

Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care for Birmingham & Black Country (CLAHRC-BBC)



Autumn 2010 Issue

General News

CLAHRC-BBC has introduced 55 new appointments in to the local economy since October 2008. Additionally, CLAHRC-BBC currently supports a further 29 people already in-post and funds 9 PhD studentships and 2 fellowships. Through collaboration with partner organisations, including industry and charities, we also support a further 4 fellowships. Please see the 'Who Am I' section to meet some of our faculty.

Mark Samuels, MD of the NIHR Office for Clinical Research Infrastructure (NOCRI) comes to Birmingham on 3rd November 2010 to deliver a seminar to clinicians, managers and academics as part of the BCRA seminar series. The NOCRI mission is 'to enhance and promote the nation's reputation as a world-class centre for applied clinical research'. Please see the NOCRI site at <http://www.nihr.ac.uk/infrastructure/Pages/NIHROfficeforClinicalResearchInfrastructure.aspx> for more information. Further details about the seminar can be found at the events page of the BCRA website at <http://www.bcra.uk.net/>.

CLAHRC-BBC has established a Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Panel and Forum. The role of the PPI panel is strategic and advisory and aims to develop PPI activities within each of our nine themes. The role of the forum is operational and developmental. The next PPI Forum is on the 30th September 2010 and is open to CLAHRC-BBC personnel and colleagues with a particular interest in this area. If you would like to join the next PPI Forum please contact Alan Hargreaves (a.p.hargreaves@bham.ac.uk).

CLAHRC-BBC will hold its second dissemination event on 1st February 2011. The event will be held at the old library in the custard factory and will include exhibitions from our nine research or implementation themes. Please visit our website at www.clahrc-bbc.nihr.ac.uk for more information or sign-up to our mailing list to hear our latest news. **To subscribe to our**

mailing list please send an e-mail to: majordomo@bham.ac.uk containing the text: 'subscribe clahrc' as the first two lines of the message (NOT the subject - which is ignored).

Latest News from our Themes

A trial to evaluate the effectiveness of a pregnancy outreach worker (POW) service in Birmingham is underway. Researchers at University of Birmingham working for our maternity theme (5: Redesigned maternity support services for multi-ethnic disadvantaged groups) have started recruiting women, identified as having complex social needs, to the trial. At the time of writing 67 women have been recruited to participate in the trial.

The baseline phase of the **Theme 1 (From structure to function: Health service redesign)** project has recently been completed. During this phase 77 in-depth interviews were undertaken, transcribed and analysed to provide an initial snap-shot of events at three NHS Trusts (University Hospital's Birmingham, Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital and Walsall Hospital). The full report can be downloaded at http://medweb4.bham.ac.uk/websites/bcra/clahrc/research-projects/theme1/research_themes_1_dissemination.html.

A CLAHRC-BBC press release covering **Theme 3 (Early detection and interventions in psychosis)** has been released this month. This research aims to reduce the delay between the onset of symptoms and effective treatment for individuals with psychosis. The delay in untreated psychosis (DUP) currently stands at about a year in Birmingham, but the research team are aiming to reduce this to just three months. See http://medweb4.bham.ac.uk/websites/bcra/clahrc/research-projects/theme3/research_themes_3_dissemination.html for the full press release.

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"Improving our health by translating research evidence into local NHS practice"

Dissemination Highlights

Professor Richard Lilford was interviewed recently on BBC radio 4 'more or less - behind the statistics' programme presented by Tim Harford [28th May 2010] in regards to his publication in the BMJ [2010;340:955-957] on "Using hospital mortality rates to judge hospital performance: a bad idea that just won't go away". This work is linked to one of our cross-cutting topics led by Professor Lilford (**Epistemology and methodology**).

Congratulations to **Gemma Health** working at Birmingham Children's Hospital on **Theme 2 (Evaluation of paediatric outreach services)** who won a prize for her poster

"Paediatric satellite services: a qualitative study exploring the concept of 'Health Space'" presented at the University of Birmingham Poster Conference on 16th June 2010.

Dr Jamie Coleman has been busy disseminating the work of **Theme 9 (Improving patient safety through information technology)** and has presented at several conferences including a talk at the National ePrescribing Forum, February 2010 on "What does success look like? Additional benefits to support practice in electronic prescribing".



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External Funding

One of CLAHRC-BBC core aims is to foster a culture of collaborative applied health research and evaluation in our region and beyond. We are doing this through a number of mechanisms, including submitting additional collaborative grant applications.

To date, CLAHRC-BBC has secured an additional £5,917,466 and €334,000 of funding linked to our nine themes and two cross-cutting topics. Key success include:

Professor Max Birchwood and colleagues have been successful in obtaining an NIHR Programme Grant for £2million. The programme is called SUPEREDEN 'SUstaining Positive Engagement and Recovery – the next step after Early DEtection and interventioN for psychosis' and builds on work being conducted in Theme 3 (Early detection and interventions in psychosis).

Professor Richard McManus and Professor Jonathan Mant have been awarded £230,000 by

the NIHR Research for Patient Benefit Programme for RAPID-TIA 'RAPid Primary care Initiation of Drug treatment for TIA – a pilot' which links to working being conducted in Theme 7 (Optimisation of the management of stroke and TIA).

Dr Jonathan Shapiro and colleagues have completed an additional study linked to Theme 1 (From structure to function: Health service redesign). The research team were funded by NHS West Midlands to conduct an evaluation of staff engagement programmes at four NHS Trusts in the region (value, £50,000). This work concluded that senior management buy-in and effective leadership and communication are key to the success of any staff engagement initiative.

Professor Richard Lilford and colleagues have been awarded £1.1million to establish the West Midlands central **Health Innovation Education Cluster (HIEC)**. Partners include local Universities, NHS organisations and industries.

"Improving our health by translating research evidence into local NHS practice"

Who Am I? Dr Sara Kenyon



Name: **Dr Sara Kenyon**

Location: Public Health & Epidemiology, University of Birmingham

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I am Sara Kenyon and I am working on the maternity theme. I am a midwife by background and was appointed as a Senior Lecturer at University of Birmingham in January 2009. As part of this work we have designed a trial to evaluate the Pregnancy Outreach Worker (POW) service. This service started some 3 years ago and offers lay support to women pregnant with their first baby who have social risk factors (such as housing or benefit problems, drug or alcohol misuse or mental health problems). We hoped to include women who already had children but there are too many other lay support workers who work with them. Women are identified at booking using the systematic social risk assessment done by all midwives. We have appointed and trained 16 midwives across Heart of Birmingham (HoB), South Birmingham (South) and Birmingham East and North (BEN) in the

community midwifery teams to recruit these women and the POWs are attached to each team. We started recruiting women recently and are delighted with progress as 67 women have been recruited in only a few weeks to either standard care (support from the midwife) or the addition of the POW. Primary outcomes include antenatal attendance and the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Score at 8-12 weeks after birth. The pilot study will continue for the next 6 months and give us a clearer idea of how long it will take us to recruit the 842 women required, but we are hopeful it will take about a year.

I am also leading a trial looking at the optimum dose and speed to give oxytocin to women delayed in their first

labours- the evidence suggests that increases normal birth (without intervention). The trial starts recruiting women in the middle of October and will recruit 100 women in 3 centres (Birmingham Women's Hospital, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle and Liverpool Women's Hospital).

I am also developing a trial to evaluate whether single or multiple membrane sweeping is more effective at reducing the need for induction for low risk women at term.

As you can see my research interests are broad and encompass research into any question clinicians are interested in- rather than the other way round- so this CLARHC was made for me and I am loving it!

Who Am I? Ms Ugochi Nwulu



Name: **Ms Ugochi Nwulu**

Location: University Hospital's Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust

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My name is Ugochi Nwulu ("Gochi") and I joined Theme 9 of the Birmingham and Black Country CLAHRC this summer as a Senior Research Coordinator, employed by the University Hospital's Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust. Theme 9 is one of the two implementation themes and it seeks to evaluate whether components of the electronic prescribing system used on the wards within the trust improve patient safety. The Prescribing Information and Communication System (PICS) was developed in-house and has now been in use for over 10 years. It is a rules based prescribing system that is able to raise alarms, alerts and various on-screen messages in response to prescriptions and investigations. We are carrying out the research in 5 main areas:

1. impact of the system enhancements on aspects of infection control
2. using the recently implemented electronic observation charts to recognise (using early warning scoring systems) and respond to deteriorating patients on the

wards (by alerting clinicians and critical outreach teams)

3. reduction of prescription errors
4. reduction of inappropriate clinical investigations
5. the reduction of patient misidentification by using a new bar coding system for patients and also medications.

What is truly exciting about this research is that while we are using the audit functionality of PICS (which downloads thousands of pieces of data every day); we are also going to qualitatively assess the ways in which ward staff adopt the system and how they interact with Information and Communication Technologies. I am pleased to be working with sociologist colleagues who are undertaking this research and are planning an ethnographic study on the wards which will take place early next year.

There are many ways in which data from PICS can be used and so there is the potential to study many more aspects of the system than those outlined. To that end, our collaborations with other researchers, clinicians, pharmacists, statistical and informatics staff are extremely important.

Whilst I am currently employed by UHBFT, I'm still linked with the School of Health and Population Sciences at the University of Birmingham where I previously worked as a researcher helping to evaluate a patient safety initiative in NHS hospitals. I seem to have come to health services research though a circuitous route (medical undergraduate, NHS audit, cancer clinical trials, paediatric cohort studies and case note reviews), but all these NHS and academic experiences have served me well, thus far! It's particularly gratifying to be working within a research collaboration that puts an emphasis on research being implemented and translated into practice.



News from the NIHR

NIHR publishes 'Embedding Health Research' its annual progress report 2009/10. Earl Howe states the NIHR *'is committed to collaboration between those doing research and those who gain from research...'* CLAHRCs form part of the NIHR infrastructure and aim to speed-up the translation of research evidence in to practice. In 2009/10 the NIHR spent £18.5million on CLAHRCs, of which £2,177,378 was awarded to CLAHRC for Birmingham and Black Country. A full copy of the report can be downloaded at <http://www.nihr.ac.uk>.

NIHR publishes standards framework for local NHS research management. The NIHR Research Support Services framework will enable NHS R&D offices to offer a consistent, streamlined and risk-proportionate service to support research in the NHS in England. The NIHR Research Support Services framework is available at www.nihr.ac.uk/systems/pages/research_support_services.aspx.

Building an international register of ongoing systematic reviews: have your say. In response to growing concern about reporting biases, and advocacy for registration of systematic reviews, the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) is leading an initiative to establish an international register of ongoing systematic reviews. The register will be free of charge and will work in a similar way to clinical trials registers allowing researchers to prospectively record key features of their systematic reviews. Fuller details about the project have just been published in The Lancet.

'NIHR INVOLVE 2010 Conference' is taking place on 16th-17th November 2010 in Nottingham. The INVOLVE conference offers an opportunity for people with a common interest in public involvement in the NHS, public health and social care research to share knowledge and learning. For more information see <http://www.profbriefings.co.uk/involve2010/index.html>

Health Policy

The coalitional Government White Paper 'Equity and excellence: Liberating the NHS' emphasises the importance of research to improving patient outcomes and supporting the NHS increase in quality and productivity. It also states that the Department of Health is committed to evidenced-based policy and fostering a culture of evaluation and learning. CLAHRC initiatives were actually mentioned in the policy (page 24), signalling support for CLAHRC initiatives and the wider research agenda at the Department. The new strategies outlined in the White Paper offer further research and collaborative opportunities including: Assisting the National Institute for Health & Clinical Excellence (NICE) to develop quality standards; assisting with the

development of outcome frameworks' aimed at capturing effectiveness, safety and patient experience and the offer of promoting our research through the new NHS Commissioning Board.

South Birmingham is our lead partner Primary Care Trust (PCT) when it comes to World Class Commissioning. South Birmingham PCT ranked 30 in the national league table.

'Evidence 2010: Transforming Healthcare' is taking place on 1st-2nd November 2010 in London. The programme may be of interest to the CLAHRC-BBC faculty. See the website at www.evidence2010.com/programme for more information



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If you have a story or news to share in our next issue, please email Alan Hargreaves (a.p.hargreaves@bham.ac.uk).