

Welcome to the first 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).

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

Launch of new centre

A new Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) has been launched to reflect the increased impact of life-changing research, both nationally and internationally, at GCU. The renaming of the Centre for Living to ReaCH, with its strapline 'improving health and wellbeing for all', highlights the contribution of our research to Sustainable Development Goal 3 - good health and wellbeing - issued by the United Nations in 2015 as blueprint for peace and prosperity across the planet. The centre showcases the work undertaken in our research groups in the themes of public health and long-term conditions.

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Health CASCADE

Professor Sebastien Chastin is leading a new Europe-wide project aimed at developing co-creation into a scientific method and training the next generation of public health researchers. The €4 million EU-funded Marie Curie project Health CASCADE will train 15 talented PhD researchers throughout Europe and turn them into leaders in the field of public health research. They will join an international network of scientific experts tackling the biggest global public health challenges from obesity to pandemics, cancer to dementia - magnified by climate change and increased inequality.

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PhD Fellowships

*Evidence Based Co-creation
An innovative field of science*

The Health CASCADE project has 15 PhD Fellowships available with a range of institutions from across the world.

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New PrEP Guidance

Professor Claudia Estcourt is behind new guidance launched for the use of HIV prevention, PrEP, across EU and European Economic Area countries. The guidance for PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) implementation will help these countries meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to substantially reduce HIV and end the epidemic of AIDS by 2030. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, who released the guidance, said reaching these targets requires a sustained focus on HIV prevention, including new interventions and approaches.

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Honorary Professor

A warm welcome to Scottish Government Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr Nicola Steedman who has been confirmed as Honorary Professor at GCU. Professor Steedman already has close links with the Sexual Health and Blood Borne Viruses research group and is a key part of Professor Claudia Estcourt's HIV prevention programme. She has also championed GCU Professors Sharon Hutchinson and David Goldberg's Hepatitis C epidemiology research as part of Scotland's Hepatitis C elimination strategy.

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Scottish SIREN study recruitment going well

Professor Lesley Price who is co-ordinating the Scottish arm of the UK-wide SIREN study - the world's largest, analysing COVID-19 immunity amongst healthcare workers - revealed recruitment is going well. The team at GCU are working in partnership with Public Health Scotland, and closely with NHS Research Scotland, the Chief Scientist Office and health boards to get healthcare workers signed up for the study.

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Research to help new dads reduce alcohol consumption

A new international study led by GCU researchers found a huge gap in research exploring men's experiences of drinking in the transition to fatherhood. Dr Elena Dimova led the review funded by the Institute of Alcohol Studies that looked at evidence on men's experiences of alcohol consumption in the context of fatherhood, and on the effectiveness of existing interventions to reduce drinking among new fathers. The study found a lack of research into what is needed to help men reduce their drinking during this life-changing time.

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World Economic Forum recognises GCU Forth and Clyde Canal study

On World Water Day, The World Economic Forum recognised research carried out by GCU in partnership with Scottish Canals, which linked the regeneration of the Forth and Clyde Canal in North Glasgow to improved health and wellbeing. The research looked at the impact of regeneration along the Forth and Clyde Canal in North Glasgow and highlighted the significant physical and mental health and wellbeing benefits that can be achieved from investing in regenerating urban waterways globally.

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Latest vacancies

- Research Fellow to work on the Needle Exchange Surveillance Initiative
- Data Scientist to work across the Sexual Health and Blood Borne Viruses research group and the Substance Use research group
- Data Coordinator to work on the SIREN-Scotland research project

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COP26 Climate Data Challenge Hackathon

A team of scientists from GCU recently took part in a 48-hour COP26 Met Office Climate Data Challenge Hackathon. Professor Sebastien Chastin, School of Health and Life Sciences and Professor Gordon Morison, School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment led a team from GCU made up of health and data experts who used big data from award-winning research to find nature-based solutions that would both increase urban population health and resilience to climate change challenges. It is hoped the ideas developed during the Hackathon will be showcased at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November 2021.

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GCU-led international stroke research network awarded new funding

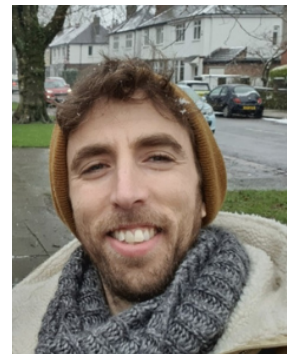
The GCU-led international Collaboration of Aphasia Trialists (CATs) has been awarded new funding to support its research aimed at improving the lives of stroke survivors with speech problems. The funding from Tavistock Trust for Aphasia will support a third phase of CATs work until 2024. The network currently involves more than 240 aphasia researchers across 40 countries. CATs founder and chair is Professor Marian Brady, Dr Myzoon Ali leads one of the six working groups and PhD students Atharva Bhagwat and Kathryn VandenBerg are supported by the network.

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Transatlantic lecture for sport psychology student

GCU sport psychology student and former Israel national baseball team player Nadav Ephrat has just delivered mental health skills training to students in the US. He presented his online guest lecture to sport psychology and sports management undergraduates at Keystone College, in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The lecture focused on mental health skills with an introduction to imagery, the psychological / biological mechanisms of how it works, how it could be integrated in sport and how its benefits could be maximised. He also highlighted new research leads such as the incorporation of virtual reality to assist imagery accuracy and its use in rehabilitating athletes who suffered injury.

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Researchers clinch top awards

GCU researchers Dr Kris McGill and Kathryn VandenBerg from the Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions Research Unit (NMAHP-RU) have recently won top awards in recognition of their invaluable work improving the lives of stroke survivors. The National Society for Rehabilitation Research (SRR) awarded the Vera Wright prize for best oral presentation of 2020 to Dr Kris and best poster of 2020 to PhD student Kathryn.

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Students working with Cricket Scotland's stars of the future

GCU and Cricket Scotland have extended their partnership to provide an innovative psychology and support programme for up-and-coming cricket talent. Two DPsych Sport and Exercise Psychology students have been selected to work with Cricket Scotland's boys' and girls' performance pathways to provide sports psychology support to young cricketers starting out on their sporting careers.

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Shortlisted for prestigious award

Former GCU PhD student Marco Mannisi who played a key role in one of Europe's largest ever investigations into the diagnosis and treatment of knee osteoarthritis was shortlisted for the Entrepreneurial Award in the EU region at the British Council for the Study UK Alumni Awards 2020-21 in recognition of his amazing start-up company called Medere, which is directly linked to his PhD work. He put his success down to his positive experience at GCU and involvement in the University's EU-funded KNEEMO Initial Training Network project.

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Ageing well with stroke in the era of COVID-19 Conference

An online conference is being jointly organised by GCU's Ageing Well research group, Living with Stroke and Other Neurological Conditions research group as well as the Scottish Stroke AHP Forum and the Scottish Stroke Nurses Forum. Scheduled for Thursday 17th June 2021, this conference aims to create an opportunity to share insights acquired during the pandemic and disseminate research findings and service innovation to facilitate recovery and healthy ageing after stroke. By joining forces, the conferences hosts aspire to create a cross-disciplinary platform that is stronger than ever before, to ensure that knowledge and insights be shared with everyone involved in stroke care and rehabilitation, for the benefit of people affected by stroke.

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Research excellence shared with new nursing students

Three leading scientists at GCU shared their life-saving research with 800 new first-year nursing students. The University's newly appointed Honorary Professor Nicola Steedman, who is the Scottish Government's Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Clinical Academic Professor of HIV and Sexual Health Claudia Estcourt and leading drugs researcher Dr Matt Smith are behind the innovative plan. Each researcher recorded a short video interview with one of the nursing lecturers, outlining their research and how it is involved in improving public health. The module development team are lecturers in adult nursing - Programme Leader Dr Val Ness, Module Leader Martin Murchie, Sarah Renton, Linzi Nisbet and Dr Jenny Dalrymple.

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