. [Read the article in the Scottish Sun](#)

## Scottish Mental Illness Stigma Study

The Scottish Government's "Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Plan 2023-2025" recently cited the Scottish Mental Illness Stigma Study. Professor Simon Hunter was involved in the study and it was cited as evidence in relation to actions surrounding the stigma experienced in healthcare, education and workplaces.



## Tackling foot ulcers in Scotland with the Common Good Podcast

Dr Ruth Barn joins the latest episode of the Common Good Podcast to talk about a new research project designed to tackle diabetes-related foot ulceration in Scotland. Dr Barn and her team have received a grant of almost £300,000 from the Scottish Government's Chief Scientist Office to develop a study that explores "motivational interviewing", which can empower patients to adopt new lifestyle changes and ultimately reduce ulceration, amputation and death rates among people with diabetes. She explains how the project will work, what its roadmap looks like over the next three years, and how the pilot could be put into practice. [Listen to the podcast](#)



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## Youth Voice is Invaluable

PhD student Rebecca Johnson along with co-researchers Jess Hughes and Kirsty Miller, recently had a blog published by the Edinburgh Mental Health Network titled "Youth Voice is Invaluable: How Participatory Research Can Capture the Voices that Matter Most". [Read the blog](#)

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## NMAHP- RU Newsletter

Find out the latest news from the the Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professional Research Unit (NMAHP-RU) newsletter in the January issue of their newsletter.

[Read the NMAHP-RU newsletter](#)

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## Occupational Therapy Blog

[Read the latest blogs](#) from the Department of Occupational Therapy & Human Nutrition and Dietetics including:

- H is for Home
- What it's like to study Occupational Therapy at GCU in 2024!

## SHIP Blog

[Catch-up on the latest blogs](#) from the Safeguarding Health through Infection Prevention (SHIP) research group including:

- Advancing the Fight Against Wound Infections!
- Hand Hygiene Study in Cameroon

## NESSIE Blog

[Read the blog](#) from the NIHR Synthesis Scotland Initiative (NESSIE) to keep up to date with what projects the team are working on, information about how they are carrying these out, and what they learn.