

Community and Health Research Unit Summer Newsletter 2023



Collaborative team led by School of Geography, with School of Computing, LIIRH and CaHRU win Wellcome Data Science Ideathon on climate and health

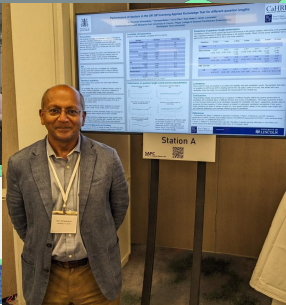
A team from the University of Lincoln came first in the Climate and Health section of the Wellcome Data Science Ideathon which took place from 10-12 July at the Wellcome Institute in London. This was a competition involving 24 academic teams and almost 100 researchers from institutions across the United Kingdom supported to investigate the link between climate and health. The team, led by Dr Harriet Moore (right) also included Prof Edward Hanna (School of Geography), Dr John Atanbori (School of Computing), Prof Mark Gussy (LIIRH) and Prof Niro Siriwardena (CaHRU).

The team are researching the link between methane and health (respiratory and mental health) emergencies building on work led by Dr Moore over the past two years. This addresses Wellcome's strategic priorities around mental health, infectious disease and climate and health and their wish to bring researchers from different disciplines together to tackle this important global challenge.

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CaHRU studies presented at 51st Society of Academic Primary Care Annual Scientific Meeting in Brighton in July 2023



Members of the CaHRU team, Despina Laparidou, Dr Julie Pattinson and Prof Niro Siriwardena joined primary care scientists from the UK and internationally at the 51st Society for Academic Primary Care Annual Scientific Meeting in Brighton 18-20 July 2023 to present their work.

The conference theme of 'Informed and inclusive primary care' included oral presentations from the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration East Midlands REACH (Researching Emergency Ambulances in Care Homes) study and studies of performance of doctors in the UK MRCGP licensing examination for general practice.

There were two presentations from the team from the REACH study including two oral presentations on the first day of the conference, 'A qualitative study of ambulance personnel, care staff and service users' experiences and perceptions of emergency care in care homes' (Despina Laparidou) and 'Predictors of conveyance of care home residents to hospital by ambulance services for medical emergencies' (Niro Siriwardena).

On the second day followed three presentations including, 'Exploring perceptions of doctors in GP specialty training with specific learning difficulties undertaking clinical and work place-based assessments for GP licensing: interview study' (Julie Pattinson) 'Performance of doctors with specific learning difficulties in the UK GP licensing Applied Knowledge Test data interpretation questions' (Niro Siriwardena), and a poster on 'Performance of doctors in the UK GP licensing Applied Knowledge Test for different question lengths' (Niro Siriwardena).

The conference and presentations were well attended and staff were pleased to present on behalf of the research teams involved.

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CaHRU and Lincoln Clinical Trials Unit partners in new NIHR Research Support Service (RSS) East Midlands

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) has awarded £8.5 million to an East Midlands partnership, including CaHRU and LinCTU, to deliver one of eight hubs of the new NIHR Research Support Service (RSS). The partnership will work with research teams across England to develop and deliver ground-breaking health and social care research. The NIHR Research Support Service (RSS) will provide researchers, especially those applying for and in receipt of NIHR funding, access to support, advice and expertise in clinical and applied health and care research.

Research Support Service Hub Director, Martin Williams, said: "We are delighted that the National Institute for Health and Care Research has recognised the strength and quality of our partnership. This prestigious award demonstrates the high reputation of the staff and leadership teams of our member groups and institutions. We look forward to working with research teams across the country to deliver truly innovative research that will make a positive difference to people's health and care."

The new service will begin on 1 October 2023. Further information about the NIHR Research Support Service can be found [here](#):

Partner Research Units, Groups and Centres

Derby Clinical Trials Support Unit, University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHSFT
Derbyshire County Council

Lincoln Clinical Trials Unit, University of Lincoln
Nottingham Clinical Trials Unit, University of Nottingham

Biostatistics Research Group, University of Leicester
Centre for Environmental Health and Sustainability, University of Leicester

Centre for Ethnic Health Research, University of Leicester
Centre for Healthcare Equipment & Technology Adoption, Nottingham University Hospitals
NHS Trust

Centre for Lifestyle Medicine and Behaviour, Loughborough University
Community and Health Research Unit, University of Lincoln

Development Centre for Population Health, University of Leicester
Department of Population Health Sciences, University of Leicester
Diabetes Research Centre, University of Leicester

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CaHRU and Lincoln Clinical Trials Unit partners in new NIHR Research Support Service (RSS) East Midlands

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Healthy Ageing Research Group, University of Lincoln
Injury Epidemiology and Prevention Research Group, University of Nottingham
Institute for Environmental Futures, University of Leicester
Institute of Mental Health, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
and University of Nottingham
Lifespan and Population Health Unit, University of Nottingham
Lifestyle & Health Research Group, University of Leicester
MindTech MedTech and In-vitro diagnostic Co-operative, University of
Nottingham
National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine, Loughborough University
Real World Evidence Unit, University of Leicester
Social Science, Applied Healthcare and Improvement Research Group,
University of Leicester
The mission of the National Institute for Health and Care
Research (NIHR) is to improve the health and wealth of the nation through
research by:

- Funding high quality, timely research that benefits the NHS, public health and social care;
- Investing in world-class expertise, facilities and a skilled delivery workforce to translate discoveries into improved treatments and services;
- Partnering with patients, service users, carers and communities, improving the relevance, quality and impact of our research;
- Attracting, training and supporting the best researchers to tackle complex health and social care challenges;
- Collaborating with other public funders, charities and industry to help shape a cohesive and globally competitive research system;
- Funding applied global health research and training to meet the needs of the poorest people in low- and middle-income countries.

NIHR is funded by the Department of Health and Social Care. Its work in low- and middle-income countries is principally funded through UK Aid from the UK government.

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Dr Shihua Zhu joins CaHRU as Senior Research Fellow in Econometrics and Health Economics

Dr Shihua Zhu joined the Community and Health Research Unit

and the Lincoln Clinical Trials Unit in June 2023. Shihua is a Senior Research Fellow in Econometrics and Health Economics. His expertise lies in economic evaluations alongside clinical trials, statistics and mathematical models. Dr Zhu has completed more than 10 economic evaluations alongside large scale random control trials. He has rich experience in conducting decision analytic models used in health care evaluation including Markov models, discrete event simulation models and population dynamic models. Zhu has published widely in high prestigious journals including *The Lancet*, *BMJ*, *PLOS One* and *HTA Reports*. Before joining CaHRU, Dr Zhu worked as a Senior Research Fellow in Health Economics at the Academic Unit of Primary Care and Population Sciences, University of Southampton. He has worked on many economic evaluations alongside clinical trials and analysis of large datasets including individual patient data of trials and observational studies, routinely collected electronic health records.

He was awarded an HTA trainee fellowship at the University of Aberdeen in 2007 after his PhD in geometric modelling at the University of Birmingham.



Dr Tanja Kleinhappel joins Lincoln Clinical Trials Unit

Tanja joined the Lincoln Clinical Trials Unit (LincCTU) in August 2023 as a Clinical Trials Manager.

She will be involved in the management of relational databases and the data management for clinical and other research trials within the LinCTU.

Prior to joining, Tanja obtained theoretical and practical research experience across various fields within biology, including behavioural ecology, animal cognition and welfare by working across different research labs. After studying for her BSc in Behaviour at the University of Graz and her MSc in Neurobiology, behaviour and cognition at the University of Vienna in Austria, Tanja obtained her PhD at the University of Lincoln in 2015. She investigated the causes and consequences of animal social network structure using fish as a model species, by developing custom Matlab code to track animals and analyse their social behaviour under different environmental conditions. After this she briefly worked as a research fellow for a small local agricultural company conducting R&D work as well as efficacy trials on plants and crops. In 2016 Tanja started a postdoctoral research fellowship funded by the NC3Rs, investigating automated predictive welfare assessments in groups of fish. During this time, she gained more experience with coding in Matlab, Python and R for data collection and statistical analysis. She is excited to join the LinCTU team, working on a variety of projects and collaborating with internal and external researchers.

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CaHRU presents two papers at the XX World Congress of Sociology in Melbourne, Australia, 25 June – 01 July 2023

Dr Gupteswar Patel, a member of the CaHRU team, presented two papers from the NIHR-funded Community First Responder project at the XX World Congress of Sociology in Melbourne, Australia, from 25 June to 01 July 2023.

his quadrennial conference brought together academicians, experts, and researchers from around the world to discuss the topic of “Resurgent Authoritarianism: Sociology of New Entanglements in Religions, Politics, and Economics.”

In addition to disseminating the project’s findings, Dr Patel’s presentations reinforced the symbiotic relationship between sociology and health disciplines. Dr Patel presented two papers at the conference that illustrated crucial aspects of power dynamics in Community First Responder (CFR) provisions in conjunction with sociological factors. These papers explored the power relationships between CFRs, ambulance clinicians, and the

ambulance services as state institutions, demonstrating the complexities of power dynamics and their implications for the delivery of prehospital care. These investigations also contributed to a greater understanding of the complexities of governance and emphasised the importance of sociological considerations in CFR provisions.

Paper 1. Power Dynamics in Out-of-Hospital Emergency Care: The Community First Responder – Ambulance Clinician Relationship in the United Kingdom.[GPI]

Sub-theme: Oppressors or Saviours? The Role of Professions in a Changing World

This oral presentation investigated the relationships between CFRs and ambulance clinicians in out-of-hospital emergency settings. This paper examined the role of professional power in establishing a hierarchy within the division of labour in out-of-hospital contexts where both volunteer CFRs and professional ambulance clinicians attended to patients and delivered prehospital care.

Paper 2: Role of Community First Responders during the Pandemic in England; An Understanding of Field and Power Dynamics[GPI]

Sub-theme: COVID-19 Pandemic and Global Health Workforce Policies and Governance: Challenges and Issues at the Forefront.

This paper examined how ambulance services as state institutions modify the scope of practice for CFRs while protecting institutional interests amidst changing health system priorities during the Covid-19 pandemic. It examines the dynamics of decision-making, how health institutions adapt and respond to the evolving challenges posed by the pandemic, as well as the implications for CFRs.

The XX World Congress of Sociology, held in Melbourne, Australia, provided an interdisciplinary forum to highlight the research contributions to Health Sociology.

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Despina Lapidou presenting at the 18th European Congress of Psychology

Despina Lapidou, Research Assistant and part-time PhD student at CaHRU, recently attended the 18th European Congress of Psychology (ECP) at the Brighton Centre in Brighton (3-6 July 2023) and presented the findings of one of her PhD studies, called "The Stressor-Distress Relationship within Informal Carers of People with Dementia: Exploring the Role of Potential Cognitive Mediators and Moderators".

This year's theme for the conference was "Psychology: Uniting communities for a sustainable world" and the scientific programme included a combination of keynotes, 3-minute and 7-minute oral presentations, workshops, and posters. There were various thematic streams, including, but not limited to, Climate change and sustainability; Clinical psychology; Community psychology; Cyberpsychology; Forensic psychology; Political psychology and democracy; and Psychological responses to the pandemic.

One other conference theme was Geropsychology. Despina's 3-minute Thisis presentation discussed the findings of one of her studies, an online questionnaire study, which explores the relationship between stressors (specifically the physical, memory and behavioural problems of people living with dementia) and informal carer distress, looking at cognitive factors that mediate or moderate this relationship and especially the carers' intrusive thoughts and cognitive coping strategies.

The Conference came to an end with Thursday's Closing Ceremony and the promise to meet again in 2025 for an even more exciting ECP Conference in Paphos, Cyprus!



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Celebrating the Completion of a PhD: Dr Guptaeswar Patel



The pursuit of knowledge that began years ago with passion and dedication has finally achieved another milestone. I am thrilled to share the completion of my PhD from the University of Newcastle, Australia.

The culmination of my PhD voyage was a defining moment characterised by pride, pleasure, and relief upon receiving my hard-earned PhD. The overwhelming sense of accomplishment was the result of years of hard work and commitment being recognised. The ceremony held in the Great Hall on the Callaghan campus of the University of Newcastle served as a visceral reminder of the magnitude of this accomplishment and becoming the first doctorate in my family.

My research, an endeavour of dedication that has formed my academic identity, rests at the core of this voyage. My study aimed to explore how health systems and policy contextual factors influence integration of complementary and alternative medicine in India, how CAM practitioners implement their unique healthcare philosophies in biomedical settings and the implications of integration for primary healthcare services.

The first paper from my PhD research was published in the journal *Social Science and Medicine* and received the best HDR publication award from the Societies, Cultures, and Human Services, University of Newcastle, Australia, in 2021.

Completing my PhD is not my endpoint but rather a steppingstone towards new prospects. I am thrilled and pleased with my current postdoctoral role at the Community and Health Research Unit, University of Lincoln, United Kingdom. My postdoctoral research with Professor Niro Siriwardena and the CaHRU team has been exceptional in continued learning, exploration, and contribution to advancing healthcare scholarship, especially in the domains of emergency and prehospital care.

As I begin this new chapter, I am honoured and eager to contribute to the academic inquiry in the UK and beyond.