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Health Services

Health Services management research is led by Professor Wallace, Professor Brian Toft and Dr Louise Moody. It aims to improve the safety and effectiveness of services. Research has improved the methods of organisational learning from patient safety incidents. Professor Toft has developed an evaluated online Diploma in Root Cause Analysis aimed at those who undertake investigations into serious adverse incidents. Organisational research by Christine Grant has developed psychometric scales and a consultancy tool to improve e-working and wellbeing.

Cancer Consultations

Another group, Decision Navigation in Cancer Consultations, is based in the Edinburgh Cancer Centre working with Macmillan Cancer Care, and is trialing decision-navigation interventions to

improve cancer consultations. This is led by Dr Belinda Hacking and Professor Wallace.

Breastfeeding

The Breastfeeding group, led by Professor Wallace and Susan Law, has developed the Coventry University Breastfeeding Assessment (CUBA), Breastfeeding Workbook and Essential Skills DVD which are sold to health service practitioners via the Centre's commercial arm Health Behaviour Research Limited (www.healthbehaviourresearch.co.uk).

The products provide an integrated evidence-based system for hospitals, community services and children's centres to train their staff in breastfeeding support skills consistent with UNICEF's Baby Friendly initiative accreditation. The system has been trialed in the West Midlands, Canada and the USA and there are plans to test the system in China.

Long Term Conditions

The Long Term Conditions Group, led by Dr Andy Turner, develops interventions to promote self-management for people living with a wide range of long-term conditions and their carers. The development of self-management interventions for people living with early stage dementia addresses the National Dementia Strategy objectives around earlier provision of care and interventions to support independence.

In partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support, the group has designed several self-management interventions for cancer survivors, addressing the National Cancer Survivorship Initiative policy.

MUMS & MS (www.mumsandms.org.uk) is a web-based intervention for women with MS and their partners with a source of information about various aspects of their condition in relation to childbearing, pregnancy and post partum.

In association with the Long Term Conditions Group, Professor Wallace has evaluated the Health Foundation's Co-creating Health initiative, which spans individual, practitioner and service support for self management of long-term conditions.

i For more information visit www.coventry.ac.uk or www.healthbehaviourresearch.co.uk or call 01203 610000 (ext 1400) or 01203 610000 (ext 1400)

Health Psychology



Engaging students in the research agenda is an important part of the learning experience at

Coventry. One example of how this works successfully is the MSc in Health Psychology which has a strong relationship with the Health & Lifestyle Interventions ARC.

Since the MSc started in 1997 students have been engaged in real-world research projects through the ARC forming their dissertations.

This has culminated in a range of successful research outputs from MSc graduates including many conference presentations and peer-reviewed journal publications.

Recently a graduate was published in peer-reviewed publication, the *Journal of Advanced Nursing* (Galbraith & Brown, 2011) reviewing the evidence for interventions designed to reduce stress among student nurses.

The success of this approach has led to the recent development of a dedicated work experience component of the MSc programme which allows students to choose to engage with research centre programmes and benefit from topic-specific expertise through a second route.

Currently students are working with staff on projects about increasing exercise and addressing obesity, addressing the cultural practice of Female Genital Mutilation and its elimination, the management

of long-term conditions and enhancing sexual health.

MSc student Liz Cooper is evaluating current opportunistic Chlamydia screening practices with the aim of enhancing staff training and screening uptake among 16-24 year-olds.

"Working with the research centre staff and making use of their knowledge and experience in this field is really helping me to apply rigorous research methodologies and the theory and evidence base to a real world issue that's of interest to me," said Liz.

MSc graduates have also secured employment or PhDs at the Centre. This means the relationship continues to provide important research evidence and practical intervention solutions for enhancing health beyond the remit of postgraduate study.

Senior Researcher Katie Newby (pictured above left) conducted her dissertation with staff at the centre in 2003 and started work there after graduation. Katie has gone on to successfully win a range of funding tenders, and produce many publications. She said: "My work is very varied and I find the strong links we have developed with local Government and NHS colleagues means our research has genuine impact on practice.

"The experience I now have has meant I've recently achieved registered Health Psychologist status through the Health Professions Council," said Katie.

i For more information about the MSc Health Psychology visit www.coventry.ac.uk/postgrad

Putting lives back on track

Work in the Health and Lifestyle Interventions Applied Research Centre improves wellbeing and health services, explains its **Director Professor Louise Wallace**

Effective intervention is the key to tackling many of society's health problems. Whether through encouraging behaviour change in individuals, or making improvements in health services management, the Applied Research Centre in Health and Lifestyle Interventions uses health psychology as the basis for its work in identifying areas where change needs to happen and developing techniques to implement it.

The Centre, which has 40 staff, postgraduate students and Visiting Fellows, uses systematic methods to develop and evaluate health behaviour and organisational interventions to improve health and health services.

Research spans evidence reviews, intervention development via quantitative and qualitative primary research, intervention testing, for example by RCTs, implementation and evaluation, quality improvement, consultancy and knowledge transfer.

But organisations and individuals do not necessarily have to be treated separately. The centre has many projects in which the two programmes are combined since interventions may be targeted at the level of individual peoples' health behaviour and the clinical and communication practices of healthcare staff and their services.



Studies in Adolescent Sexual Health (SASH)

The Studies in Adolescent Sexual Health (SASH) group led by Dr Katherine Brown, develops and evaluates interventions to enhance sexual health and wellbeing, particularly of young people. Projects include the development of a 'serious game' and other online resources to help parents in Coventry and Warwickshire communicate with their children about relationships and sex (www.besavvy.org.uk). In North Warwickshire, there is an online planning intervention designed to enhance contraceptive use in motivated adolescents attending sexual health



drop-in clinics (visit the website www.healthinterventions.co.uk)

The Health Protection Agency is funding a teaching resource for schoolchildren about the risk of Chlamydia (visit <http://e-bug.eu>).

POINT

The Physical activity and Obesity INterventions (POINT) group, is led by Professor David French and develops and evaluates interventions to promote physical activity (for example walking) and to prevent or reduce maternal obesity.

A Medical Research Council funded study has developed and evaluated an intervention to promote walking, to be delivered by nurses in primary care. The study addresses the lack of evidence identified by NICE and the group is working with Coventry City Council to develop an evidence base for its walking group programme, including developing training materials for walk leaders. POINT's work has been presented as keynote presentations at national health psychology conferences, including the British Psychological Society (BPS) Division of Health Psychology and the BPS Scottish Division of Health Psychology, and as invited presentations at multidisciplinary scientific conferences, such as the UK Society of Behavioural Medicine, Heart UK and the German Centre of Gerontology.

MRC Medical Research Council

