

# Newsletter, February 2017

No. 3

## Welcome

The Bournemouth University Clinical Research Unit (BUCRU) is 5 years old. We can look back with some satisfaction at what we have achieved in that time; our work with the NIHR Research Design Service, involvement in successful collaborative funding awards (most notably with NIHR and the UK MS Society), strong publications, conducting research with demonstrable societal impact and working with students. The opportunities to work with colleagues across the University and the NHS are highly valued. In this newsletter we highlight some of the achievements during the past year.

Of course there is still much to do. Our objectives for the coming year are to:

1. Continue developing our own programme of research in complex interventions (including digital health) and long term conditions.
2. Work with researchers in the University and the NHS (including public health, primary care and social care) to design and submit high quality grant applications and produce high quality research papers.
3. Work closely with other University research entities and the local NHS to help support new and experienced researchers and develop new programmes of multi-disciplinary research.
4. Continue to work in partnership with the Centre of Postgraduate Medical Research and Education (CoPMRE) and the Visiting Faculty to produce high quality collaborative research, linking in with the rest of the University as required.
5. Ensure the work of BUCRU continues to contribute to the performance indicators set by the University.

We look forward to working with you in the coming year.

**Professor Peter Thomas**  
Director (Methodology)

## A year in the life of BUCRU



# News

## Usability testing – Kirsten

In July BUCRU was fortunate to host Dr Kirsten van Kessel as part of her study leave sabbatical. Kirsten is a Clinical Psychologist and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychology at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in New Zealand. She has a particular interest and expertise in CBT and its application to mental and physical health problems. BUCRU is collaborating with Kirsten and Assoc. Prof Duncan Babbage and other researchers at AUT on a project jointly led by Kirsten and Prof Paula Kersten (University of Brighton) to develop an app for people with multiple sclerosis (MS) for the management of fatigue ('MS Energise'). Kirsten had a busy schedule during her UK visit. She and Sarah Thomas initially spent several days visiting Paula in Brighton to work on the MS Energise project. On returning to Bournemouth, Sarah and Kirsten undertook usability testing of the MS Energise app with several people with MS at the local MS centre.

During her visit to BU Kirsten gave a presentation about her research interests entitled 'Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Multiple Sclerosis Fatigue: From Individual to Technology Based Interventions'.

We are really excited that Kirsten is now a Visiting Fellow at Bournemouth University and we hope this may lead to the development of further links and collaborations with AUT, New Zealand.



## Data Champion

Sharon Docherty has been named as 'Data champion' for the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences and has undertaken a short course in Research Data Management and Sharing jointly run by the universities of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Edinburgh. If you have questions regarding the management or analysis of research data you plan to collect or have collected, you can book an appointment to see Sharon via Louise Ward (01202 961939) or pop in and see us.

## BUCRU out and about

### MS Life Event

In September Sarah Thomas gave an invited presentation as part of a session entitled 'Understanding Fatigue' at the MS Society's biennial information, lifestyle and exhibition event for people with MS called 'MS Life' (held at the ExCel Centre in London). After the session Sarah joined in with a hula hooping activity session and the MS Society captured her in action... it was great fun!



### International Clinical Trials Day

In May, Helen, Lisa, Louise and Sharon took part in the Royal Bournemouth Hospital celebrations of International Clinical Trials day. This fun day was designed to highlight some of the exciting research being done at, and in association with, the Trust. Along with the Alzheimer's Society, Stroke Association and Cancer Research UK, BUCRU had a gazebo next to the lake. It was well attended by members of the public and staff from the hospital. There was even a visit from the mayor! In addition to talking to staff members about how we can help them with their research, we highlighted how members of the public can get involved with research at all levels. Helen gave a presentation on Patient and Public Involvement, while Sharon got some competition going among visitors by offering a simple task to show how different people perceive upright.



### Festival of Learning

In June Sarah Thomas and Alison Nock delivered an event as part of the BU Festival of Learning. It was an interactive workshop to enable people to find out more about fatigue in Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and how it can be managed and provide tips that everyone can use for managing fatigue. The event was well attended and enthusiastically received.

# News from our colleagues in CoPMRE

## Visiting Faculty

CoPMRE has a visiting faculty of around 60 members which meets bi-annually to showcase some of its excellent research and education projects and to provide an opportunity for networking. This year we welcomed 8 new members: Dr Simon Crowther, Dr Tom Bartlett, Professor Taz Qureshi, Laura Purandare, Dr Sanjaya Wijeyekon, Professor Paul Taylor, Richard Dolan and Dr Kirsten van Kessel.

We held our Spring Visiting Faculty Day at Bournemouth House in May. The day was opened by Dr Malcolm McIver, Associate Dean Global Engagement who presented the BU Global Engagement Plan. This was followed by 20 poster presentations by various members of the Visiting Faculty and Dr Zoe Sheppard, Senior Lecturer in Quantitative Research Methods, Professor Peter Thomas and Dr Tamas Hickish (Co-Directors, BUCRU), Helen Allen, Patient and Public Involvement Lead (BUCRU) and Emma Frampton, PhD student. The range of posters highlighted the varied and amazing research that CoPMRE faculty members continue to undertake, with good examples of BU and NHS collaboration. Feedback was excellent, making this another successful Visiting Faculty meeting.

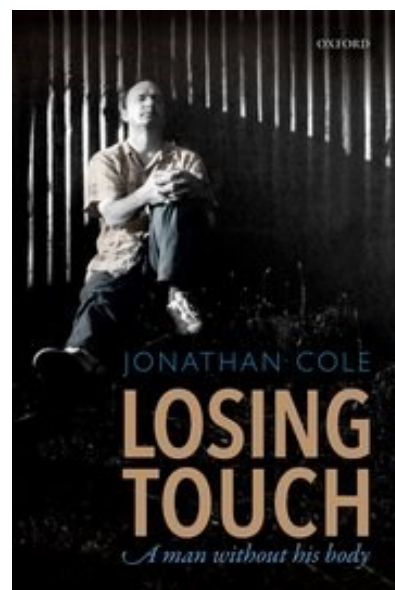
The second Faculty Day on the 24 January 2017 saw presentations from Mr Guy Nash, Consultant Colorectal Surgeon entitled 'Surgical Risk' and Mr Kevin Turner, Consultant Urological Surgeon on 'How are surgeons affected by errors and complications?' Throughout the day there were discussions on MScs in Medicine, the role of Physician Associates and Simulation Education. The day was rounded up by welcoming back Professor Paul Thompson, our retired CoPMRE Director who regaled us with his adventures across the seas.

**Audrey Dixon, CoPMRE Manager**

## Professor Jonathan Cole – new book published by Oxford University Press

Professor Jonathan Cole has published his latest book, *Losing Touch A man without his body* which shows what it is like to live without touch or movement/position sense (proprioception). To summarise, the book:

- Has a strong narrative drive and engages a wide audience in the personal biography.
- Illustrates how neuroscience is done and uncovers life in laboratories.
- Reveals life without touch or proprioception and shows what we all take for granted.
- Shows science, TV documentary and theatre overlapping and different ways of explaining to different audiences.



## Dame Yvonne Moores DBE awarded Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award by Honour Society of Nursing



Dame Yvonne Moores DBE, former CoPMRE Chair and stalwart supporter, has been awarded a Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award by the Honour Society of Nursing. Only five other people have received it in its 25-year history, including the iconic Audrey Hepburn and Princess Anne. What an amazing honour for a remarkable lady! Congratulations to Dame Yvonne for this outstanding achievement.

Dame Yvonne is a former Chief Nursing Officer for England and Director of Nursing for the Department of Health in 1992-99. She played a key role as an adviser to governments on policy and quality issues. She was a Pro-Chancellor at BU from 2006 to 2013 and a Non-Executive Director at Poole Hospital for eight years, as well as the Vice-Chairman of the Board for four years. She is Patron and Trustee of the Poole Africa Link which is supporting the development of healthcare in South Sudan, through education and training of doctors, nurses and midwives and in taking vital medical equipment to Wau Hospital.



## New appointment for Dr Christopher Boos

Dr Christopher Boos, Consultant Cardiologist at Poole Hospital NHS Trust and Visiting Fellow at BU has been appointed as a Visiting Professor at Leeds Beckett University in Sports Exercise Medicine and Cardiology.

## Dr Edward Carlton, FHSS PhD Student, Professor Ahmed Khattab, FHSS and Professor Kim Greaves, Visiting Professor, CoPMRE win 'Best Paper Award 2015' in the international journal *Heart*

A paper, *A novel diagnostic protocol to identify patients suitable for discharge after a single high-sensitivity troponin* published by Dr Edward Carlton, an FHSS PhD student and his supervisors, Prof. Ahmed Khattab (FHSS) and Prof. Kim Greaves, Visiting Professor, CoPMRE (Australia) has won the 'Heart Best Paper Award 2015'. This award is in recognition of the high quality and clinical impact of the paper. The winner for this award was chosen by the Editorial Team from the top 10 papers in each of the following three categories: downloads, citations and Altmetrics Score. Dr Edward Carlton is now working as an Emergency Medicine Consultant in Bristol.



## CoPMRE Thirteenth Annual Symposium

CoPMRE held another sell-out conference in October 2016 entitled Digital Healthcare: Shaping the Future which was opened by Professor Stephen Tee, Executive Dean for the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences. The conference explored the escalating scale and pace of digital technology in healthcare and the benefits and challenges of transformative technologies to advance care, improve clinical outcomes and enhance the patient experience.



The two keynote addresses were delivered by Cathy Francis, Director of Patients and Information, NHS England South and Theodoros Arvanitis, Professor of e-Health Innovation and Head of Research, Institute of Digital Healthcare (IDH) at WMG, University of Warwick. Other presenters included speakers from the NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group, the NHS, Bournemouth University and local enterprise. A short YouTube video can be viewed at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybjF4-geH\\_c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybjF4-geH_c) and a full report and presentations can be found on our website [www.bournemouth.ac.uk/copmre](http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/copmre).

We hope to see you at our next conference in Autumn 2017 on the topic of Simulation. Book early to secure a place!

## New publication for Professor Sam Rowlands

Professor Sam Rowlands, Visiting Professor, CoPMRE, has published an interesting article 'On being an expert witness in sexual and reproductive health' in the *Journal of Family Planning & Reproductive Health Care*. In this article Sam highlights that expert witnesses need to be able to apply appropriate legal tests to evidence, to deal with the range of expert opinion on a matter, and explain clearly what constitutes an appropriate standard of care for a clinician in their discipline and specialty. They must be aware of pitfalls such as being sued for substandard work and being reported to their professional regulator for straying outside their area of expertise. Expert witnesses must be truly independent and ideally their reports should be the same whomever they receive their instructions from.

## CoPMRE Faculty to present at FHSS Lunchtime Seminars

**15.3.17: Professor Emma King and Dr Christopher Boos**  
venue: R301, Royal London House.

- **Head to head: Cancer and the immune system**, Professor Emma King, Consultant ENT Head and Neck Surgeon, Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.
- **Cardiovascular adaptations of the human heart to high altitude** Dr Christopher Boos, Consultant Cardiologist, Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

**10.5.17 Professor Alan Breen** Venue: To be confirmed.

**Common Back Pain: What's really behind it?** Professor Alan Breen, Professor of Musculoskeletal Research BU & AECC.



## Events

### NIHR Research Funding – Seminar and Support Event (RDS-SW)

This free half-day event is directed at researchers who are considering applying to peer-reviewed funding competitions for applied health or social care research, and aims to help to improve their chance of success. It is relevant to researchers applying to any of the major health research funders, but particularly the NIHR funding schemes. For more information please see:

<http://www.rds-sw.nihr.ac.uk/research-funding-seminar.htm> They are held several times a year.

### NIHR RDS Project Review Committee

The NIHR Research Design Service Project Review Committee provides an excellent opportunity for researchers to obtain a critical review of a proposed grant application before it is sent to a funding body. The committee brings the benefit of seeing the proposal with “fresh eyes”, replicating as far as possible the way the real funding committee will consider an application. Committee members include senior research consultants who have considerable experience of obtaining research funding, resulting in comprehensive comments and advice.

### RDS National Grant Writing Retreat

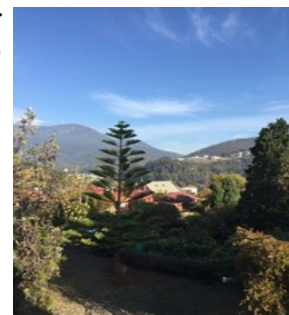
The Grant Writing Retreat provides an opportunity for research teams to develop high quality health related research proposals suitable for submission to national peer-reviewed funding schemes. The aim of the Retreat is to provide the environment and support to promote rapid progress in developing proposals over a relatively short time period. For more information see <http://www.rds-sw.nihr.ac.uk/rgwr.htm>.

## BUCRU Research programme update

In addition to providing collaboration and support to projects led by colleagues in the University and the NHS, BUCRU also has its own programme of research focussing on complex interventions and long-term conditions.

**Fatigue in Multiple Sclerosis (MS):** In previous grants Sarah Thomas and Peter Thomas have developed and evaluated the FACETS programme, a 6 week group-based intervention to support people with MS to self-manage their fatigue. Activities during 2015-16 include:

- a) Continuation of the Energise project with AUT in Auckland, New Zealand and the University of Brighton, to develop a smartphone app for people with MS fatigue. This project is progressing well with coding and interface work well advanced and some usability testing undertaken with more to follow.
- b) Collaborative grant from the MS Society (£97k), working with Kings College London to conduct systematic review and scoping work on exercise and cognitive behavioural interventions for fatigue. Project nearing conclusion.
- c) In April Sarah visited the University of Tasmania (UTAS) as a visiting scholar hosted by Assoc. Professor Ingrid van der Mei. Ingrid is a Principal Research Associate at the Menzies Institute for Medical Research and is project manager of the Australian MS Longitudinal Study. Sarah spent 3 weeks working closely with Ingrid and team at UTAS on a collaboration in the area of MS fatigue. At weekends Sarah had an opportunity for some sightseeing and explored some of Tasmania's beautiful scenery including Mount Wellington, Port Arthur and the Russell Falls.
- d) Norwegian version of FACETS adapted for an inpatient rehabilitation setting has been delivered to two groups of people with MS (led by Inger Grethe Løyning).
- e) Funding from the MS Society to conduct scoping and consultation for a digital version of FACETS.
- f) Development of a French version of FACETS working with colleagues in the International Multiple Sclerosis Partnership in Research group (iMSpire – a scientific interest group involving Universities and hospitals in the UK and France) with funding for a PhD student based in Paris. This collaboration has also led to a published protocol for a Cochrane review of adherence to disease modifying therapies.



### Mii-vitaliSe project

In research led by Sarah Thomas we have developed a physiotherapist supported intervention using the Nintendo Wii™ to help people with MS increase their activity levels. Papers from this grant are being written and BU colleague Louise Fazakarley is writing up her PhD based on this work. A volunteer, Luisa Holt, is currently supporting foundational work for another bid in this area.

### Digital Health

In a new development, Professor Tamas Hickish is leading the creation of a Digital Health Hub. The purpose is to bring together staff with an interest in digital health from across the University, the NHS and industry to work on innovations that have the potential to improve patient and public health. An example is the development and patenting of a portable device for patients to measure neuropathy during cancer treatment.

### Emotional Processing

Following publication of the Emotional Processing Scale (EPS) by Psychometric Test Publisher, Hogrefe, there has been work to support the launch and profile development of the tool, including a video, webinar and website. Volunteer Anna Stuflesser, Professor Roger Baker and Birgit Gurr, a clinical neuropsychologist from Dorset HealthCare NHS University Foundation Trust, are working with German researchers at Phillips University, Marburg on a German version of the EPS to be published by the German Office of Hogrefe.

### Perception of Visual Vertical

Sharon's research continues to investigate how clinical conditions influence our perception of vertical. In collaboration with colleagues at the Arabian Gulf University, she published a preliminary study on whether HbA<sub>1c</sub> levels can predict visual dependence for spatial orientation in Type 2 diabetic patients.

In addition, Sharon and Jeff Bagust successfully gained Seed Corn funding to test the validity and reliability of a new version of the Computerised Rod and Frame Test used to measure perception of vertical in older adults. This allowed them to employ Sophie Turnock, a recent Psychology graduate, as a Research Assistant. Data collection for this project is complete and the results being compiled for publication.

## Spotlight – Helen Allen – PPI: putting the patient voice at the heart of what we do

I work in BUCRU as the Public Patient Involvement (PPI) lead – making sure patients, carers, support groups, charities and anyone else with a vested interest in the research we are doing can have their say in what is researched – and how we go about it. Half of my role is as advisor for the South West branch of the Research Design Service (SW RDS). Along with colleagues Peter Thomas, Sarah Thomas and Sharon Docherty we support fellow academics and local clinicians to put together peer-reviewed grant applications. PPI is considered from the germ of an idea through to post award and well beyond. I'm also on the carer and service user (CSUP) academic steering group which is finding creative ways of working together and sharing resources across the university.

As a trained nurse, midwife and psychologist I feel I am going back to my roots to encourage and support appropriate individuals to give honest and constructive feedback on research we are planning and conducting. Although it's great to have our work endorsed it's equally if not more valuable to have it's flaws and limitations brought to our attention. I love the enthusiasm of the people we work with, and the variety of ways we can work with them – small groups, one to one meetings, teleconferences, emails and phone calls – we use them all!

Whether we signpost and advise researchers on PPI or are more actively involved in service user consultations is decided on a case-by-case basis. We always prioritise our advisors' preferred method of working. I know of a colleague who conducted a service user consultation via email with a passenger on a cruise ship, but I personally haven't had anything as exciting as that! Talking to patients waiting in outpatient departments and to new mums cradling new-borns at home is as exciting as it's been for me! Still, it was a welcome reminder that real world research is all about engaging with people on their terms – and not ours.

PPI input has suggested a variety of changes to several projects, including which photos and text would be most appropriate in a patient self management project, changing the content of the patient information sheet, and proposing that invasive procedures planned for a particular project would be unacceptable to the participants.

I think the concept of PPI at Bournemouth University is now well established and the increasing demand for it shows researchers here recognise the invaluable contribution it can make. PPI has come of age!





## Departures and arrivals



Lisa joined BUCRU as Research Facilitator in May 2013. She has very much been the 'matchmaker' between BUCRU and local NHS Trusts and BU.

Her role has been quite varied; from searching for suitable funders for a research project to assisting with costings, being the marketing lead for the unit and attending many events to network and promote the unit.

She is being seconded to RKEO (Research Knowledge and Exchange Office) for up to 12 months. BUCRU wishes her well in her new role - we'll miss her knowledge and experience greatly. However, we're taking comfort in the fact it's more of a 'See you later' than a goodbye. We welcome Andy Powell who is filling the post during Lisa's secondment. Please keep an eye out on the blogs for introduction of our new colleague.

## BUCRU 2016 Publications

Abbey, G., Thompson, S.B.N. and **Hickish, T.**, 2016. A meta-analysis of prevalence rates and moderating factors for cancer-related post-traumatic stress disorder. *Psychooncology*, 24 (4), 371-381.

Ali, H.R., **Hickish, T.** et al., 2016. Computational pathology of pre-treatment biopsies identifies lymphocyte density as a predictor of response to neoadjuvant chemotherapy in breast cancer. *Breast Cancer Research*, 18 (1).

Davis, Z., Forconi, F., Parker, A., Gardiner, A., **Thomas, P.**, Catovsky, D., Rose-Zerilli, M., Strefford, J.C. and Oscier, D., 2016. The outcome of Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia patients with 97% IGHV gene identity to germline is distinct from cases with <97% identity and similar to those with 98% identity. *British Journal of Haematology*, 173 (1), 127-136.

Pratt, G., **Thomas, P.** et al., 2016. Evaluation of serum markers in the LRF CLL4 trial:  $\beta$ 2-microglobulin but not serum free light chains, is an independent marker of overall survival. *Leukemia and Lymphoma*, 57 (10), 2342-2350.

Pritchard, C., **Hickish, T.**, Rosenorn-Lanng, E. and Wallace, M., 2016. Comparing UK and 20 Western countries' efficiency in reducing adult (55-74) cancer and total mortality rates 1989-2010: Cause for cautious celebration? A population-based study. *JRSM open*, 7 (6), 2054270416635036.

Pugh, S.A., **Hickish, T.** et al., 2016. Patterns of progression, treatment of progressive disease and post-progression survival in the New EPOC study. *British Journal of Cancer*, 115 (4), 420-424.

Razzak, R.A., Bagust, J., **Docherty**, Hussein, W., Hassan, Z., Al-Kafaji, G. and Alotaibi, A.M., 2016. A preliminary study on whether HbA1c levels can predict visual dependence for spatial orientation in asymptomatic Type 2 diabetic patients. *International Journal of Diabetes Research*, 5 (3), 54-61.

Rehman, T., **Battcock, T.** and Black, D., 2016. Post-CCT fellowship pilot programme: The physician experience. *British Journal of Hospital Medicine*, 77, 589-591.

\*2015 but not in previous newsletter - **Thomas, S.**, **Kersten, P.** and **Thomas, P.W.**, 2015. The Multiple Sclerosis-Fatigue Self-Efficacy (MS-FSE) scale: initial validation. *Clinical Rehabilitation*, 29 (4), 376-387.

\*2015 but not in previous newsletter - **Thomas, S.**, Thomas, S., Fazakarley, L., **Thomas, P.W.** et al., 2015. Mii-vitaliSe - Development of a physiotherapist-supported Nintendo Wii™ intervention to encourage people with multiple sclerosis to become more active in the home. *Multiple Sclerosis Journal* 21; 775

## Grants won in 2016

March 2016 - Baker R, Wedderburn C, Thomas P, Thomas S. **Funder:** Faculty of Health and Social Sciences (Seed corn); **Project Title:** GP Resilience. **Amount:** £1300

March 2016 - Thomas S, Thomas P, Kersten P, van Kessel K, Babbage D, Sezier A. **Funder:** Faculty of Health and Social Sciences (Seedcorn); **Project Title:** Energise - Usability testing of a fatigue management app for people with multiple sclerosis. **Amount:** £1560.

March 2016 - Docherty S and Bagust J **Funder:** Faculty of Health and Social Sciences (Seed corn); **Project Title:** Making the computerised rod and frame task easier to understand?; **Amount:** £2784

December 2016 - Thomas S, Thomas PW, Kersten P, Gay M-CG, Davies Smith A, Hourihan S, Roberts F, Stanley K. **Funder:** Information and Support Department MS Society. **Project Title:** cFACETS: Scoping and consultation. **Amount:** £42,000

## How can we help?

BUCRU is a model for supporting and conducting health-related research in Dorset. We support researchers to improve the quality, quantity and efficiency of research across the University and local National Health Service (NHS) Trusts. We do this through: Helping researchers from the University and from the NHS with developing high quality applications for external research funding (including small grants) – free of charge, ongoing involvement in funded research projects, a “pay-as-you-go” research service for other projects, developing our own research programme.

BUCRU supports Bournemouth University staff and researchers working locally in the NHS. There are no restrictions on topic area or professional background of the researcher. BUCRU is partly funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and incorporates the Dorset office of the NIHR Research Design Service.

## Free initial discussion

We offer up to two hours of free research consultancy time to NHS colleagues or businesses in Dorset. We are keen to continue supporting the development of research and researchers in Dorset. For larger projects a grant application is often needed to secure funding, and BUCRU (via the NIHR Research Design Service) can help with that. Sometimes a grant application isn't the right approach; for example, for new researchers, small projects, projects that have a primarily local focus, collection of feasibility or pilot data. In these situations we offer a “pay-as-you-go” service aimed at the NHS and the commercial sector in areas such as study design, quantitative methodology, statistics, patient and public involvement and general research know-how. We are now offering a free initial discussion - this is often enough time to provide sufficient advice to get a project started in the right direction or to get advice on data analysis. Please get in touch if you would like to take up this offer.

## Contact details

**Email:** [BUCRU@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:BUCRU@bournemouth.ac.uk) **Tel:** 01202 961939

**Web:** [www.bournemouth.ac.uk/bucru](http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/bucru) **Follow us on Twitter:** @BU\_CRU

If you would like us to come to your event, we would be happy to provide more information on what we can offer your team.