My name is Sarah Howie and I am Professor of Immunopathology and I am based in the Immunity and Chronic Inflammation group at Little France. One of the projects going on in our lab is looking at the immune responses made by women in response to vaccination against the cancer-causing types of papilloma virus. In women this ends up with a disease called cervical cancer which affects a large number of people, and particularly what we want to know is 'What is the difference between people who have been vaccinated against the infection and protected against developing cancer, compared to those who make an immune response to the natural infection'.

This work is ongoing with colleagues in the hospital and within the Centre for Reproductive Health and we are going to be measuring over time the antibody responses made by vaccinating women and comparing those to women who have been infected naturally with the organism. We hope to discover what actually constitutes protective immunity against this virus.