

In brief:

- A systematic review on anxiety scales used in pregnancy, authored by the Unit's Andrea Sinesi, Margaret Maxwell and Helen Cheyne, was among the most read articles on the *BJPsych Open* and was picked up by several news outlets.
- Julie Cowie attended the International BMJ Quality & Safety Forum, 27th-29th March. In addition to a poster presentation, Julie was one of six invited to host a table at a world café event at the accompanying symposium, where she presented results on a recently completed systematic review of the literature on sustainability of hospital-based interventions.
- Dougie McPhail a part time PhD student and UK listed Mindfulness teacher provided an experiential mindfulness workshop to members of the NMAHP Research Unit at the last quarterly meeting in March, outlining how mindfulness practice can reduce stress and anxiety in academic staff.

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PROPEL: Implementing PFMT. By Dr Karen Berry

We are taught that Randomised Control Trial (RCT) evidence is the gold standard within healthcare research. However, despite the POPPY trial⁽¹⁾ showing pelvic floor muscle training (PFMT) should be used as a first line of treatment for women with pelvic organ prolapse this is still not standard practice nine years on. This may be due, in part, to the limited numbers of specialist physiotherapists who could deliver PFMT to women. The implementation of research findings doesn't just happen, it takes work and often research to understand how findings can be implemented in a real world setting. PROPEL sought to

address the implementation problem by testing different models of PFMT delivery, using different staff groups/skill mixes⁽²⁾. These models were assessed using a realist evaluation to understand what worked, for who, and in what context. At the same time we carried out a robust outcomes study of participating women, using the same outcomes as the original POPPY trial, to assess if their outcomes were similar or within an acceptable range. We have now successfully completed the PROPEL study, with positive findings. The next step was to make these findings known to those concerned with women's health and to



discuss how they might help wider implementation of PFMT. We held two large and successful dissemination events (London and Glasgow) involving a range of clinicians, women with prolapse, and other interested parties. Our final report is currently with the funder which we hope to publish soon. Watch this space!

The OPAL trial. By Prof. Suzanne Hagen

Urinary incontinence is a common problem for women and pelvic floor muscle exercises are an effective treatment. The OPAL trial looked at the benefits of using a biofeedback unit, which allows women to visualise their muscles working. We aimed to find out if pelvic floor muscle exercises, with biofeedback, help women to exercise correctly and more intensively, resulting in more improvement in continence than doing the exercises alone. We also wanted to find whether pelvic floor muscle exercises with biofeedback was more expensive than pelvic floor muscle exercise alone.



From February 2014 to July 2016 we recruited 600 women with urinary incontinence from 23 centres across the UK. Half of the women were chosen at random to use the biofeedback unit when exercising their pelvic floor muscles (biofeedback plus exercise group); the other half exercised without this

unit (exercise group). Participants attended appointments and received instruction on how to exercise the pelvic floor muscles correctly, and how to use the biofeedback unit if appropriate. Participants provided information at the start of the trial, and completed exercise diaries and questionnaires at various times throughout (after 6 months, 1 year and 2 years). We looked at differences in incontinence between the groups after 2 years in the trial. We hope to share the results in this newsletter later this year. The OPAL Trial was funded by the NIHR programme (project number 11/71/03).

Talking reviews @ The Cochrane Symposium. By Alex Pollock



The 2019 annual Cochrane UK and Cochrane Ireland symposium, held in Oxford on 21st and 22nd March, was attended by Alex Pollock, who contributed to three of the four conference sessions. Alex's main presentation summarised the recent work of the ACTIVE project, which is focussed on methods of involving people within systematic reviews, and introduced the 'Involving People' online learning resource, a key output from the ACTIVE project. During the discussion which followed, Alex highlighted the

importance of recognising that, while involving people is important, to ensure that Cochrane reviews are relevant people may wish to get involved in different ways and there is no singular solution to involvement.

A group of around 70 people came together in a workshop to explore how meaningful involvement could become a reality for Cochrane and Cochrane reviews. Facilitated by Cochrane's Consumer Engagement Officer, Richard Morley, with Alex leading focussed discussions around how authors may successfully involve people in their systematic reviews. Participants agreed top

activities required to support involvement included; compulsory reporting of involvement, a focus on outcomes of importance to patients, carers, family members and health professionals, and training and support for involvement. Day 2 saw Alex – in collaboration with Prof Frederike van Wijck from Glasgow Caledonian University - lead a workshop focussed on overviews of reviews, facilitating some lively discussion relating to the potential impact of overviews on patient care. This workshop built on a paper that the two have recently written for a special edition of the European Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Recent publications

In our last edition we were able to list some of our most recent publications however, we have too many over the past three months to be able to list them all here! There were 18 new publications from the following authors, ranging from PhD students to Professors: **Calvey, E. • Cheyne, H. • Cowie, J. • Duncan, E. • Elders, A., • France, E • Gilmour, L. • Hagen, S • Hoddinott, P • Maxwell, M • McClurg, D. • Semple, K.** These papers cover a wide range of topics and were all co-authored with many colleagues we have collaborated with both nationally, and internationally. The full list and links to the papers is available at: <https://www.nmahp-ru.ac.uk/research/publications/>

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Directors Blog:

Welcome to our second newsletter for 2019. One of our next key goals for the NMAHP Research Unit is to raise our international profile and showcase and share our expertise across the globe. There is so much to report on this that we are creating a new section on our website which will be visible in the coming weeks. This includes: international honorary appointments in prestigious Universities; Chairing international committees; international awards; on-going and developing international research collaborations, and particularly new collaborations in response to the Global Health Challenges initiatives and priorities.

In respect of the Global Health Challenges work, Dr Edward Duncan has been conducting action research among communities in Malawi to develop a community-based prevention and first-response programme of interventions to reduce traffic related trauma in Malawi and other sub-Saharan African countries. We are also developing a partnership in Malaysia (to expand to other countries in South East Asia) in the area of maternal and child mental health and wellbeing.

We look forward to reporting on these initiatives as they develop.

Best Wishes, Margaret Maxwell.

