

New review highlights the power of telerehabilitation in breaking global health barriers

In a groundbreaking development for global neurological care, researchers from Glasgow Caledonian University have published the first-ever systematic review examining the effectiveness of telerehabilitation for adults with neurological conditions in low and middle-income countries.



Led by Eric Nkansah Opoku, a lecturer in Occupational Therapy, and supervised by Professor Lorna Paul, the Telerehabilitation Research Group analysed all existing evidence to assess how remote rehabilitation services are transforming care for patients in regions where hospital access is limited or non-existent.

The review, entitled Effectiveness of Telerehabilitation for Adults with Neurological Conditions in Low and Middle-Income Countries, shines a spotlight on the critical role technology plays in bridging gaps in global health. It highlights early but promising results for patients recovering from strokes, spinal cord injuries and other neurological conditions through virtual rehabilitation methods.

“This is about rethinking access,” said Eric. “If people can’t reach rehabilitation services, then we must bring the services to them - and telerehabilitation offers a real opportunity to do that.” The review emphasises the potential of telerehabilitation to boost outcomes for patients, particularly in underserved areas. However, it also points to significant gaps in current research, noting that much of the evidence remains limited in both scope and quality.

[Read more](#)

MSK research team measuring cartilage stiffness after new knee arthritis treatment

A team of Glasgow Caledonian musculoskeletal (MSK) experts are working with a local orthopaedic surgeon to evaluate how a new treatment for knee arthritis works.

Dr David Hamilton, Dr Lisa Wright and Dr Diane Dickson, from the School of Health and Life Sciences' Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) Musculoskeletal Health Research Group, have teamed up with Professor Graeme Hopper, a Consultant Orthopaedic Knee Surgeon at Ross Hall Hospital in Glasgow.



Dr Hamilton explained: “Stiff and swollen joints are a huge problem affecting quality of life for around one in four adults in the UK. Arthrosamid is a new treatment that treats the synovitis (swelling of the lining of the joint) that is part of knee arthritis. This injectable hydrogel integrates with the lining of the knee joint to thicken that tissue and to provide a barrier.

Pain relief following the treatment been demonstrated in small clinical trials but the mechanism of action has not been well demonstrated clinically. The MSK team secured funding from the manufacturer, Contrura international, to use our state-of-the-art shear wave sonoelastography ultrasound scanner to assess cartilage stiffness of the synovial membrane and measure if this has changed following the hydrogel injection.

[Read more](#)





Physio researcher is first AHP to be awarded CSO Early Postdoctoral Fellowship

Glasgow Caledonian University physiotherapy lecturer and researcher Dr Vicky Joshi has been awarded an Early Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Chief Scientist Office (CSO).

During the three-year full-time Fellowship, based at Glasgow Caledonian's School of Health and Life Sciences, Dr Joshi will develop cardiac arrest aftercare interventions for survivors and their families in Scotland through the CAROUSel project. The CAROUSel project received £353,270 from the CSO and runs from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2028. Dr Joshi's supervisors will be Professor of Nursing Carol Bugge, Dr Gareth Glegg, from the University of Edinburgh, and Dr Chris Seenan, from the University of Stirling.

The project will be supported by the Save A Life For Scotland (SALFS) campaign, which brings together the emergency services, NHS, third sector organisations, Scottish Government and academic researchers to improve survival rates after a cardiac arrest. Dr Joshi is the first allied health professional (AHP) to be awarded an [Early Postdoctoral Fellowship](#) by the CSO. She is currently the Director of SALFS Recovery, a partner group to SALFS, focused on cardiac arrest aftercare.

[Read more](#)

PEPPY Trial gets off to a flying start

The NIHR-funded PEPPY multicentre trial, led by Professors Suzanne Hagen and Carol Bugge from the Department of Nursing, Community and Public Health, started recruitment in May 2025. The first woman was randomised in May at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, followed by 2 more in June. Over the next 18 months 552 women will take part across 13 NHS centres in the UK.

The trial is investigating the clinical and cost effectiveness of supervised pelvic floor muscle training plus vaginal pessary compared to supervised pelvic floor muscle training alone for management of pelvic organ prolapse. The research includes a full economic evaluation and process evaluation to support the main trial element. Pelvic organ prolapse is a female condition which occurs when the organs in a woman's pelvis descend into her vagina. Prolapse can cause distressing vaginal, bladder, bowel and sexual symptoms, and impaired quality of life. On examination, 40% of women over 50 years of age have prolapse, and symptomatic prolapse affects 11% of women.

Supervised pelvic floor muscle training (PFMT) is an effective non-surgical option for treating and preventing prolapse symptoms and is first line management. A vaginal pessary, a support device inserted vaginally to hold the prolapsed organs in place, also provides symptom relief, and two thirds of women try a pessary when offered. PFMT and pessary are used together in clinical practice by some healthcare professionals, however there is insufficient evidence supporting this practice, therefore NICE identified this as a research gap.

Inserting a pessary may allow the pelvic floor muscles to be trained more effectively by reducing the obstructing prolapse, leading to a better treatment outcome. This research will establish effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of PFMT plus pessary, and also investigate intervention context and implementation, to inform evidence-based practice and service delivery.

[Find out more](#)





Ground-breaking VR rehab project for people with MS in line for big digital award

A virtual reality (VR) games rehabilitation project that's transforming the lives of people with multiple sclerosis (MS) in Scotland has been shortlisted for a prestigious digital innovation award.

The project - run by Professor Lorna Paul, Dr Elaine Coulter, Dr Amy Webster (pictured) and PhD student Hannah Milne, from Glasgow Caledonian, Glasgow School of Art's Dr Matthieu Poyade, in partnership with the MS Society - is up for the ALLIANCE Self Management Awards - Digital Innovator Award. The awards, organised by the Health and Social Care Alliance (the ALLIANCE), present annual accolades in recognition and celebration of the achievements of people and projects that have contributed the most to self-management of health conditions in Scotland over the past year.

"We're thrilled to be recognised for work that's already making a difference," said Professor Lorna Paul, who leads Glasgow Caledonian University's MS Doctoral Training Centre. "We're grateful to the MS Society, our partners, and the incredible individuals with MS who continue to support and shape our research. People with MS need life-long rehabilitation and VR provides an opportunity for a fun and motivating way to do rehabilitation. Rather than 'off the shelf' VR games, Amy and Hannah have developed bespoke games for people with MS for use at home so people with MS can self-manage their condition in a fun way," she added.

The ALLIANCE shortlisted the project for the award because they were impressed by the innovative work being carried out and after watching a special feature on STV's flagship Scotland Tonight programme about how the VR games are changing the lives of people with MS. The VR games the team developed, with input from people living with MS, include playing a virtual piano, whack-a-mole and catch-a-falling-star. They're designed to be fun and engaging. Scotland has the highest rates of MS in the world, with over 15,000 people living with the condition. The VR project is one of several cutting-edge research initiatives at Glasgow Caledonian University's MS Doctoral Training Centre, focused on novel approaches to symptom management. The winners of the Self Management Awards 2025 will be announced during Self Management Week, which runs from September 22 to 25, 2025.

[Read more](#)



Cancer expert appointed to Myeloma UK Research Advisory Group

Cancer scientist Dr Mark Williams has been appointed to the Myeloma UK Research Advisory Group to help shape future research projects aimed at improving the lives of people with the incurable blood cancer.

Myeloma UK, which is the only charity in the UK focused on myeloma and related conditions, has recently relaunched its Research Advisory Group (RAG) to better serve the needs of people affected by myeloma. The revamped RAG now brings together a more diverse pool of experts including leading scientists such as Dr Williams, haematologists and patients. The group will help shape the charity's research programme, and fund projects that reflect the priorities of those affected by myeloma.

Dr Mark Williams said it was an "honour and a privilege" to serve on the RAG and to be "in a position to help steer the research direction and focus of Myeloma UK, addressing the unmet needs of Myeloma patients". "The ultimate goal of Myeloma UK is for this research to one day lead to a cure for myeloma patients, providing them with a life expectancy and quality of life as close to normal as possible," added Dr Williams, Senior Lecturer in Cancer Biology and Advanced Therapeutics, in the School of Health and Life Sciences at Glasgow Caledonian University.

[Read more](#)



Ageing and health expert presents global insights into falls and frailty

Professor of Ageing and Health Dawn Skelton shared her expertise with 446 delegates from 18 countries at an international Centre for Ageing Research & Education (CARE) network webinar, hosted by Duke University, Singapore



Her keynote presentation, entitled What's New in Falls and Frailty Research, focused on new research and guidelines for preventing and managing falls and frailty in older adults living in the community and in care settings.

Professor Skelton explored the latest evidence and implementation strategies in falls prevention, with a particular focus on the World Falls Guidelines that she co-authored. She shared practical recommendations for translating these guidelines into practice, especially concerning the delivery of exercise programmes. She also presented new implementation research on the Falls Management Exercise (FaME) Programme, a widely used intervention in the UK. Professor Skelton explained that while FaME has been instrumental in reducing falls, she noted growing concerns about a lack of fidelity in its implementation, which can compromise its effectiveness.

Professor Skelton emphasised the need to assess and address vestibular impairments and dizziness which are often overlooked factors contributing to falls in older adults. She called for a broader approach to rehabilitation that goes beyond strength and balance training to include sensory and functional assessments.

The CARE network webinar is a well-established international forum for research and knowledge exchange in rehabilitation. Professor Skelton's invitation to speak followed her participation in the 60th Anniversary National Physiotherapy Conference in Singapore last year.

Her presentation to an audience of researchers, healthcare professionals and policymakers highlighted the importance of evidence-based, comprehensive approaches to falls prevention, particularly as global populations continue to age.



Professor Skelton also gave a keynote speech about physical therapy for older adults at an international event in Thailand. The International Physical Therapy Research Symposium (IPTRS) 2025 – Sustainable Well-being: Global Perspective of Physical Therapy through 60 years Advancements conference was hosted by The Faculty of Physical Therapy at Mahidol University.

Highlights from Professor Skelton's speech - Physical Therapy in Older Adults and Global Social Engagement Mission - were picked up by 25 different media outlets across South East Asia.

Professor Skelton is based in the School of Health and Life Sciences (SHLS) Department of Physiotherapy and Paramedicine and co-leads the Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) Ageing Well Research Group.



Politicians consult drugs expert on Scotland's safer drugs consumption facility



Glasgow Caledonian University's drug expert Professor Andrew McAuley's expertise was called on for a major inquiry into ways to combat Scotland's drug epidemic.

Following his appearance at the Scottish Affairs Committee earlier this year, Professor McAuley was quoted in their final report on Glasgow's Safer Drugs Consumption Facility (SCDF), which was published on September 16. The SCDF is the first of its kind in the UK and opened on January 13 this year as part of a three-year pilot. The inquiry examined the legal and policy challenges facing the facility, known as The Thistle – with a particular focus on its future.

Scotland experiences among the world's highest level of drugs-related deaths. The problem is severe in Glasgow, where there are also concerns over people injecting in public places. In response, the Scottish Government committed £2.3 million per year to set up the UK's first official SDCF, providing a safe place for people to inject their drugs under medical supervision. Staff can also offer support for health and social needs.

[Read more](#)

Award-winning social enterprise startup spin-off launches



A groundbreaking social enterprise Health CASCADE spin-off project has officially launched in Scotland after winning the prestigious Converge Challenge Competition last year.

Glasgow Caledonian University's Health CASCADE team, which is a Marie Skłodowska Curie Innovative Training Networks project funded by the European Union and led by Professor Sebastien Chastin, won the Venture Labs category with the MosalQ project. The competition, recognised as Scotland's leading springboard for university-born innovators, saw the Health CASCADE's training project triumph over 100 semi-finalists from 18 Scottish universities, showcasing the most advanced and impactful social enterprise projects in the country. The aim of Health CASCADE is to foster the next generation of highly trained research leaders to develop evidence-based guiding principles, novel tools and new technologies to make co-creation an effective tool to fight complex public health problems through a European Joint Doctoral Programme.

The MosalQ project is a pioneering cascade training and consultancy agency, specialising in harnessing collective-intelligence for co-creation solutions to complex challenges. It facilitates training and projects for communities, companies, and social innovators, empowering them to collaboratively address pressing issues. Professor Sebastien Chastin, who co-ordinated the training network and now continues as Founder and CEO of Health CASCADE, said: "Our approach is built on years of rigorous research and methodological advances. We have developed a co-creation methodology and tools that set global standards in trustworthy and effective collective intelligence. Health CASCADE is dedicated to strengthening trust and collaboration, blending human insight and AI to exceed their capabilities."

Following the Converge Challenge competition win, Health CASCADE has been supported by the Challenge Group team to become a registered social enterprise, develop a comprehensive business plan and begin preparations for pitching to investors. The team, Dr Niamh Smith, Quentin Loisel and Professor Chastin are already actively delivering the project throughout Europe such as the www.yeah-project.eu. All profits will be re-invested in research and in supporting other social enterprise on a pro-bono basis. Health CASCADE is now officially trading and invites researchers and organisations seeking expert co-creation support for funding bids or projects to get in touch.



New strategic partnership will futureproof NHS workforce



Glasgow Caledonian University is delighted to announce a new strategic collaboration with NHS Education for Scotland (NES) aimed at transforming the design and delivery of health and social care services across Scotland.

The partnership, officially signed on Sept 4 at the University's Glasgow campus by Principal and Vice-Chancellor Professor Steve Decent and NES Chief Executive Professor Karen Reid, marks a significant step toward building a more skilled, sustainable and resilient NHS workforce for the future.

The agreement will see both organisations pool their expertise, knowledge and resources to design and deliver innovative education and training programmes that respond to Scotland's evolving health and social care needs. The collaboration focuses on key priorities including improving population health, reducing inequalities, driving accessibility and embedding innovation in workforce development.

The partnership also aims to:

- Widen participation in health and social care careers through inclusive education and training initiatives.
- Support research and development in digital health and care technologies
- Work collaboratively with a range of external partners and stakeholders
- Improve the impact and efficiency of public sector investment in research and innovation
- Deliver training through digital and simulation-based learning platforms

Also present at the signing were Professor Kevin Kelman, Director of NHS Scotland Academy, Learning and Innovation, Glasgow Caledonian School of Health and Life Sciences (SHLS) Dean Professor Anita Simmers and SHLS Strategic Lead for CPD, Innovation and Business Development Maria Renwick.

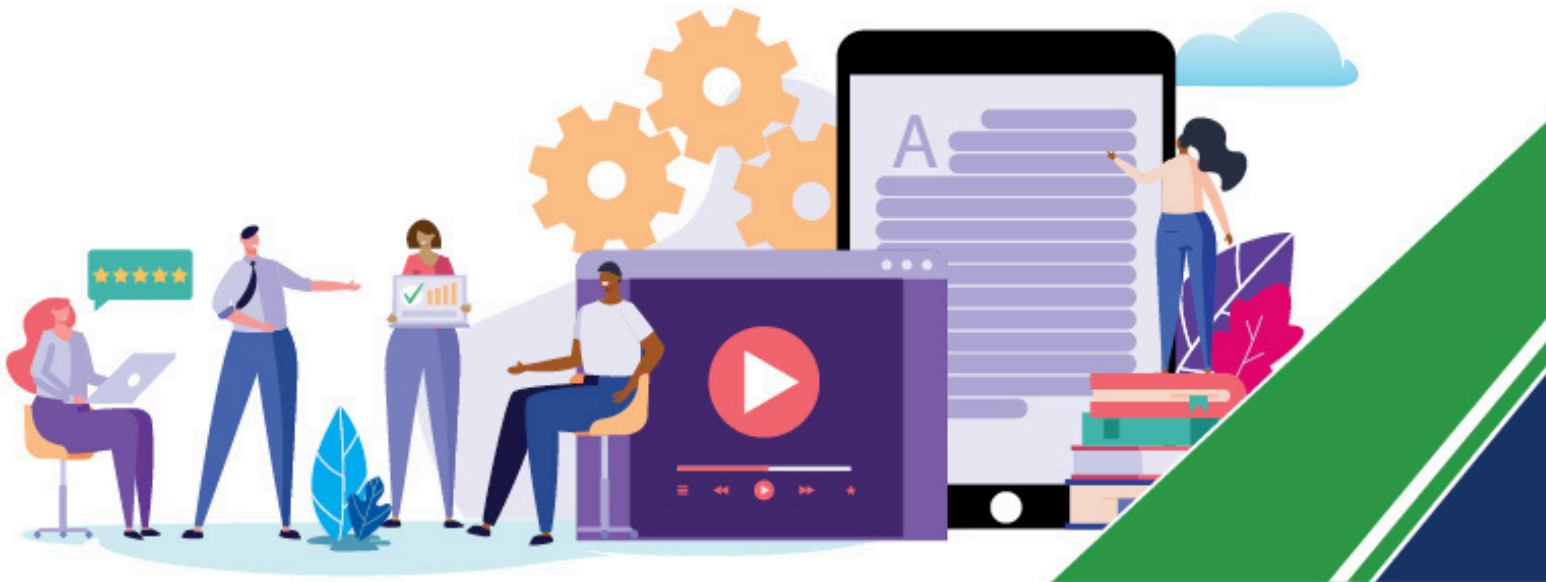
[Read more](#)

PhD viva success

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

- Annamae Burrows, Being a "Good Sober": Exploring the Male Friendships and Masculinities of Young Men Who Identify as 'Light' Drinkers (pictured right)
- Lynn Grayson, Identifying and responding to family needs for supporting cognitive-communication difficulties following traumatic brain injury
- Deepti KC, Learning from COVID-19 in practice to enhance infection prevention and control learning for the future: A qualitative cross-national comparative study between Nepal and Scotland
- Lauren McCaffrey, Co-creators' experiences of the co-creation process: a multiple case study
- Quentin Loisel, Digital Technology for Co-Creation: Enabling Participatory Systems and Collective Intelligence in Public Health





Conferences and events

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

All eyes on vision conference

Researchers from all over the UK and beyond attended a major vision science congress hosted by Glasgow Caledonian University in September.

The 2025 British Congress of Optometry and Vision Science (BCOVS) discussed the latest developments in visual science.



The annual conference brings together researchers from the fields of optometry, orthoptics, ophthalmology, vision science, and psychology. This year's event attracted a broad spectrum of contributions, with abstracts submitted by PhD students, early-career researchers, and senior academics.

Speakers from as far afield as Australia and the US gave talks on myopia and imaging, applied vision research and AI in vision science, visual perception and technology, public health and qualitative research, and educational research. Dr Joanne Wood, Professor of the School of Optometry and Vision Science at Queensland University of Technology, Australia, Professor David Whitaker of Cardiff University, and Professor Mark Bullimore of the University of Houston were the keynote speakers.

Dr Sven Jonuscheit, chair of the BCOVS organising committee and Senior Lecturer in Vision Sciences at the University, said: "BCOVS 2025 provided a dynamic platform for knowledge exchange and collaboration. The conference is renowned for its welcoming and supportive environment, particularly for early-career researchers," added Dr Jonuscheit, who is also Research Group Lead for the Vision Research Group in the School of Health and Life Sciences' Research Centre for Health (ReaCH).





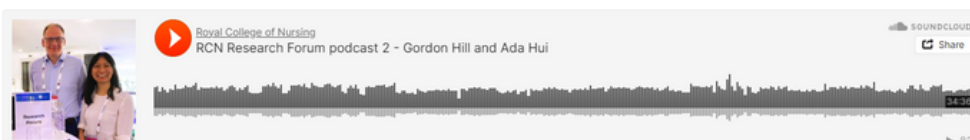
Selected Publications

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

- EngAGE4Change: Co-creating outdoor community spaces with care home residents and community-dwelling older adults to improve movement behaviour and reduce social isolation - A Health CASCADE study protocol
- Exploring age-friendly urban design through co-creation: insights from EngAGE4Change, a Health CASCADE Study
- Funding Health Promotion Activities to Reduce Avoidable Hospital Admissions in Frail Older Adults (HomeHealth): Further Challenges to the "Cost-Effective but Unaffordable" Paradox
- Potentially inappropriate medication and its associated factors in older people living in nursing homes: a cross-sectional study

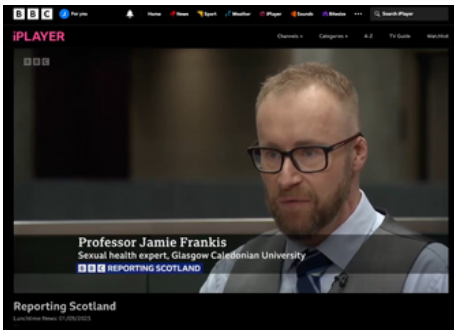
Podcasts & Good News

Some of the latest podcasts, interview and appointments from GCU staff are listed below.



The latest [RCN Research forum podcast](#) is now live! In the podcast Gordon Hill & Hilal Al Shidhani, a PhD student at GCU, discuss writing for publication with Ann McMahon & Andree Le May. Ann & Andree share strategies & give excellent advice to help nurses to get their work published. Check out the podcast and others [here](#).





Professor Jamie Frankis spoke to BBC Scotland TV and Radio about the roll out of the new gonorrhoea vaccine to gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, as well as people who sell sex, who are higher risk of gonorrhoea infection in Scotland. Since the pandemic, gonorrhoea in Scotland has risen to the highest levels ever. This vaccine aims to reduce new infections amongst those most at risk. You can see Professor Frankis speaking on TV [here](#).

Watch this brief interview with Professor Dawn Skelton, recorded for Landspítali Hospital in Iceland, where she discusses deconditioning and the vital role of active wards. [Catch the full interview now on YouTube.](#)



Congratulations to Professor Jacqui Reilly who was appointed as the new Chair of the Infection Prevention Control Strategic Development and Oversight Group. This group will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of infection prevention and control (IPC) across health and social care in Scotland by developing a ten year strategic vision and priorities statement.

SHIP Blog

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

- *Building Biofilms with LEGO: My Experience at the 2025 Edinburgh Science Festival*

NESSIE Blog

[Read the latest blogs](#) from the NIHR Synthesis Scotland Initiative (NESSIE) including:

- *Experiences, perceptions and attitudes of health and social care professionals to management of children's chronic non-cancer pain – a qualitative evidence synthesis*