

Newsletter

Research Centre for Health (ReaCH)

June 2026

Welcome

As we move into the summer period, I am delighted to share another edition of the ReaCH newsletter and reflect on what has been a productive and successful few months for our research community.



One of our strengths within ReaCH is the breadth of expertise across our membership. Whether advancing new therapeutic approaches, addressing major public health challenges, improving rehabilitation outcomes, or supporting evidence-based healthcare, our researchers continue to deliver work that makes a genuine difference to people's lives. This edition highlights just a few of the many achievements taking place across the Centre. I am pleased to see the continued success of colleagues in securing competitive funding, building international partnerships and translating research into real-world impact.

The Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) continues to strengthen its position as one of Scotland's leading interdisciplinary health research centres, securing major external funding, international recognition and impactful collaborations across targeted therapeutics, rehabilitation and public & community health.

A significant highlight is GCU's leadership of the €4.5 million SUPER Doctoral Network, funded through Horizon Europe. Led by Professor Sebastien Chastin and colleagues, the programme will recruit 17 doctoral researchers to investigate how sport and physical activity can adapt to climate change while promoting health and sustainability. This places ReaCH at the forefront of an emerging global research agenda linking climate, health and behaviour.

Within Targeted Therapeutics, Dr William Johnston secured a prestigious £125,000 Academy of Medical Sciences Springboard Award to develop advanced 3D oral biofilm models that better replicate gum disease and accelerate the development of microbiome-targeted therapies. In addition, Biological Sciences student Chloe Christie was awarded a highly competitive British Pharmacological Society PhD studentship to investigate novel PROTAC-based therapeutics for multiple myeloma under the supervision of Dr Mark Williams and Dr Yvonne Dempsie.

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Rehabilitation research also achieved major success, with Dr Elaine Coulter and her team securing over £271,000 from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Charitable Trust to investigate long-term outcomes and community rehabilitation needs of people living with spinal cord injuries across the UK.

In Public Health, Professor Sharon Hutchinson received national recognition through election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and co-authored the major EASL-Lancet Commission report highlighting Europe's growing liver disease burden. Meanwhile, research involving Professor Carol Emslie demonstrated that extended alcohol licensing hours were associated with increased alcohol-related ambulance callouts and crime, providing evidence with direct policy relevance.

The newsletter also showcases ReaCH's expanding international profile through collaborations with NASA, European Commission activities, major conference presentations, and growing engagement with healthcare, industry and policy partners. Collectively, these achievements demonstrate ReaCH's increasing success in attracting external investment, influencing policy and delivering research with real societal impact.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Centre's success and to those who have shared their stories for this newsletter. I hope you enjoy reading about the outstanding work being undertaken across ReaCH, and hope you have a well deserved break during the summer.

Professor Gordon Ramage
Director of ReaCH

ReaCH Management Committee

I am pleased to announce the membership of the new ReaCH Management Committee, which will play a key role in shaping and delivering the strategic direction of the Research Centre for Health.

The committee comprises:

- Norah Palmateer – Theme Lead, Public & Community Health
- Ryan Kean – Theme Lead, Targeted Therapeutics
- Lorna Paul – Theme Lead, Rehabilitation
- Suzanne Hagen – Theme Lead, Cross-Themed Research
- Martha Canfield – Mid-Career Researcher Representative
- William Johnston – Early Career Researcher Representative
- David Hamilton – Commercial and Innovation Lead
- Carol Bugge - UoA3 REF Lead

Working together, this group will help build and support our research strategy, strengthen collaboration across themes, and deliver a bold and ambitious vision for ReaCH and Glasgow Caledonian University.

Please join me in congratulating the committee members and wishing them every success in supporting the continued growth and impact of our research community.



Glasgow Caledonian leading major sport and climate change research

Researchers at Glasgow Caledonian University are leading a major European research initiative exploring how sport and physical activity can respond to climate change while continuing to support health and wellbeing.



The University will coordinate SUPER (Sustainable Sports and Physical Activity for Equity and Resilience), a doctoral training network bringing together universities, researchers, civil organisations, sports federations, and industry partners from across Europe to examine the environmental impact of sport and develop more sustainable ways for people to be active.

The project is supported by more than €4.5 million from the European Commission through the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions programme, alongside more than 1 million Swiss Francs from the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation.

Led by Glasgow Caledonian researchers Professor Sebastien Chastin, Dr Niamh Smith, Dr Zoe Tiegues and Dr David Hamilton, the programme will recruit 17 doctoral researchers to investigate how sport and physical activity can adapt to a changing climate while reducing their environmental impact.

[Read more](#)



GCU LGBTQIA+ research influences alcohol guidelines

Glasgow Caledonian University research into LGBTQIA+ people's experiences of alcohol services has informed Scottish and UK policy.

A team led by Professor Carol Emslie from GCU's Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) conducted the first UK academic study exploring LGBTQIA+ people's relationship with alcohol and the barriers they faced when accessing services. The research informed recommendations to reduce barriers to treatment for LGBTQIA+ people in the first UK Clinical Guidelines for Alcohol Treatment and the Scottish Government's new Alcohol and Drugs Strategic Plan.

The team have recently been awarded GCU Impact Accelerator funding to work with partners at the Scottish Drugs Forum. Together, they will explore how a free e-learning resource, developed from the research for NHS and third-sector professionals, could help alcohol and drug services become more inclusive.

The research team also includes Dr Elena Dimova, Professor Jamie Frankis and Dr David Whiteley, all from GCU's Research Centre for Health (ReaCH).

[Read more](#)



Researcher awarded prestigious Academy of Medical Sciences Springboard funding

A researcher from Glasgow Caledonian University's School of Health and Life Sciences (SHLS) has secured a prestigious Academy of Medical Sciences (AMS) Springboard Award to develop a new laboratory model of gum disease and accelerate the development of targeted therapies.



Dr William Johnston, Lecturer in Biomedical Science, has been awarded £125,000 through the highly competitive national scheme, which supports early-career researchers in establishing independent research programmes and building research leadership.

The funded project will develop a customisable 3D-printed fluidic device in collaboration with industry partners and researchers from GCU (Professor Gordon Ramage), the University of Strathclyde (Professor Aikaterini Lalatsa), and the Complutense University of Madrid (Professor Dolores Serrano). The system will be used to generate both healthy and disease-associated plaque communities under controlled laboratory conditions and provide a platform to test innovative therapeutic strategies aimed at reducing harmful microbial activity without broadly disrupting the wider oral microbiome.

By creating a cost-effective and clinically relevant experimental platform, the project aims to accelerate the development of microbiome-targeted therapies for gum disease and support improvements in both oral and systemic health.

[Read more](#)

Student lands prestigious pharmacology scholarship



A Glasgow Caledonian University student has become the first at the institution to be awarded a prestigious British Pharmacological Society (BPS) PhD studentship, securing funding to pursue research into a new approach to treating blood cancer.

Chloe Christie, a fourth-year Biological Sciences student, has been named one of four inaugural recipients of the Sir David Jack Scholarship – a new programme funded by a donation from the family of the late Sir David Jack, which aims to support 40 PhD projects over the next decade. The BPS described the programme as transformative for the future of pharmacological research.

Chloe was selected following a competitive process that included a panel interview in London. Speaking about the award, she said she was "honoured" to receive the scholarship and hoped her work would "contribute to the development of innovative therapies that could improve treatment options for patients with multiple myeloma." Chloe's PhD project will be supervised by Dr Mark Williams and Dr Yvonne Dempsie of the Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences.

[Read more](#)



University to lead UK research to support people living with spinal cord injuries

Researchers in the School of Health and Life Sciences have been awarded funding to support people living with spinal cord injuries. The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Charitable Trust has awarded a GCU-led team over £271,000 to conduct a two-year project, Evidence for Living Well with a Spinal Cord Injury in the Community.



Led by Dr Elaine Coulter, the GCU team - Professor Lorna Paul, of the School of Health and Life Sciences, and the Yunus Centre's Julie Cowie and Helen Mason - will work with researchers from Aberdeen and Loughborough universities and spinal injury centres in Glasgow, Stoke Mandeville and Stanmore. Dr Coulter said: "Rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injuries aims to help them regain mobility and self-care skills that are essential for everyday life. However, after they are discharged, access to specialised care varies widely across the UK. Some people notice a decline in their abilities once they are home. Furthermore, physical function can be affected by inadequate healthcare or insufficient activity, potentially harming overall health and wellbeing and community reintegration. This work is a UK-wide study that will lay the groundwork for future research aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of people with SCI, helping them to lead active lives in their communities while reducing healthcare and societal costs."

The programme will explore care and rehabilitation pathways, physical function trajectories, and unmet healthcare and rehabilitation needs, as well as develop an area for future investigation.

[Read more](#)

Later bar hours linked to surge in alcohol-related ambulance callouts, researchers find

Allowing bars and pubs to stay open later at night leads to a significant rise in alcohol-related ambulance callouts and reported crime, according to new research involving a Glasgow Caledonian University academic.



Professor Carol Emslie, a co-investigator on the study, was part of a research team led by the University of Glasgow and the University of Stirling that examined the impact of extended licensing hours in Aberdeen and Glasgow – the first study of its kind in the UK. The findings have been published in *BMJ Public Health*.

The research forms part of the wider ELEPHANT study – Evaluating Later and Expanded Premises Hours for Alcohol in the Night-Time economy – funded by the NIHR Public Health Research programme and led by the University of Stirling.

[Read more](#)



Professor Sharon Hutchinson elected a Fellow of The Royal Society of Edinburgh

Professor of Epidemiology and Population Health Sharon Hutchinson has been elected a Fellow of The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE).



Professor Hutchinson is among 43 eminent individuals deemed excellent in their field who have been elected as 2026 RSE Fellows. They will use their knowledge for the public good as part of Scotland's National Academy.

This year, a third of new Fellows were drawn from public health disciplines, reflecting the RSE's commitment to supporting and mobilising its influence to improve the lives of all Scots, and the wider global community. As well as a professor of epidemiology and population health at Glasgow Caledonian, Professor Hutchinson is a consultant scientist at Public Health Scotland and an adviser to the World Health Organisation.

Fellows are elected to the RSE, Scotland's National Academy, in recognition of excellence in their disciplines and their ongoing commitment to advancing knowledge for the benefit of society.

[Learn more](#)



Professor Skelton helps shape parliamentary report on ageing and exercise

The University's Professor Dawn Skelton has helped shape a parliamentary report calling for physical activity to be placed at the heart of the NHS's support for older people.

Professor Skelton, Professor of Ageing and Health, gave evidence to a cross-party Health and Social Care Committee exploring the role of physical activity in improving the health and wellbeing of older people. Its report, published last month, says physical activity should be at the heart of the NHS's support for older people and is as important as prescribed medication.

The [report](#), Healthy Ageing: physical activity in an ageing society, recommends:

- GP prescribed physical activity should become routine for older people
- Stronger links between the NHS, leisure providers and community groups to make exercise accessible and achieve required dose
- The Care Quality Commission should ensure that exercise programmes are provided in care homes.

The Committee also called for a cultural shift in how ageing is perceived and discussed, saying negative stereotypes can leave older people feeling resigned to becoming inactive.

[Read more](#)



Other news

Glasgow Caledonian sport psychology students to support athletes at 2026 Commonwealth Games

Postgraduate psychology students at Glasgow Caledonian University are to provide hands-on psychological support to Commonwealth athletes competing at this summer's Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

Glasgow Caledonian and SAMH extend collaboration in support of Scotland's mental health

Glasgow Caledonian University and Scottish Action for Mental Health (SAMH) have re-committed to their long-term partnership, bringing academic knowledge and practice experience together in support of Scotland's mental health.

Appointments

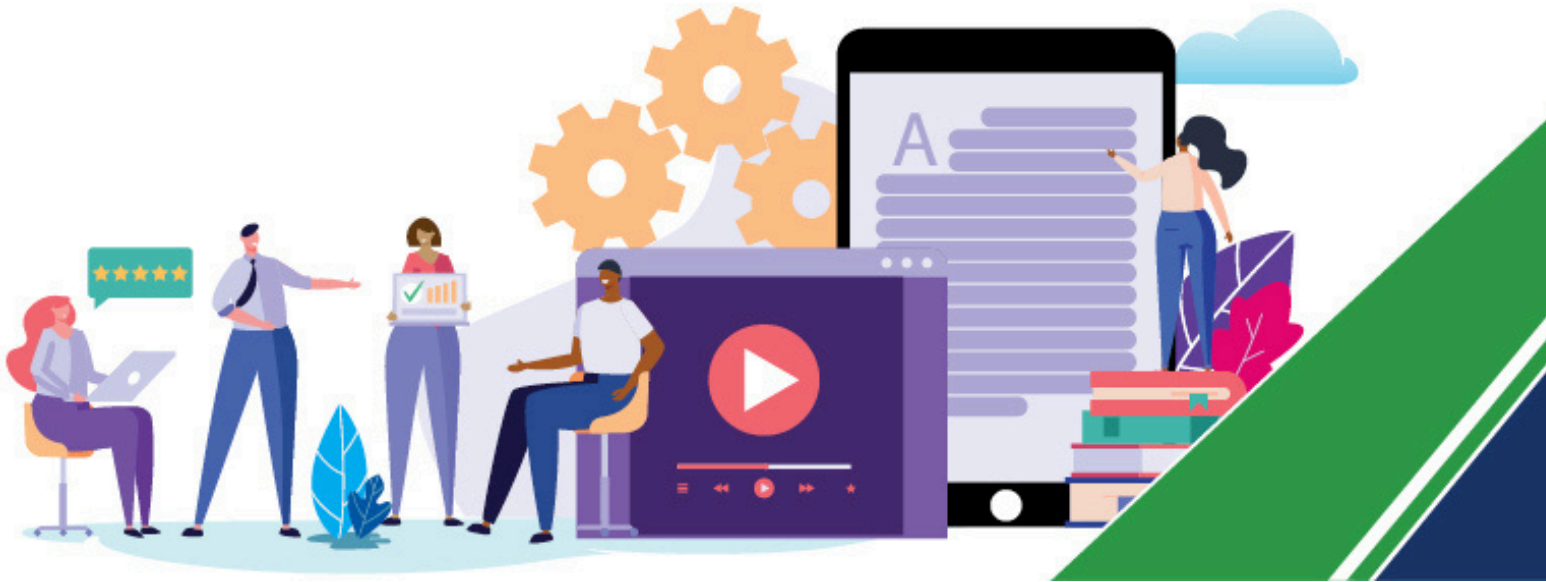
Professor Joanna McParland has been appointed to the NIHR Work and Health Research Committee. This two-year role involves reviewing research applications and attending NIHR Work and Health commissioning meetings three times per year. Joanna has previously been funded by NIHR, and this appointment reflects her ongoing involvement in research that supports work and health policy in the UK.

PhD viva success

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

- Stefan Corradini, Investigating the Therapeutic Potential of Two Novel Protein Degradators Targeting STAT3 and CBP/p300 in Multiple Myeloma
- Deborah Rickards-Hill, Factors Influencing Decisions to Donate Organs: Perspectives of the Specialist Nurse for Organ Donation





Conferences and events

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

GCU welcomes NASA's Chief Health and Medical Officer

The University welcomed Dr James 'JD' Polk, NASA's Chief Health and Medical Officer, to our latest ReaCH seminar.

Dr Polk explored the challenges of space flight and lunar/Martian habitation for the human body and how GCU's researchers can help NASA tackle them at the event on campus.



He was joined by Principal Professor Mairi Watson, Chair of Court Yvette Hopkins and staff.

Dr Polk has been NASA's Chief Health and Medical Officer since 2016 and has published extensively on emergency medicine, disaster medicine, space medicine, and medical management. His honours include NASA's Exceptional Service Medal and Exceptional Achievement Medal.

Dr Polk said: "Our conversation highlighted how essential university-driven research is to the future of safe and sustainable spaceflight, from understanding physiological adaptation and behavioural health to developing technologies and interventions that protect crews on long-duration missions. I'm looking forward to continued collaboration and to seeing GCU's impact grow across both terrestrial and space-based health research."

[Read more](#)



Scotland on track to eliminate Hepatitis C as a public health threat

Leading researchers, clinicians, policymakers and third sector representatives came together in Glasgow on 8 June for the Scottish Hepatitis C Elimination Meeting, co-hosted by Glasgow Caledonian University's Blood-Borne Virus (BBV) Research Programme and Public Health Scotland



The meeting reviewed evidence and progress against Hepatitis C (HCV) elimination targets set by both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Scottish Government, and identified priorities for future research, monitoring and evaluation to support ongoing elimination efforts in Scotland.

Scotland has achieved several key WHO milestones in the drive to eliminate HCV as a public health threat. More than 80% of those diagnosed with Hepatitis C in Scotland have now been treated, and HCV-related mortality has fallen below the WHO threshold of two deaths per 100,000 population.

Findings from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)-funded EPIToPe study – Evaluating the Population Impact of Hepatitis C Direct Acting Antiviral Treatment as Prevention for People Who Inject Drugs – co-led by GCU and the University of Bristol, indicate that Scotland is on track to meet the WHO target of reducing new infections to fewer than two cases per 100 person-years among people who inject drugs. This is a target Scotland is aiming to reach by the end of this year.

GCU's BBV Research Programme has played a central role in generating the evidence underpinning Scotland's elimination efforts, co-leading the EPIToPe study alongside the University of Bristol and leading the Needle Exchange Surveillance Initiative (NESI), funded by Public Health Scotland. Together, these studies have provided the data needed to monitor and evaluate Scotland's progress toward elimination.

The outputs of the meeting will feed directly into the renewal of the Scottish Government's Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Action Plan, due in 2027

[Read more](#)



Psychology for the Common(wealth) Good project offers support to Games athletes

The University's Dr Bryan McCann and trainee sport & exercise psychologist Izzy Tolometti have shared GCU's Psychology for the Common(wealth) Good project with delegates from all 74 Commonwealth Games Associations.



Ahead of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow this summer, the University project is offering sport psychology support to athletes and their teams. A number of teams representing nations in Africa, Europe, the Caribbean and Pacific regions have already registered their interest.

Once confirmed, a team of postgraduate trainee sport and exercise psychologists will provide up to six teams with valuable psychological support before, during, and after the Games.

Dr McCann, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, and Izzy, a trainee sport and exercise psychologist, spoke to delegates at a seminar in the city as it prepares to host the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games. During the seminar, delegates said they were excited about the project and the potential support the GCU trainees could provide to enhance their teams' performance and mental health.

[Read more](#)

Professor Sharon Hutchinson co-authors Lancet Commission report calling for action on liver disease

Professor Sharon Hutchinson joined a new Lancet Commission in Brussels this week calling for urgent action to tackle Europe's rising liver disease burden.



Professor Hutchinson joined policymakers, health experts and researchers to launch a major new report from the EASL-Lancet Commission on Liver Health in Europe – warning that liver disease is an escalating public-health crisis across Europe and calling on governments to implement stronger prevention policies.

Professor Hutchinson, Professor of Epidemiology and Population Health, co-authored the report, From Evidence to Impact: Implementing Sustainable Liver Health in Europe. She is a commissioner and co-lead of the working group on Data for Action for the Lancet Commission on Liver Health in Europe.

Liver disease remains one of the few major non-communicable diseases that is still growing. The report highlights how liver disease reflects broader failures in tackling the major drivers of non-communicable diseases. Alcohol consumption and obesity, alongside viral hepatitis, remain the principal causes of liver-related mortality in Europe.

[Read more](#) and [view the report](#)



Professor Skelton delivers keynote address in Montreal

Professor Dawn Skelton headed to Canada to deliver a keynote address at the Canadian Geriatrics Society Annual Congress in Montreal.



Glasgow Caledonian's Professor of Ageing and Health, who is internationally renowned for her work in falls prevention, discussed mobility assessment and interventions at the conference in April.

The keynote follows a busy period of international engagement, which included delivering a lunchtime lecture at Cork University Hospital to more than 80 medics, meeting with the Irish Department of Health and delivering a masterclass at the University College Cork.

Professor Skelton also delivered a keynote at the 33rd Panhellenic Scientific Congress of Physiotherapy, in Piraeus, Athens, to more than 200 physiotherapists and physiotherapy students.

She said: "I do enjoy the networking and meeting potential new collaborators when I travel to conferences abroad. Through previous visits, I have built a strong multi-national network of colleagues and been involved in over a dozen funded projects that have advanced research and practice across the world."

[Read more](#)

Professor Carol Emslie shares research at Uppsala University

Professor Carol Emslie gave a keynote address at the Research and Innovation for Action on Women's Mental Health conference at Uppsala University in Sweden in May.



Professor Emslie, of the Research Centre for Health (ReaCH), will explore how women are targeted by the alcohol industry in her talk, Buying in, drinking up? Women, alcohol, and identity.

The conference attracts more than 150 academics, policymakers and practitioners.

Professor Emslie said: "The alcohol industry develops pink drinks, fruity beers and low-calorie products and cynically exploits images of femininity and female empowerment to sell to women. Female celebrities are increasingly launching and marketing their own alcohol products, leveraging their personal brands and positioning alcohol as a lifestyle accessory for women."

Professor Emslie will also share her experience of directly influencing alcohol treatment guidelines and government strategy when she joins a panel discussing Research and Policy for Driving Societal Change.

[Read more](#) and [learn about the conference](#)



GCU supports Glasgow Science Festival with mock murder trial and live demonstrations

Glasgow Caledonian University hosted a mock murder trial to explore the science behind jury decision-making, as part of a bumper programme of events to celebrate the 20th Glasgow Science Festival.



Guests stepped into the shoes of jurors to decide whether the accused is innocent or guilty at the event, hosted by Glasgow Caledonian Lecturer in Applied Psychology Dr Lee John Curley and lecturers in criminal law and evidence, Dr Rachel Ferguson and Dr Andrew Tickell. Attendees then had the opportunity to discuss the verdict and the challenges faced by jurors with an expert panel.

The School of Health and Life Sciences was represented at a series of other activities during the Festival, which ran from 4 - 14 June.

- Dr Yvonne Dempsie, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology, hosted a series of tabletop displays in Glasgow Botanic Gardens on subjects ranging from blood flow, movement, how drugs work, DNA in fruit and how to prevent disease.
- Dr Paul Baker, Lecturer in Biological and Biomedical Sciences, explained why you need to be aware of ticks.
- Brian McGill, Clinical Supervisor in the Vision Sciences department, explored the different ways our eyes help us to see.
- Dr David Hamilton, Reader in Musculoskeletal Health, demonstrated the importance of balance for sports performance and how injury and rehabilitation performance are monitored.

[Read more](#)

Staff join researchers and clinicians at the Scottish Cardiovascular Forum

Biological and Biomedical Sciences staff joined 130 researchers and clinicians at the Scottish Cardiovascular Forum at Glasgow University.



Dr Yvonne Dempsie, who chairs the Scottish Cardiovascular Forum committee, was joined by Dr David Welsh and PhD student Kate Sloan at the event on March 21. Dr Welsh gave a keynote talk, Translational Studies into Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension, and Kate was awarded one of two British Pharmacological Society prizes for her presentation on Dapagliflozin as a novel therapeutic for pulmonary arterial hypertension.



Three Minute Thesis Winners

Postgraduate researchers from Glasgow Caledonian University once again shone at this year's Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) competition, impressing judges with a compelling presentation of their research in just three minutes



Peter Akor, from the School of Science and Engineering, secured the Judges' Choice Award at the University's annual final, held on the Glasgow campus and livestreamed to audiences online on Wednesday, 3 June. His presentation, *The Minutes That Matter: Transforming Epileptic Seizure Care from Reaction to Prediction*, explored how technology and data could help predict epileptic seizures before they happen, potentially improving safety, treatment and quality of life for people living with epilepsy.

The People's Choice Award, voted for by audience members attending in person and online, was awarded to Kimia Rezaei Fard from the School of Health and Life Sciences. Her presentation, *The Mystery of the Unstable Ankle*, examined why some people continue to experience ankle instability and repeated injuries after a sprain, with the aim of improving diagnosis, treatment and long-term recovery.

This year's other finalists represented a range of disciplines from across the University:

- Amy Close, Glasgow School for Business and Society – Future-Proofing Inclusive Working Environments for Women on the Menopausal Transition Journey
- Abisola Ijaodola, School of Science and Engineering – Developing a Climate Just Finance Framework for Glasgow
- Niloofer Sedighi, School of Health and Life Sciences – Reducing Pressure Where It Matters: Developing Innovative Solutions to Prevent and Treat Diabetic Foot Ulcers Through 3D-Printed Insoles

[Read more](#)

Students go the distance for MS research fundraiser

A team of PhD students from Glasgow Caledonian University's Doctoral Training Centre (DTC) for MS Symptom Management have raised more than £1,300 for the MS Society after completing the charity's annual The May 50K challenge.



The group, made up of eight doctoral researchers whose work focuses on exercise and physical activity for people moderately to severely affected by multiple sclerosis (MS), each committed to walking, running or wheeling 50 kilometres throughout May. Collectively, the students covered hundreds of kilometres while raising funds to support vital MS research and services.

The DTC is part-funded by the MS Society and brings together researchers dedicated to improving the lives of people living with MS through innovative research into symptom management and physical activity interventions. The students took on the challenge as a team to raise awareness of MS and support the charity that helps fund their research, while also promoting the importance of staying active.

[Read more](#)



Women's health researchers deliver keynote presentation

Health researchers Professor Suzanne Hagen and Professor Carol Bugge delivered a keynote presentation at the Association for Continence Professionals' (ACP) annual conference last week.



The ACP is a multi-professional association open to all health and allied-care professionals who are working within or have an interest in the field of bladder and bowel care. Its annual conference was a celebration of excellence and evolution in continence care.

Professor Hagen is a Professor of Health Services Research and Professor Bugge is a Professor of Nursing, in the University's School of Health and Life Sciences. They are also members of the School's Research Centre for Health (ReaCH).

Their presentation was on the use of pessaries and pelvic floor muscle training in treating women with prolapse.

[Read more](#)

Professor Frankis explores blood screening at emergency medicine conference

Professor Jamie Frankis explored a new opt-out blood borne virus screening programme at the Royal College of Emergency Medicine conference in Edinburgh

Professor Frankis, of the Department of Nursing, Community and Public Health, was invited to speak at the event to discuss the psychology behind opt-out testing as well as the programme's implications for the LGBTQIA+ community.



The opt-out blood borne virus (BBV) screening programme is being rolled out across Scotland's A&E departments. The new care pathway will routinely test anyone aged 16 and over who attends A&E for HIV, Hepatitis B and C unless they choose to opt out.

[Read more](#) and [learn about Professor Frankis' talk](#)



GCU experts play lead role at European conference

Leading researchers from Glasgow Caledonian University played key roles in the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Collaboration European Symposium in Aberdeen in May.



JBI is a global organisation that promotes and supports evidence-based decisions that improve health and health service delivery. Based at the University of Adelaide, it collaborates with more than 90 entities across the world. The conference saw experts from across Europe meet to discuss the latest advances in evidence synthesis, transfer and implementation to promote evidence-based practice in a range of healthcare settings.

Alex Todhunter-Brown, Professor of Evidence Synthesis in the School of Health and Life Sciences' (SHLS) Research Centre for Health (ReaCH), delivered the keynote speech, highlighting the importance of meaningful involvement of patients and the public in evidence synthesis, and sharing key findings from a recently published piece of work. Professor Todhunter-Brown also took part in a panel discussion, joining other European experts in answering questions about future challenges and opportunities for evidence synthesis.

Dr Myzoon Ali, a Reader in ReaCH, spoke about a new statistical approach for combining data from individual patients. A delegate praised Dr Ali's presentation, describing her work as 'game-changing' for those who work in systematic reviews.

Dr Julie Cowie, Senior Research Fellow in the Yunus Centre for Social Business and Health, presented on Enjoy Life Locally (ELLY), a programme of research to support healthy weight and wellbeing in disadvantaged communities. The JBI organising committee praised the project and the embedding of a researcher within the participating communities to maximise the reach, acceptability and community ownership of ELLY.

Senior Research Fellow Dr Pauline Campbell, from ReaCH, delivered a presentation on the health outcomes of people receiving court-ordered drug and alcohol treatment. This study was conducted by the NIHR Evidence Synthesis Scotland Initiative (NESSIE), which is a collaboration between GCU and the University of Edinburgh. Dr Campbell was awarded the prize for best platform presentation and was delighted to receive the award on behalf of the NESSIE team.

[Read more](#)



Professor Chastin showcases research collaboration at European Commission events

Professor of Health Behaviour Dynamics: People, Places, Systems Sebastien Chastin shared his expertise at two European Commission events in March.



Professor Chastin was invited by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Directorate of the European Commission to speak on its European Expert thirtieth anniversary podcast and take part in Science is Wonderful!, its flagship science engagement fair. Science is Wonderful!, brings together leading researchers from across Europe to demonstrate how collaborative research can address societal challenges. The anniversary podcast, Co-Creation of Science for MSCA, focused on how co-creation approaches are transforming research practice and impact. The episode was produced and hosted by acclaimed science communicator Dr Shane Bergin.

The invitations recognise Professor Chastin's pioneering work in participatory research and the co-production of knowledge across Europe through his coordination of a series of international research networks.

[Read more](#)



ReaCH Seminar: Right person, right intervention, right time

**Wednesday 1st July, 12noon-1pm
W219, Annie Lennox Building**

Frailty (both functional and cognitive) is on the rise post-covid, evidenced by an increase in hip fractures and dementia beyond the increase in the older population. Interventions to support those with pre-frailty and reduced mobility (prevention), those with high falls risk or frailty (management and rehabilitation) and finding those at risk (screening using GP and hospital records) have shown we can offer the right person the right programme at the right time. However, many of these interventions don't work if offered to the wrong person at the wrong time in their frailty trajectory. For many, the holy grail would be a drug that could mimic the benefits of exercise and help improve muscle function in those most resistant or unable to exercise. There has been limited success in these studies so far. Dawn will talk about some of the prevention and rehabilitation she has been involved in over her years at GCU as well as talking about the potential of targeted therapeutics to support the frailty tsunami hitting the global older population.

Bio: Dawn Skelton is a Professor of Ageing and Health within ReaCH. She is an exercise physiologist and was a co-author of the World Falls Guidelines, sits on the British Geriatric Society Falls and Bone Health Section and is Editor of the Journal of Frailty, Sarcopenia and Falls.

Join us for our ReaCH seminar on Wednesday 1st July, 12noon-1pm in room W219.





Selected Publications

1. Ankanawin, U.; Kidd, L.; Skelton, D.A. Nurse-Initiated Transitional Care Interventions to Support the Transition from Hospital to Home amongst Older Stroke Survivors and Caregivers: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Clin Rehabil* 2026, 2692155261430092, doi:10.1177/02692155261430092.
2. Azuara-Blanco, A.; Logan, N.S.; McConnell, E.; Kearney, S.; Kirk, G.; Jones, S.; McDowell, C.; Murphy, L.; O'Hanlon, G.; McFarland, M.; et al. Low Concentration Atropine Eye Drops and Progression of Myopia in Children: Multicentre Placebo Controlled, Double Masked, Randomised Trial in the UK(CHAMP-UK). *BMJ* 2026, 393, e086698, doi:10.1136/bmj-2025-086698.
3. Brooks, W.; Preston, J.; Barclay, A.; Wilson, G.; Ainslie, D.; Coulter, E. The Effect of Exercise Interventions on Physiological Fitness, Physical and Cognitive Function, Common Symptoms, and Disease Impact for People with Severe Multiple Sclerosis: A Systematic Review. *Mult Scler Relat Disord* 2026, 112, 107317, doi:10.1016/j.msard.2026.107317.
4. Campbell, P.; Broderick, C.; Fenton, C.; Davis, B.; Xu, W.; Todhunter-Brown, A.; Aladangady, N.; Chin, R.F.; Hill, R.; Kean, R.; et al. Benefits and Harms of Antenatal/Intrapartum Screening for Maternal Group B Streptococcus and Use of Intrapartum Antibiotic Prophylaxis Versus Risk-Based Protocols or No Intervention: A Rapid Review. *Acta Paediatr* 2026, doi:10.1111/apa.70568.
5. Davis, E.; Whiteside, B.; Stott, T.; Paul, L. Dance for Health Impact in a Rural Scottish Island Community: Understanding Stakeholder Experiences. *Health Promot Int* 2026, 41, doi:10.1093/heapro/daag069.
6. Emslie, C.; Maxwell, K.; O'Donnell, R.; Mitchell, G.; Cook, M.; Uny, I.; Nicholls, J.; Lewsey, J.; McIntosh, E.; Angus, C.; et al. How Are Bars and Nightclubs in Scotland Using Extensions in Late-Night Alcohol Trading Hours? Venue Observation Study. *Int J Drug Policy* 2026, 151, 105210, doi:10.1016/j.drugpo.2026.105210.



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