Brendan McCormack (D.Phil (Oxon.), BSc (Hons.), FEANS, PGCEA, RMN, RGN) has been appointed as Research Professor and Head of the Division of Nursing at Queen Margaret University.

Prior to his current position Brendan was Director of the Institute of Nursing and Health Research and Head of the Person-centred Practice Research Centre at the University of Ulster. His internationally recognised work in person-centred practice development and research has resulted in successful long-term collaborations in Ireland, the UK, Norway, The Netherlands, Canada, Australia and South Africa, where he holds honorary professorial appointments. His writing and research work focuses on person-centered practice, gerontological nursing, and practice development and he serves on a number of editorial boards, policy committees, and development groups in these areas. He has a particular focus on the use of arts and creativity in healthcare research and development.

Brendan has more than 200 peer-reviewed publications as well as 8 books published. He is the Editor of the “International Journal of Older People Nursing”. Brendan is a Fellow and Board member of The European Academy of Nursing Science. This year, Brendan has been awarded the ‘International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame’ by Sigma Theta Tau International as well as being made a Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing. In commenting on his appointment Brendan said "I am delighted to be appointed as Research Professor and Head of Nursing at QMU. The opportunity to build a programme of collaborative research with colleagues in NHS Lothian and other health and social care providers is very exciting."
Spotlight on Early Career Researchers

Congratulations to Elspeth Donaldson, a Senior Physiotherapist based at Kirkliston Health Centre within Edinburgh Community Physiotherapy Service (ECPS), for successfully beating off stiff competition to win a PhD studentship at Glasgow Caledonian University.

Elspeth has been awarded a 3 year bursary and will study under the supervision of Professor Tracy Howe. Her PhD will involve investigation of the use of social media as tools to support and promote self-management.

Elspeth commenced her studies in February 2014 and has started with a project looking at aspects of a virtual community of people on a social network blog about musculoskeletal conditions. In particular she is exploring the processes of engagement of users with both the media content and other members of the virtual community. Elspeth will continue to work for ECPS one day per week and predicts that she may be fairly busy over the next wee while!

Elspeth.donaldson@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Research Scotland Career Researcher Fellowships

Two NHS Lothian NMAHPs have been awarded NRS Career Researcher Fellowships. Dr. Judith Merriweather, Dietitian in Critical Care at the Royal Infirmary was the first in the 2013 round. The Fellowship will give Judith time to continue her research over the next three years into the nutritional care of patients recovering from critical illness.

Judith.merriweather@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Gillian Knowles, Nurse Consultant in Oncology at the Western General Hospital was awarded her Fellowship in the 2014 round. Gillian has a clinical and research interest in anal cancer.

Gillian.knowles@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

PhD Studentship for Physiotherapist

Congratulations to Elspeth Donaldson, a Senior Physiotherapist based at Kirkliston Health Centre within Edinburgh Community Physiotherapy Service (ECPS), for successfully beating off stiff competition to win a PhD studentship at Glasgow Caledonian University.

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Elspeth.donaldson@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Oncology Nurse undertaking PhD

Linda Sherwood is a colo-rectal clinical nurse specialist in the Edinburgh Cancer Centre. Her focus is patients that are being considered for liver resection who have metastases originating from the bowel. It can take up to 4-6 months before the decision is made that resection will definitely take place. Linda could see that the pathway leading to surgery was very demanding, and could include adjuvant chemotherapy or primary surgery to the bowel if the tumour was still present. In the past treatment was purely palliative. She also recognised the need to improve knowledge surrounding the hepato-biliary aspects of care and to have a more systematic approach to telephone follow up.

Linda was awarded a £30,000 research grant by Edinburgh and Lothian Health Foundation which allowed her release for 2 days per week for 22 months. She has since secured further funding from NHS Lothian’s Research Futures Scheme.

Her research takes an action research approach focusing on what is useful to the patient group and improving service delivery. She has a steering group that includes an oncologist, liver surgeon, colorectal surgeon and the cancer nurse consultant. In addition she has a group of fellow clinical nurse specialists who will work with her to develop any new service delivery approaches.

Linda.sherwood@luht.scot.nhs.uk
University of Edinburgh: Masters of Nursing in Clinical Research

This innovative programme has been funded by the Scottish Government and is a 1 year full-time masters degree undertaken immediately following graduation with an honours degree in nursing. The programme is 50% theory 50% practice with the students undertaking two placements: one with a clinical research team and the other in a nursing research setting. It is anticipated that on graduation these nurses will have the ability to use research to influence their own clinical practice and that of others, whether they pursue a clinically based career or a research career.

Six students commenced the programme in September 2013 and undertook clinical research placements with the Emergency Medicine Research Group (EMeRGE), the Lothian and Scottish Studies of Intracerebral haemorrhage (LASSIE), the Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Facility, the Edinburgh Cancer Centre and Edinburgh Tommy’s Centre (Pregnancy research). Nursing research placements were undertaken in Oncology, Neonatology, Dementia, Child Health and Emergency Medicine.

On completion of the programme in August 2014 two of the students have gone on to undertake full-time PhDs. Katie McGhooghan was awarded a Stroke Association studentship and will focus on cognitive impairment and quality of life after intracerebral haemorrhage.

Adam Lloyd was awarded the Gardiner Scholarship from the University of Edinburgh. His study will examine ways of improving the quality and safety of nursing care provided in acute medical emergencies through identifying, measuring and improving emergency nurses’ non-technical skills.

A second cohort of six students have commenced the programme in September 2014.

Queen Margaret University Masters in Clinical Research

Queen Margaret University offers a Masters in Clinical Research which offers AHPs, nurses and midwives the opportunity to develop their capacity and capability to contribute to evidence based practice.

The programme offers two 30-credit taught modules which prepare students for the 120-credit extended research project. The programme can be undertaken full or part-time. Classes take place either weekly or fortnightly depending on mode of study. Informal discussions around potential project ideas are welcomed at an early stage in the applications process.

Further details are available on their website at http://www.qmu.ac.uk/courses/PGCourse.cfm?c_id=266.

For more information, contact the programme leader Dr Judith Lane (jlane@qmu.ac.uk)

NHS Lothian Doctoral Research Network

A NHS Lothian Doctoral Research Network has been established and 3 meetings have been held during 2014. There are currently 19 NMAHPS undertaking doctoral studies (11 nurses, 3 midwives, 6 AHPs), with 5 of those staff matriculating since September 2014. The aim of the Network is to provide peer support and networking opportunities to staff.

Some of the members pictured left to right: Joanna Gordon (Physiotherapist), Elspeth Donaldson (Physiotherapist), Kenny Davidson (Nurse), Ali Wood (Nurse), Elisabeth McAnally (Dietician).
Midwifery Research Champions

The University of Edinburgh and NHS Lothian are recognised nationally and internationally as leaders in the field of pregnancy research. To date, these research strengths lie mainly in the areas of basic science, translational and clinical trials with relatively few studies being led by midwives or addressing key midwifery research questions. To address this imbalance Dr Fiona Denison, Professor Jane Norman, Dr Juliet MacArthur, and Alice Keely, Research Midwife established an innovative ‘Research Champion Scheme’.

The overall aim of the Research Champions Scheme is to support research and capacity building amongst midwives. The specific aims are to promote and enhance pregnancy related research that will improve the health of women and babies by:

- maximising recruitment to existing clinical studies.
- providing professional development and research opportunities to a cohort of midwives.
- identifying key midwife-focused research questions that will enhance the care and experience of women and babies.
- promoting a research culture within maternity services.

The proposal to fund and appoint 6 research champions for 2 hours per week was accepted as a 12 month pilot study funded by the Research and Development Office and commenced in January 2013 and was extended for a second year. The original Research Champions were Sue Shade, Lesley Scott, Naomi Waddell, Karen Carstairs, Rita Seidler and Louise Croan. Alice Keely joined the team in April 2013. Lesley, Karen and Alice have since moved on and new Champions are currently being appointed. During 2014 much stronger links have been made with the Research Midwives and monthly meetings are held.

To date the midwives have focused on developing accessible information about the pregnancy related clinical trials including a timeline that identifies key recruitment dates and inclusion criteria linked to the period of gestation. They have undertaken two surveys of all midwives in Lothian to explore their awareness of the research studies, the midwives’ confidence to discuss clinical trials with women and to identify ways of improving communication about the studies.

Two of the midwives, Naomi Waddell and Louise Croan undertook a Masters Research Methods Module in early 2013 and developed research proposals examining pregnancy related trauma. Naomi has since been awarded a PhD studentship at Edinburgh Napier University undertaking a study on the impact of childhood trauma in pregnant women who are affected by substance misuse. Louise is participating in a funded study that will incorporate much of her research proposal. Alice Keely was also awarded a PhD studentship and is examining antenatal care for women with a BMI >40 in a study titled ‘Obesity, pregnancy and experiences of antenatal services’. This research was influenced by a previous study she was involved in on the assessment of barriers to breast feeding in obese women.

In recent months there has been an emphasis on capacity building for research focussed on midwifery practice and a proposal is being developed for a Clinical Academic Research Careers (CARC) Scheme that will focus on ‘Building knowledge to reduce health inequalities in maternity care’. This Scheme will be a partnership between NHS Lothian, Edinburgh Napier University and the MRC Centre for Reproductive Health. The opportunity to create the CARC scheme is particularly enhanced by the appointment of a Professor of Midwifery at Edinburgh Napier University—Professor Caroline Hollins-Martin—who will take up post in early 2015.

There is a single email address for access to any queries about maternal and fetal health research.

researchmidwives@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk
Recent Research Results

Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) to assist walking in people with MS

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is the most common neurological disorder diagnosed amongst young adults and usually manifests between the ages of 20 and 40 years. An estimated 10,500 people in Scotland live with MS; no other country exceeds this prevalence (possibly due to genetic and environmental factors). The deterioration of myelinated structures of the central nervous system leads to long-term impairment of movement, function and fatigue. Hence MS is an enduring condition with an early onset, a progressive course and duration of about 40 years from diagnosis.

People with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) often experience so-called ‘foot-drop’, which can result in problems with foot clearance during walking causing the person to trip and fall.

Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) is used to activate the muscles on the front of the leg which lift the foot during the swing phase of gait.

Researchers at Queen Margaret University, Professor Tom Mercer and Dr. Marietta van der Linden, in collaboration with Dr. Julie Hooper, a clinical specialist physiotherapist at Slateford Medical Centre and Paula Cowan (now NHS Lanarkshire) secured funding (£97,027) from the MS Society for a PhD studentship to investigate the effects of FES on the gait characteristics and walking ability of people with MS.

Methods

The gait kinematics and walking ability of twelve people with MS who were new users of FES were assessed without and with the assistance of FES. Gait kinematics were recorded using the three-dimensional motion analysis system at Queen Margaret University and walking ability was assessed by the time taken to walk 10 metres and the distance covered during a 6 minute walking test.

Results

Dorsiflexion of the ankle, i.e. the angle of the foot relative to the leg and the knee flexion angle during the swing phase were significantly improved in the FES assisted condition compared to unassisted walking. Participants also walked significantly faster over the 10 metres with the FES switched on. However, no difference between the two conditions was found in the 6 minute walk tests.

Discussion

The participants in this study were not habitual users of the FES device and it is possible that they had not yet established a new walking pattern as they were still getting used to the device. It is also possible that due to the fact that FES was new to the participants they experienced fatigue of the lower leg muscles stimulated by FES during the longer 6 minute walking test. Further work is underway to evaluate the longer term effects in patients who are habitual users of FES.

These findings, the first part of Sasha Scott’s PhD studies, plus a paper on the longer term outcomes are now published:


For more information contact: Dr. Marietta van der Linden mvanderlinden@qmu.ac.uk or Dr. Julie Hooper julie.hooper@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk
Dr Zoë Chouliara, BSc PsyD MSc PhD PGDip Counselling CPsychol (Health) FHEA AFBPsS

Reader in Person Centred Care

Zoë is a clinical academic. She is a Practitioner Counselling and Health Psychologist and Psychotherapist/Counsellor. Zoë is an experienced researcher with a portfolio of publications and funded research in the area of person centred care and vulnerable groups in health care. Her most research focuses on person centred models of change and recovering from adversity in vulnerable groups, recovering from childhood abuse and the effects of relational variables, e.g. trust, on physical and mental health. She is the lead author of the Acts of Recovery, the first evidence-based, survivor-centred self help booklet for survivors of childhood abuse. The booklet is currently being used in clinical services in this country and overseas, i.e. Australia and India. The booklet is also endorsed by the Scottish Government, Survivor Scotland and the Scottish Recovery Network. Zoë has been nominated for an Equal Opportunities Award by the British Psychological Society (BPS) for her work. She has successfully led a specialist psychology in plastics service in NHS Tayside for three years, where she worked with individuals with body image and appearance related distress. She is a person-centred practitioner, one out of four Person Centred academics in the UK, and clinical supervisor/trainer with experience that spans across the voluntary, private sector and the NHS. She was a clinician with the Medical Foundation (now Freedom from Torture), where she practised with survivors of torture/organised violence. She is currently the Past Chair of the British Psychological Society (BPS), Assistant Chief Supervisor for Health Psychology, Associate Fellow of the BPS and Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She is an experienced clinical and research supervisor in health and counselling psychology.

Contacts: z.chouliara@napier.ac.uk 07742728169 (mobile)

Professor Graeme D. Smith

Graeme is Professor of Nursing in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Care of Edinburgh Napier University. He is an Honorary Professor at University of Edinburgh and has been a Fellow of the European Academy of Nursing Science since 2003. He graduated from Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh with a BA in Nursing Studies in 1989. His Doctoral studies at University of Edinburgh arose from an interest in psychological care in gastroenterology. He then worked as a Senior Lecturer in Nursing Studies in the University of Edinburgh. He has studied health related quality of life issues in patients with a variety of chronic illnesses. His current research interests include the use of medical hypnotherapy as a treatment for functional bowel disorders. He is currently working with a group of Asian academics on a collaborative project to examine psychological morbidity in chronic disease. Other interests include the use of complementary and alternative medicine in nursing and stress in nursing. He is Editor of the Journal of Clinical Nursing and has published textbooks on nurse education and gastrointestinal nursing. Professor Smith is currently working on secondment in Hong Kong and is Honorary Professor at Hong Kong University.

Research Interests

Gastroenterology Nursing, Health Psychology, Health Related Quality of Life and Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM).
Research Futures is an annual training fund to support postgraduate research training for Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals (NMAHPs) employed by NHS Lothian. It is intended for staff at the early stage of their research career development, regardless of the stage of their clinical career development. It serves to promote research capacity and capability development and thereby sustain a higher volume of quality applied healthcare research amongst these professions in the longer term. Funding is provided by the Nursing Directorate and Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation (ELHF).

Two rounds of invitations to apply for support have occurred to date in 2013-14 and 2014-15. This funding opportunity has proven popular among staff and some quality applications have been received in both rounds. The limits of the available funding have meant that the Awards Panel has not been able to fund all applicants to the preferred extent. Nonetheless, a total of 8 NMAHPs have been granted a Research Futures award to date. Details of the awards including the variety of important research topics are described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Research Topic</th>
<th>Type of Training</th>
<th>Type of Award</th>
<th>Award Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elaine McCurrach</td>
<td>Prosthetist</td>
<td>Understanding the causes of patient non-attendance at the SMART Centre Prosthetics Service</td>
<td>MClinRes at QMU</td>
<td>Funded 2 years backfill and expenses</td>
<td>Deferred to Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Jones</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Impact of muscle relaxant practices on patient safety in terms of endotracheal re-taping among paediatric ICU patients</td>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>1 year backfill and expenses</td>
<td>Commenced Q3 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison Murray</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>To explore whether early identification of the need for endotracheal re-taping among paediatric ICU patients improves patient safety and nursing time efficiency</td>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>1 year backfill and expenses</td>
<td>Commenced Q3 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azucena Garcia Garrido</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Involvement in a number of studies being carried out by the Dementia Research Cluster at UoE</td>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>1 year expenses</td>
<td>Commenced Q4 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynne Bremner</td>
<td>Speech &amp; Language Therapist</td>
<td>Development and testing of a diagnostic tool for children with suspected Autism Spectrum Disorders in pre-school settings</td>
<td>PhD at QMU</td>
<td>5 years expenses</td>
<td>Due to commence Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Ferry</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Do gender differences in the presentation of patients with suspected acute coronary syndrome affect treatment and outcomes?</td>
<td>PhD at Univ of Edinburgh</td>
<td>5 years expenses</td>
<td>Commenced Q3 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Sherwood</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Developing a supportive model of care for patients being considered for resection of colorectal liver metastases</td>
<td>PhD at Univ of Edinburgh</td>
<td>3 years expenses</td>
<td>Due to commence Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Matthews</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Can a portable Fibroscan be an effective cirrhosis screening tool in a community alcohol support service?</td>
<td>ProfDoc at QMU</td>
<td>5 years expenses</td>
<td>Commenced Q3 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Lothian NMAHP Research Community is made up of approximately 120 nurses, midwives and allied health professionals from both the NHS and higher education who are active or interested in practice-based research in health and social care. The Community was established in 2010 following the launch of the Lothian NMHAP Research Framework (2010-2015) which aims to:

- increase the volume and quality of applied research that leads to improvements in patient/client health and well-being and service delivery, particularly in areas of strategic priority.
- further enhance the profile and status of NMAHP research in Lothian, creating a culture of inquiry and evidence-informed decision making.
- enhance the NMAHP research infrastructure in order to support the development of high quality research studies and offer a range of career opportunities.

Dr Juliet MacArthur, NHS Lothian (Chair)
Andy Peters, NHS Lothian
Dr Janet Hanley, NHS Lothian
Dr Sheila Rodgers, University of Edinburgh
Professor Michael Brown, Edinburgh Napier University
Susan Watt, Edinburgh Napier University
Dr Judith Lane, Queen Margaret University
Dr Kath MacDonald, Queen Margaret University

Phone: 0131 537 4070
E-mail: juliet.macarthur@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Congratulations!

To the following members of the Lothian NMAHP Research Community who have completed their studies in the past year:

- Juliet MacArthur—awarded PhD from Edinburgh Napier University
- Kath MacDonald—awarded Professional Doctorate from Queen Margaret University
- Sue Cruickshank—awarded PhD from Edinburgh Napier University
- Kirstin James—awarded Professional Doctorate from Glasgow Caledonian University
- Joanne McArdle—awarded Professional Doctorate from Glasgow Caledonian University

Hold the Date!

NMAHP Research Community Networking Event

28th April 2015: 12—3.30pm

More details to follow