Winter 2017 Volume 12.2

Sheffield Evidence Synthesis Centre

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@ScHARRHEDS

Visit us at...
www.shef.ac.uk/scharr/sections/heds

HEDS Blog
The HEDS blog can be found at http://scharrheds.blogspot.com and is kept regularly updated. It is a mine of useful information for anyone working in the areas in which we specialise.

Shining darkness CC BY 2.0 http://bit.ly/2fBEdk5
A word from the Director

“And now, the end is near
And so I face the final curtain
My friends, I’ll say it clear
I’ll state my case, of which I’m certain.

Yes, it’s the moment you’ve all been waiting for... my last newsletter editorial. Who’s taking over? I’ll tell you later as we have other stuff you need to know about.

In this issue, we’ll be hearing from Dr Suzy Paisley, recently appointed as the School’s new Director of Innovation and Knowledge Transfer. Suzy has a lot of consultancy experience on searching, reviewing and modelling projects and will be helping both us and clients to build productive relationships that generate high quality research outputs.

You’ll also read about Dr Andrew Booth who has led a team winning a £500,000 three-year competitive tender from the National Institute for Health Research to renew its Health Services & Delivery Research Programme Evidence Synthesis Centre (ESC). The Sheffield ESC is one of three centres (the others being in Exeter and York) that offer a rapid response reviews service on programme priorities to inform policy and research.

And finally, congratulations to two new appointments:

Claire Beecroft, HEDS’ new Director of Teaching, and (drumroll...)

Dr Phil Shackley, who will be my successor as the new Director of HEDS from 1st November, 2017.

If you want to know more about HEDS, or catch up on Phil’s adventures as Director, remember to check out the HEDS Blog on a regular basis.

Bye.
HEDS contributes to new report on liver disease and alcohol consumption

A new report published by the Foundation for Liver Research and endorsed by the Lancet Commission on Liver Disease includes new estimates from the Sheffield Alcohol Research Group (SARG) (which contains members of HEDS) of the burden that alcohol places on the NHS and society. The report was featured on the front page of the Guardian newspaper on Monday 24th July, 2017.

The figures used in the report come from the Sheffield Alcohol Policy Model, a complex behavioural and epidemiological simulation model which combines data on patterns of alcohol consumption and purchasing; current rates of harm for 43 different alcohol-related health conditions; evidence on the relationship between prices and purchasing; and epidemiological evidence on the links between drinking at different levels and risks of harm.

The numbers show that alcohol is estimated to cause 35 deaths and 2,300 hospital admissions a day in England, costing the NHS almost £17 billion over the next 5 years at a time when healthcare resources and budgets are already being stretched. This research also highlights the potential for policies such as Minimum Unit Pricing for alcohol to reduce this burden.

This report comes out just as the UK Supreme Court is hearing the final stage in a lengthy court battle between the Scottish Government and the Scotch Whisky Association about the legality of Scotland’s efforts to introduce a minimum unit price for alcohol.

The Sheffield Model (developed by SARG) has formed an integral part of the court case, highlighting that the policy would effectively target the heaviest drinkers and have a positive effect on socioeconomic inequalities in health. The court’s judgement, expected to arrive in the Autumn, will be watched closely by the governments of a host of other countries including Wales and Ireland - both of which have announced their intention to introduce a minimum unit price, supported by SARG modelling. However, their ability to do so seems certain to be conditional on the Supreme Court ruling that the policy is not in breach of EU law.
Interview with Rt Hon Sir Kevin Barron MP

At the recent Medical School Research Meeting, Dr Duncan Gillespie from HEDS and Faculty RSA, Research and Policy group met Rt Hon Sir Kevin Barron (Labour MP for Rother Valley) to talk about the importance of research on changing legislation.

Sir Kevin’s diverse parliamentary experience includes chairing the Health Select Committee that brought through the 2005/6 ban of smoking in public places and held evidentiary hearings for minimum unit pricing of alcohol in 2010. More recently, Sir Kevin has been Chair of the All-Party Group on Pharmacy, protecting the availability of community pharmacies and protesting against pharmacy cuts by presenting a petition to Number 10, Downing Street, which had 2.2 million signatures.

This meeting was a perfect opportunity to discuss the research-policy interface from a politician’s perspective, and to explore how researchers bridge the gap between their work and the politicians who need to inform policy decisions. In Sir Kevin’s words: “Medical science is going to carry on and help us, but it can also find out why we need to be changing lifestyles. We need that evidence so legislators can put that into the public domain.”

The full interview can be found on the Think Ahead blog: http://bit.ly/hedsbarron

Fellowship for Dean of ScHARR, Professor John Brazier

Congratulations to Professor John Brazier, Dean of our School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR), who has been elected to the prestigious Fellowship of the Academy of Medical Sciences.

The Fellowship brings together world-leading scientists from across the UK to pioneer the research that will transform the future of public health.

Celebrated globally, their work is renowned for providing real benefits to society while breaking new academic ground.

Professor Brazier said: “I am delighted to be elected to such a prestigious Academy of medical and health scientists, and pleased for the recognition it brings to the research undertaken in ScHARR. The Academy is influential in the development of research policy in this country and I hope to lend my support for investment in the important areas of applied health services and public health research.”

Fellows are elected from across the spectrum of biomedical and health research.

Dr Helen Bell Garrod recently visited the Centre for Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Research (CIDER) at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Helen successfully obtained funding for the visit from the Worldwide University Network (WUN) Research Mobility Programme (RMP).

During the month long visit, Helen worked on a collaborative research project with Dr Michael Schomaker, Professor Mary-Ann Davies and others at UCT. Using causal inference statistical methods, the project aimed to assess the impact on hospitalisation and mortality outcomes of delays in viral load testing and treatment switching from first-line to second-line antiretroviral therapy (ART) treatment regime for HIV patients.

Short Courses

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<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Name of Course</th>
<th>Course Content</th>
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<tr>
<td>27-29 November 2017</td>
<td>Advanced Simulation Methods</td>
<td>This course aims to provide participants with the skills required to be able to undertake simulation projects to a professional level. It will be both theoretically-based and practically-based, with the use of the Simul8 software package. It will cover the use of discrete-event simulation to assess the impact of alternative options within a local system with resource constraints and the use of patient-level simulation for health economic modelling.</td>
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<td>6 February 2018</td>
<td>The Identification and Review of Evidence to Inform Cost Effectiveness Models</td>
<td>The course will enable participants to develop an understanding of the methods available for the identification and review of evidence to inform cost effectiveness models.</td>
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<td>12 – 13 March 2018</td>
<td>Utility Data for Health Technology Assessment</td>
<td>This course outlines the practical requirements of measuring utility and obtaining utility data for health technology assessment for agencies such as NICE and explores recent research in utilities including EQ-5D-5L valuation, measuring subjective well-being and condition-specific preference-based measures.</td>
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<td>17 – 19 April 2018</td>
<td>Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis Short Course</td>
<td>This three-day course gives an introduction to methods for conducting systematic reviews in health care. The course will be interactive and practical, with delivery of sessions based on lectures and individual and small group practical exercises.</td>
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<td>15 May 2018</td>
<td>An Introduction to using Social Media to Communicate Research</td>
<td>The aim of the workshop is to offer an introduction to the many tools you can use to help you communicate research and work smarter. The purpose of the day is to help attendees come away with a variety of tools and artefacts they can use to help communicate and share their work.</td>
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<td>17 May 2018</td>
<td>Rapid Review Methods</td>
<td>The aim of the day is to equip you with a greater insight into the range of rapid review methods that can be used for, and adapted to, your particular review.</td>
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Further details and booking information can be found on our website http://bit.ly/hedsscu

MSc Courses

For information on all Masters courses, visit http://bit.ly/hedsmasters

MSc International Health Technology Assessment, Pricing & Reimbursement

This fully online course offers the entire range of knowledge and skills needed by those developing health technologies for market, involved in commissioning, or evaluating health technologies. It is aimed at those working in the pharmaceutical, medical devices, or diagnostics industries. http://bit.ly/2zC2Oyw

MSc Health Economics and Decision Modelling

This MSc is the only programme in the UK dedicated to the practical application of mathematical modelling to inform healthcare decision making. The course is ideal for students wishing to pursue a career as a professional health economist/modeller. http://bit.ly/hedsmschedm

MSc Economics & Health Economics

This MSc programme is run jointly with the Department of Economics at the University of Sheffield. It is aimed at students who wish to pursue careers as applied economists in the health sector or who wish to continue with academic research. http://bit.ly/hedsmche