



Department of Nursing & Midwifery Research Newsletter



Welcome to our second research newsletter from the Department of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of the Highlands and Islands.

As we move from a seismic COVID-19 response to planning recovery and renewal we are adapting and re-focusing our research activity. In this newsletter you will find examples of how we have adapted our research in line with COVID-19 guidance and continue to thrive during these challenging times.

This newsletter will share information on our current research activity from academic staff and students. The aim is to provide an insight into our work and showcase how we are contributing to improving the health of people in our local communities and beyond, including our response to COVID-19. The newsletter will also provide links to our staff profile pages to enable people to contact us for study opportunities or to develop collaborative work.

We look forward to connecting with you.

Dr Michelle Beattie
Lecturer and Assistant Head of Research

What do we do?

Our research aims to foster a strong research community in the Highlands and Islands and build research collaborations nationally and internationally. This enables us to address key health questions relevant to Scotland and beyond and conduct high quality research that improves health and wellbeing within the Highlands and Islands. We conduct research to improve health and wellbeing in remote and rural regions that has international significance and spans urban populations. Our research expertise includes:

- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Active health
- Health and social care interventions and evaluation
- Improvement science
- Nurse education

View our [Research Strategy](#).

The Hernia Active Living Trial (HALT)



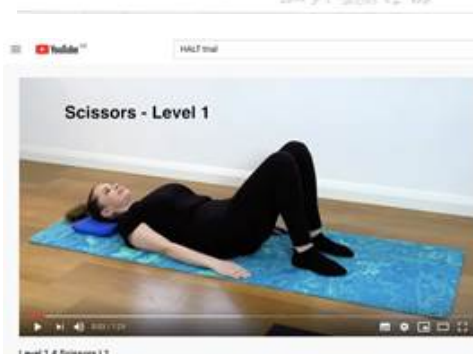
Julie Munro tells us more about the Hernia Active Living Trial (HALT) that launched recently. You can [read more](#) about how the project adapted recruitment methods, outcome measures and more in order to launch during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Project summary

This trial is currently recruiting. The Hernia Active Living Trial (HALT) is an exercise intervention for people living with a stoma. Parastomal hernia can occur at the site of the stoma and is commonplace after surgery, with up to 40% occurrence 2 years after surgery. Surgical repair results for parastomal hernia have been disappointing with recurrence rates reported between 30-76%. People living with a parastomal hernia have identified physical activity as a top research priority in relation to their quality of life. The trial aims to assess the feasibility and acceptability of the intervention and trial parameters to develop a full scale RCT. We hypothesise that the intervention will increase core muscle activation and stability across the abdominal wall at a site of potential weakness (the stoma) and reduce the risk of parastomal hernia progression, we are including quality of life measures. The project is being led by [Professor Gill Hubbard](#). We have developed a 12-week Pilates style exercise intervention, with recruitment planned at 2 sites; NHS Highland and Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust with our research colleagues at Leeds University. The intervention will be delivered by our clinical exercise specialist, Sarah Russell, who will provide weekly video calls to support participants.

Intervention and Patient Involvement

The intervention has been developed with input from clinical teams, exercise physiologists, and with patients. The project has a very active 15-member patient advisory group (PAG) and we have had their input for many of the project areas, including questionnaire design, the content of the intervention, and the patient information sheet (PIS). A member of our PAG team has developed our PIS with their design and graphics background to a high end product we are proud to offer our potential participants. Another talented member of our PAG has provided us with beautiful illustrations of the exercises we will be using (Image 1), which will be used to create an exercise booklet to compliment the videos we have produced (Image 2). Another member of our PAG very kindly volunteered to be involved in filming the exercise videos for us. The PAG input has been invaluable, and the research team provides regular feedback on how their input has shaped the details of the project, and the changes we make along the way based on their feedback.



Twitter [@HALT_trial](#)

Visual Impairment and Physical Activity



Professor Trish Gorely tells us more about her research in visual impairment, health outcomes and physical activity.

It is widely acknowledged that regular and sustained participation in physical activity is beneficial for almost every facet of adult health. Despite this many adults are not active enough to gain these benefits. Those with visual impairment have consistently been reported to have lower than average levels of physical activity, jeopardizing their health status. Along with colleagues at Anglia Ruskin University and a number of international institutions I have recently been working with nationally representative large datasets to further explore questions around visual impairment, health outcomes and physical activity. Two recently published papers focused specifically on cataracts. Using data from the Spanish National Health survey we demonstrated (1) [that those with cataract were at greater risk of chronic physical and mental health complications and multimorbidity](#) and (2) [low active adults were at 32.4% increased odds of cataract](#). Interventions specifically designed for those with cataract to reduce or manage co-occurring chronic conditions and multimorbidity are urgently required. Such interventions may consist of group exercise to promote physical activity, adaptation of the home environment to reduce fall risk, and use of low vision devices to improve social participation.

We are also exploring physical activity and visual impairment in adults in low- to middle-income countries using data from the World Health Organisation and we are just completing an umbrella review of visual impairment and health outcomes to bring together a disparate literature examining a diverse range of outcomes.

COVID-19 Impacts and Opportunities for Nurse Education

Our Department delivers both education and research, therefore changes in one of these areas effects the other. The disruptive impacts of COVID-19 created an unprecedented opportunity for transformation within undergraduate nurse education. [Dr Clare Carolan](#), [Dr Michelle Roxburgh](#) and others were invited to publish an editorial on the disruptive impacts and transformative opportunities in undergraduate nurse education. [Read more.](#)

Do health literacy interventions improve health literacy?

By Ronie Walters, PhD student

This is the key question we set out to answer in our systematic review published this month in the BMC Journal of Public Health. The focus of my PhD is on cardiac rehabilitation in the Highlands region, and how we can help patients better engage with the service to manage their cardiovascular health. There are many possible reasons why patients may not engage with cardiac rehab including health literacy. It is known that people with long term conditions may have challenges with health literacy, and that those with cardiovascular disease often struggle the most. Those with weaker health literacy skills have been shown to have more trouble managing their health, they often have poorer self-assessed health and greater levels of morbidity and mortality.

[Read more.](#)



Highland Health Sciences Library – your local research support service



Rob Polson



Chris O'Malley



Nell Stephen

With a remit to work with the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) and its School of Health/ Department of Nursing and Midwifery (DoNM), as well as NHS Highland (NHSH), the Highland Health Sciences Library (HHSL) contributes to and supports research across the Highlands and beyond throughout Scotland, the UK and globally. As such it is ideally placed to support the DoNM as it raises its research profile with increasing staff research, research collaboration and postgraduate student numbers and research.

Nursing and health sciences are evidence-based disciplines. Focused on education, research and practice, HHSL has responsibility to support and signpost access to the highest possible quality of evidence possible. This ranges from sourcing resources and materials, conducting searches for required content, and teaching locating the evidence and how to best extract it according to context and need. The subject librarians play a key role in supporting systematic and other literature reviews. Click [here](#) for a couple of recent examples.

HHSL staff can conduct these searches themselves, but more commonly teach these skills to students and staff as a part of the educational process, with the aim of self-confidence and self-sufficiency in these skills, whilst having the HHSL as back-up support. HHSL staff are also knowledge brokers. Their broad knowledge of research work being carried out locally and elsewhere optimises connections and collaboration.

The Library also supports research in the Highlands through curating and maintaining a multidisciplinary and researched based collection of materials such as the physical books/resources in the library, as well as a much larger collection of electronic books and journals available electronically.

The friendly team of three (Rob, Chris and Nell) use a wide range of tools to minimise distance, so no matter where in the region you are based it is easy to get in touch.

For any research support you need please contact the library:

e-mail: hhs@uhi.ac.uk

website: <http://libguides.uhi.ac.uk/hhs/>

twitter feed: <https://twitter.com/HHSLNew>

PhD Student Profile – Ruth Mantle

Ruth moved up from the Midlands to the Highlands 21 years ago to be nearer to the hills and snowline to pursue her love for adventuring in the outdoors and racing her beloved huskies which at their peak reached 13 in the pack! Currently based in Maryburgh she lives on the bank of the river Conon with her partner, Border terrier pup and co-parents her 2 boys with their dad. Ruth enjoys sea-kayaking, wild camping, learning French with her son and is a new convert to electric mountain-biking.



For the past 8 years Ruth has worked as the Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Nurse Consultant for NHS Highland, working across hospital and community settings to help improve the experience for people living with dementia and their caregivers. In her role she also supports both pre and post nursing registration training programmes at the University of the Highlands and Islands as well as the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology programme at the University of Edinburgh. She is a Winston Churchill Fellow and Scholar of the Florence Nightingale Foundation.

She completed her MSc in Dementia with the University of Edinburgh in 2016 gaining a distinction for her dissertation. After the initial reaction of 'never again' and a year out studying a module in linguistics with the Open University Ruth was successful in gaining a PhD Studentship through the City-Region Deal and started her studies on a part-time basis in May 2018.

The focus area for her research is exploring what impact technology has in facilitating virtual access to the outdoor environment on the wellbeing of people living with dementia and how technology might help people to stay connected to the outdoors when they are unable to get outside. People with dementia experience poorer health and wellbeing leading to social exclusion, loneliness and isolation. Sadly the COVID-19 pandemic has made the risk of isolation and loneliness for people living with dementia even more of an acute problem making this research even more relevant in these challenging times.

Visit our [website](#) to find out more about PhD students within the Department of Nursing and Midwifery.

Interested in doing a PhD?

If you are passionate about an area of healthcare practice and want to make a research contribution to your field, a PhD could be the route for you. Doing a PhD provides you with the opportunity to go to the depths of critical enquiry into a chosen topic enabling exponential personal and professional growth. Doctoral studies are challenging, but we provide you with support and encouragement every step of the way. Our department research team gets to know you which enables tailored supervision to your individual learning needs and styles. We can also provide inter-department and across University supervision to ensure students have access to the right supervisors. Students also have access to the University's Graduate School which provides access to training and guidance on administrative procedures.

Anyone interested in conducting a PhD please contact Dr Michelle Beattie michelle.beattie@uhi.ac.uk for informal enquiries.

Recent Publications

Beecher C, Greene R, O'Dwyer L, Ryan E, White M, **Beattie M** & Devane D (2020), 'Measuring women's experiences of maternity care: a systematic review of self-report survey instruments', *Women and Birth*, pp. 1-11.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wombi.2020.05.002>

Carolan C, Davies CL, Crookes P, McGhee S and **Roxburgh M**, (2020) 'COVID 19: Disruptive impacts and transformative opportunities in undergraduate nurse education', *Nurse Education in Practice*

doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2020.102807

Gray J & Rennox K (2020), 'Health equalities framework: the effect of moving from a care home to other settings on determinants of health inequalities', *Learning Disability Practice*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 1-9.

<https://doi.org/10.7748/ldp.2020.e2062>

Jacob L, López-Sánchez GF, Yang L, Haro JM, Shin JI, Veronese N, Soysal P, **Gorely T**, Koyanagi A, Smith L. (2020). 'Associations between cataract and multimorbidity: A cross-sectional study of 23,089 adults from Spain.' *Eye*.

doi.org/10.1038/s41433-020-0962-5

Keeley P, **Carolan C**, Buchanan D, Pivodic L, Tavabie S & Noble S (2020), 'Symptom burden and clinical profile of COVID-19 deaths: a rapid systematic review and evidence summary', *BMJ Supportive and Palliative Care*, pp. 1-4.

<https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjspcare-2020-002368>

Kyle R, **Beattie M**, **Smith A**. (2020) 'Transition into remote and rural nurse education and careers: a qualitative study of student nurses', *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 23rd June.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1744987120908911>

Lambrinou E, Kyriakou M, Lakatamitou I, **Angus N**, Khatib R, Vellone E, Barrowcliff A, Hansen T, Lee G (2020) 'An integrative review on facilitators and barriers in delivering and managing injectable therapies in chronic conditions: A part of the ACNAP project 'injectable medicines among patients with cardiovascular conditions'', *European Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing*.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1474515120939007>

López-Sánchez GF, Pardhan S, Trott M, Sánchez-Castillo S, Jackson SE, Tully M, **Gorely T**, López-Bueno R, Veronese N, Skalska M, Jastrzębska J, Jastrzębski Z & Smith L. (2020). 'The association between physical activity and cataracts among 17,777 people aged 15-69 years residing in Spain'. *Ophthalmic Epidemiology*,

DOI: [10.1080/09286586.2020.1730911](https://doi.org/10.1080/09286586.2020.1730911)

Mathews R, **O'Malley C**, Hall J, **Macaden L** & MacRury, S (2019), 'Diabetes, Care Homes and the Influence of Technology on Practice and Care Delivery in Care Homes: A Systematic Review and Qualitative Synthesis', *JMIR Diabetes*, vol. 4, no. 2, e11526, pp. 1-14.

<https://doi.org/10.2196/11526>

Shepherd A, Cowie J & **Beattie M** (2020) 'An exploration of how domains of quality of care relate to overall care experience', *International Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance*, vol. 32, no. 5, pp. 844-856.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJHCOA-07-2018-0183>

Thomson P, **Angus NJ**, Andreis F, Rushworth G, Mohan ARM, Chung ML & Leslie SJ (2020), 'Longitudinal evaluation of the effects of illness perceptions and beliefs about cardiac rehabilitation on quality of life in patients with coronary artery disease and their caregivers', *BMC Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, vol. 18, 158 (2020) .

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12955-020-01405-0>

Torrens C, Campbell P, Hoskins G, Strachan H, Wells M, Cunningham M, Bottone H, **Polson R** & Maxwell M (2019), 'Barriers and facilitators to the implementation of the advanced nurse practitioner role in primary care settings: A scoping review', *International Journal of Nursing Studies*.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2019.103443>

-

Meet our Research Staff

- [Neil Angus](#)
- [Jonathan Gray](#)
- [Julie Munro](#)
- [Dr Michelle Beattie](#)
- [Hannah Hollinger](#)
- [Robert Polson](#)
- [Marie Cameron](#)
- [Professor Gill Hubbard](#)
- [Dr Michelle Roxburgh](#)
- [Dr Clare Carolan](#)
- [Dr Leah Macaden](#)
- [Professor Annetta Smith](#)
- [Professor Trish Gorely](#)

Please feel free to pass this onto colleagues.

To stop receiving this Newsletter, please reply to this email and ask to be unsubscribed.

Department of Nursing and Midwifery, University of the Highlands and Islands, Centre for Health Science, Old Perth Road, Inverness IV2 3JH