



Welcome to the July issue of the Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) newsletter highlighting the latest research from the School of Health and Life Sciences at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU).

This newsletter showcases that even in the midst of a huge interruption to our normal academic life for the past 17 months, we have maintained a magnificent trajectory in research funding, outputs and engagement. We continue to have success through fundamental sciences, social sciences, to technology assessment and public health and I'd encourage you to follow up the links provided to find out more about the specific projects.

Find out more about our research on our website www.gcu.ac.uk/reach or follow us on twitter @GCUReach.

Professor Andrea Nelson, Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Director of ReaCH

Hospital infections costs NHS Scotland £46 million each year

A world-leading study led by GCU has revealed for the first time the full impact of hospital associated infections (HAIs) on patients and costs to NHS Scotland. Researchers found that 7,500 hospital patients or one in every hundred develop HAIs, also known as Nosocomial Infection (NI), each year - costing NHS Scotland £46.4 million annually. The findings from the ECONI (Evaluation of Cost of Nosocomial Infection) study were published in a special issue of the Journal of Hospital Infection. Professor Jacqui Reilly, ECONI Chief Investigator and Safeguarding Health through Infection Prevention (SHIP) research group lead said: "This study gives Scotland the first comprehensive assessment of the incidence, risks and costs of all types of HAIs, enabling annual planning of infection prevention and control (IPC) strategy in our hospitals locally and nationally". The Scottish Government, who commissioned the study, welcomed the findings and Scotland's Associate Chief Nursing Officer Irene Barkby said the results will help the NHS prevent infections and improve patient treatment.



[Read more](#)



Researchers call for mandatory health warnings on alcohol labels

A new world-wide study has found that large alcohol labelling using negative health warnings similar to that used on cigarette packets could help people change their drinking habits. Researchers are now calling for clear health warnings on all alcohol labels to be made mandatory instead of voluntary to help people make informed choices. The latest research was led by GCU Research Fellow Dr Elena Dimova of the Substance Use Research Group along with co-author Danielle Mitchell, Research Assistant at the University of Stirling's Institute for Social Marketing and Health. The research was funded by Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS), a national charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm. These findings will be key to informing the Scottish Government's decision making on labelling and provide evidence to the UK Government's consultation expected later this summer.

[Read more](#)

Research exposes gaps in mental health support for frontline nurses during pandemic

Researchers have found gaps in mental health support for frontline respiratory nurses and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. GCU health services researcher Dr Nicola Roberts of the Ageing Well Research Group is the Principal Investigator in a new research paper entitled 'Experiences of nurses caring for respiratory patients during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic: an online survey study'. Dr Roberts worked with colleagues at Edge Hill University and Southampton University exploring the experience of nurses caring for respiratory patients during the first wave of the pandemic in early 2020. The paper was published in the BMJ Open Respiratory Journal. The research team analysed responses from over 255 nurses throughout the UK who highlighted concerns over their working environment, the supply and availability of adequate PPE, the quality-of-care individuals were able to deliver, and impacts on mental health to nurses and their families.

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Microbiologist wins funding to help find new treatment for bacterial vaginosis



Dr Ryan Kean of the Molecular Mechanisms of Long Term Conditions Research Group has been awarded funding to help find new treatments for bacterial vaginosis (BV) infections which affect 30% of women of childbearing age in the western world. BV patients

have a three to five times increased risk of miscarriage, two-fold risk of pre-term birth and increased STI transmission risk. His research entitled 'Targeted Protein Payload Dispersal of Vaginal Biofilms' was one of 18 projects awarded the funding in the fourth Proof of Concept call launched earlier this year.

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Understanding the behaviour of nurse independent practitioners.



Dr Val Ness joins the Common Good Podcast to discuss her research into the behaviour of nurse independent practitioners (NIPs) and why two-thirds feel under pressure to prescribe antibiotics, even if the patients do not need them. Dr Ness explains why the overuse of antibiotics is reaching a 'global crisis' before talking about her study and how and why NIPs feel under pressure to prescribe them. She describes ways that NIPs can better manage patient expectations in the future and how the public can be better educated about antibiotics. She also talks about her background as an A&E nurse, her move into academia and her work with the Safeguarding Health through Infection Prevention (SHIP) Research Group.

[Read more](#)

PhD student launches Anger in Sports study



Sports Psychology PhD student Chris Glover has launched a study called 'Anger in Sports' aimed at investigating the level of perceived anger an athlete has according to the sport they play. He is looking for people over the age of 18 who take part in sport at any level to get involved in the study which is being conducted on the University-supported REDcap platform. Chris is a self-funded PhD student and a keen sportsman himself. He has coaching qualifications in Krav Maga, taekwondo, football, badminton, kayaking, mountain biking and archery. He chose to study anger and performance because there is very little information about it and he finds it a hugely interesting topic.

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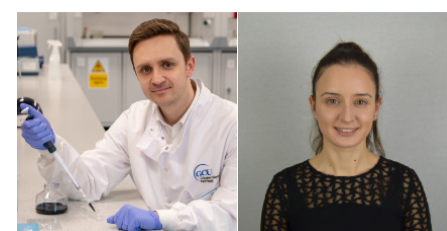
Respiratory health of adults with learning difficulties



A new study has been launched to find out whether family of carers or adults with learning difficulties in Scotland find pulse oximeters useful for monitoring respiratory health. Dr Janet Finlayson and Dr Nicola Roberts, from the Ageing Well Research Group, along with Dr Valeria Frighi at the University of Oxford, were awarded funding from the Baily Thomas Charitable Fund to carry out the study. Adults with learning difficulties are much more likely to experience respiratory system health problems which can lead to serious illness or death. Researchers say pulse oximeters may particularly benefit adults with learning disabilities, who can experience difficulties communicating discomfort or ill health.

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Blood cancer research reaches milestone



Research led by Dr Mark Williams of the Molecular Mechanisms of Long Term Conditions Research Group investigating new targeted treatments for Acute Myeloid Leukaemia (AML) has reached a significant milestone. Dr Williams and PhD student Katie Miari have just had their first peer-reviewed paper, from the University's blood cancer lab, published in the Frontiers in Cell and Development Biology Journal. The review paper highlights the importance of immune cells called macrophages in driving resistance to therapy. Macrophages are large white blood cells that are an integral part of the immune system. Their job is to locate microscopic foreign bodies and 'eat them'.

[Read more](#)



Social work scientists look to the future

Social work scientists at GCU organised a unique online event crossing three time zones and involving experts from around the world. The 'What social work does the world need now?' virtual conference was the brainchild of researchers Dr Heather Lynch and Dr Tina Wilson from the Social Work Research Group. Dr Lynch and Dr Wilson decided to organise the conference because they felt that social work, particularly in the UK, was behind the times when it comes to addressing big global challenges like climate change, environmental crisis and new technology. There was an array of experts and panellists sharing their research across Australasia, Africa, Europe and the Americas.

[Read more](#)

How alcohol companies are using International Women's Day to sell more drinks to women

Find out more by reading the article in The Conversation by Professor Carol Emslie, Substance Use Research Group on how companies are using the day to sell more drinks to women.

[Read more](#)

Happy? Sad? Stressed? How drinking became the answer to everything

'Part of the issue is that for many women, the reason for drinking alcohol goes deeper than having a buzz'. Professor Carol Emslie of the Substance Use Research Group shares her expert insight with the New York Times on women's drinking and how the alcohol industry markets products to women.

[Read more](#)



Health scientists at GCU are looking for men to sign up to a new Game of Stones weight loss research project to see if texting works in the battle of the bulge. The Game of Stones method was trialed back in 2017 which showed that incentive-led text messages could help men lose weight and feel better. Researchers now want to find out if it really helps men lose weight and keep it off, who benefits most, and what the costs and benefits are for men and the NHS. The research, funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and led by University of Stirling in collaboration with GCU School of Health and Life Sciences, Aberdeen, Dundee, Belfast and Bristol universities is looking to sign up 585 men from Greater Glasgow, Belfast and Bristol.

[Read more](#)

Drink Wise Age Well

New evaluation of the Drink Wise Age Well programme for reducing alcohol harm in over 50s is out now and involves Professor Lawrie Elliott, Substance Use Research Group.

[Read more](#)

Cochrane review on sedentary behaviour

A new Cochrane review on 'Interventions for reducing sedentary behaviour in community-dwelling older adults' involving Professor Sebastien Chastin and Professor Dawn Skelton, Ageing Well Research Group, has just been published and is available to view online.

[Read more](#)



How can we provide hepatitis c treatment in primary care

A team of researchers led by Dr Dave Whiteley, Sexual Health and Blood Borne Viruses Group, have been exploring the potential for GP-initiated hep C treatment in Scotland, and thinking about what it might look like and how it could work. At the meeting on Thursday 9th September at 5pm, the team will share their findings, presenting a theory-informed treatment pathway and suggestions for how it could be implemented. They'll also be keen to hear what you think and the meeting is open to anyone with an interest in hepatitis C and its treatment.

[Read more](#)

The Sport Psych Show

Latest episode involves GCU student Zoe Moffat and Dr Bryan McCann discussing a research paper on attribution-retraining (AR). Listen now via the link below.

[Read more](#)

New research posts

Applications now open for two posts working on the NIHR funded Physical acTivity in people with InterMittent claudication (OPTIMA) Project. Closing date 1st August.

[Read more](#)

If you have any news stories, please contact Janice Burns, Senior Communications Officer
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