



Department of Nursing & Midwifery Research Newsletter



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

Like most University Departments we are busy working away to provide our students with the best virtual learning experience. As well as welcoming our first undergraduate virtual cohort of over 170 nursing students, we continue to support midwifery students and our thriving post graduate community. Despite the hive of activity our staff and students continue to deliver high quality research.

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

Latest News

Professor Gill Hubbard, Head of Research, has been made an Associate Editor of the open-access journal [Pilot and Feasibility Studies](#), published by BMC (part of Springer Nature).



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

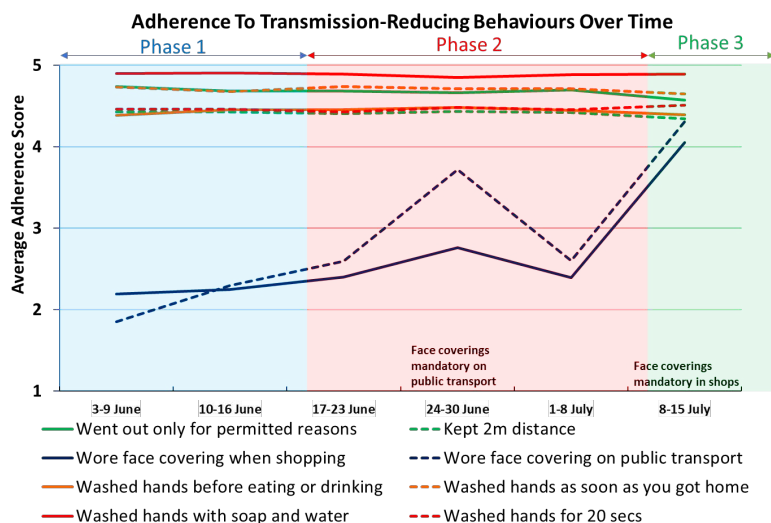
View our [Research Strategy](#).

COVID Health and Adherence Research in Scotland (CHARIS)

[Prof Gill Hubbard](#) is the UHI lead for the CHARIS study that is being led by Prof Diane Dixon at the University of Aberdeen. CHARIS is a telephone survey of a nationally representative sample of adults aged ≥ 16 currently living in Scotland (Ipsos MORI). It measures 3 behaviours: social distancing, wearing a face covering and handwashing. Here, we present two key findings about adherence.

1. Adherence over time

This graph shows that adherence to physical distancing and hand washing has been consistently high and that adherence to wearing a face covering was initially low but increased after legislation was introduced.



2. Who is adhering?

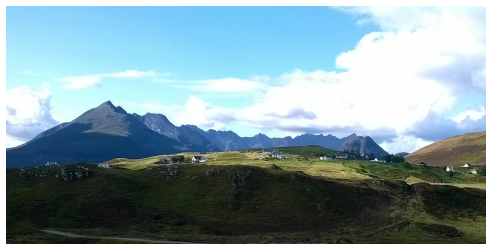
This table shows which groups of the population are adhering the most or the least.

Transmission Reducing Behaviours

	Physical Distancing	Face Covering	Hand Washing
Who	younger ↓ covid positive ↓	younger ↓ work full-time ↓ rent home ↑	younger ↓ male ↓ child in household ↑

Summaries of further findings are available [here](#).

Co-Designing Near Me at Home



Videoconsulting using Near Me aims to provide a virtual method of out-patient appointments between remotely residing patients and hospital-based clinicians. Near Me was created in NHS Highland and is now used throughout Scotland, using the Attend Anywhere technology platform. Since the Covid-19 pandemic there has been exponential use in the scale and diversity of Near Me use. In June 2020, the use of Near Me reached over 17 000 consultations per week, with over 150 000 in total in Scotland. The scope of Near Me has also extended, such as consultations with physiotherapists and other allied health professionals and supporting virtual clinical placements.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic [Dr Michelle Beattie](#) and Clare Morrison (previous Near Me Lead) secured Q Exchange funding from the Health Foundation to co-design, with the people of Skye, systems and processes for NHS Near Me to enable video consultations with specialists to take place in the patient's home. Participants identified multiple changes to systems and processes to enable tailoring for public use of Near Me at home, which would otherwise have been unknown. The lessons learnt from testing and adapting the use of Near Me at Home will likely to be useful for others. Read more [here](#).

What is the Symptom Burden and Clinical Profile of COVID-19 Deaths?

COVID-19 is a novel disease, causing significant mortality. Thus, we conducted a rapid systematic review to understand the symptom burden and clinical profile of COVID-19 deaths. The review was conducted in April 2020 with 12 papers identified. Cough, breathlessness, fatigue, and myalgia are significant symptoms in people

hospitalised with COVID-19. Dyspnoea is the most significant symptom in the dying. The mode of death was described in only two papers and was predominantly through respiratory or heart failure. Only four papers reported symptom data discretely in dying patients, though in three papers it was unclear whether these are presenting symptoms or symptoms at end of life. There was no data from settings other than secondary or tertiary care. There was a paucity of data reporting symptoms which one might expect at end of life (e.g. delirium, agitation, emotional distress). Taken together this suggests issues around data collection including: i) focus on presenting rather than terminal symptoms ii) symptoms such as dyspnoea being reported as a proxy for delirium or distress iii) cultural influences. The review provides important emerging intelligence to inform clinical care and critical insight into data gathering to guide future research. The article was published in BMJ Supportive and Palliative Care in May 2020. Read more [here](#).



[Dr Clare Carolan](#), Department of Nursing & Midwifery

Carnegie Vacation Scholarship Student Experience

[The Carnegie Vacation Scholarships](#) aim to encourage undergraduates to develop their independent research skills. The Scheme is open to students enrolled on an undergraduate degree course at an eligible Scottish institution. The application scheme is competitive, students submit a research proposal and the Carnegie Trust selects those to be awarded on the basis of the academic standing and motivation of the student, the quality of the project, and the supervision and environment provided. This is the second year in a row the Department has been successful in having an undergraduate awarded with this scholarship.



Andy Jupp explains more about his experience as a vacation scholarship student this year:

I am a 2nd year Mental Health Nursing student who was lucky enough to be accepted for the Carnegie Vacation Scholarship this summer. I was involved in a research project aiming to explore the LGBT+ knowledge, attitudes and experiences of student nurses and their educators, supervised by Dr Rebecah MacGilleEathain. The participants for this research were drawn from the staff and students from the Department of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of the Highlands and Islands, from across Highland and the Western Isles. [Read more.](#)



PhD Student Profile – Kara Callum

After completing an undergraduate degree in human physiology at the University of Leeds, Kara moved to Inverness to work for NHS Highland and undertake a scientific training programme in cardiac physiology. This was a 3 year work based training programme, alongside a part time MSc with the University of Newcastle. 7 years later, Kara is still in the Highlands having gained a husband, a daughter, a permanent clinical job, a crash course in farming and funding through the city-region deal for a part time PhD.



After securing her full time clinical job Kara continued to undertake research focusing on cardiac patients and remote and rural care. However as with many clinical roles often struggled to find enough dedicated research time. The city-region deal funding for a part time PhD has provided the perfect mix, allowing Kara to continue her clinical role and have dedicated time for research. Another benefit of the city-region deal is the emphasis for research that can feed back into clinical practice, giving direct improvements to patient care and services she is involved with on a day to day basis.

Kara works 2 days a week as a Senior Cardiac Physiologist for NHS Highland, diagnosing and treating patients with heart disease. She specialises in the follow up of cardiac devices such as pacemakers, implantable defibrillators and cardiac resynchronisation devices. Kara's MSc research project looked at the impact remote monitoring of cardiac devices had on the care of patients, specifically in a remote and rural area.

The other 2 days Kara funded for her PhD research, her area of research is the exercise component of cardiac rehab, for patients with heart failure. The project is exploring how different home-based approaches to exercise delivery, such as high intensity interval training, can help improve patients' health and fitness and quality of life. The hope is that a different approach to exercise delivery will engage more patients as well as improve outcomes. The home-based approach is particularly important to heart failure patients living in the Highlands due to the remote and rural areas they live in, being even more pertinent now as COVID-19 has impacted the way people access community facilities.

Having recently returned from maternity leave Kara is just about getting her research brain back in gear and restarting her research and clinical work. In any spare time Kara has she can be found baking, walking and exploring, or swimming in a Loch somewhere.



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

Reflections on my first international online conference

By Rebecca Hunter, PhD Student

In August, I presented at my first international conference, albeit from my office at home. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic the CARES Realist 2020 Training Conference was held online in Canada by the director of the Centre for Advancement in Realist Evaluation and Synthesis (CARES) and moderated online by two lecturers in the UK. In total, there were 60 delegates and 21 presenters. In addition



Dark Programme theory 2a: Individual level

If people with CLBP do not want to self-manage their condition then they may feel judged by the healthcare service and society for not looking after themselves.

“ Empowerment is a set of obligations ”
(Veitch 2010)

Context
Being encouraged to take responsibility for your own health care comes with a sense of moral obligation to be a 'health conscious citizen' by being less dependent on a struggling healthcare service. However, if one chooses not to be accountable for their own health, one is considered to be a 'bad self-manager' - adding to society's burdens rather than alleviating them.

Mechanism
Self-management comes with a sense of duty, moral obligation, and responsibility for your own health care which in turn makes you feel like a valued member of society that gives something back rather than takes. Conversely, there is a threat of judgement by society for failing to comply with self-management which undermines any feeling of empowerment.

Outcome
Rather than feeling empowered people with CLBP have the added burden of feeling judged by society, almost like victim-blaming, for not able to be being able to 'cope'. This could lead to the unintended consequence of users feeling more isolated and abandoned by a healthcare service claiming to be patient-centred and patient empowering.

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to the UK, presenters came from Columbia, USA, Ireland, Norway, Australia, and New Zealand. The conference was held for three hours each day either in the morning or afternoon, depending on the time zone of the speakers. The presentations were recorded for those who couldn't make the live broadcast. In addition, the comments made on the interactive forum were collated by the moderators and sent to the speaker for feedback. At the end of each day the conference host gave a written summation of the issues raised and offered his own thoughts.

As much as I missed the opportunity to fly to Canada and meet fellow Realist researchers face to face, it was a fantastic conference and a great learning experience. Due to the global pandemic, online conferences are likely to become more common place. For this reason, I thought I would take this opportunity to briefly share the pros and cons of my experience. [Read more.](#)

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

Beattie, M, Morrison, C, MacGilleEathain, R, Gray, N & Anderson, J (2020), 'Near Me at Home: codesigning the use of video consultations for outpatient appointments in patients' homes', *BMJ Open Quality*, vol. 9, e001035, pp. 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjoq-2020-001035>

Macaden, L (2020) 'Nursing Research in India: Keeping Pace or Time to Catch Up', *Indian Journal of Continuing Nursing Education*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 6-11. https://doi.org/10.4103/IJCN.IJCN_41_20

Schoultz, M, **Beattie, M, Gorely, T** & Leung, J (2020) 'Assessment of causal link between psychological factors and symptom exacerbation in inflammatory bowel disease: a systematic review utilizing application of Bradford Hill Criteria and meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies', *Systematic Reviews*, vol. 9, no. 169, pp. 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-020-01426-2>

Smith, L, Jacob, L, Shin, JI, Tully, M, Pizzol, D, López-Sánchez, GF, **Gorely, T**, Yang, L, Grabovac, I & Koyanagi, A (2020) 'Bullying victimization and obesogenic behaviour among adolescents aged 12 to 15 years from 54 low- and middle-income countries', *Pediatric Obesity*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijpo.12700>

Walters, R, Leslie, SJ, Polson, R, Cusack, T & Gorely, T (2020) 'Establishing the efficacy of interventions to improve health literacy and health behaviours: a systematic review', *BMC Public Health*, vol. 20, 1040, pp. 1-17.

Meet our Research Staff

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

Please feel free to pass this onto colleagues.

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