

WOLFSON INSTITUTE OF POPULATION HEALTH NEWSLETTER ISSUE 78: 19 June 2025

In this issue of our Wolfson Institute of Population Health Newsletter, we celebrate the achievements and work of staff and students in late May and the first half of June.

FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues

On 17 June we had an excellent turnout for our 4th annual WIPH Showcase, celebrating our activities in the last year and looking forward to new opportunities. In the morning we had excellent presentations from several PhD students and new Fellowship awardees. We also had enthralling reports about a number of cross-Institutional activities, including our education plans and our three key themes: Health Data Science, Applied Social Science in Health, and our Public Advisory Panel.



After networking over an extended lunch break in gorgeous sunshine, we had a fabulously energetic session of research and teaching highlights from five of our Centres. This included not only short talks, but also some very special effects including TikTok videos. Congratulations to all!

We then focused on the work of our Centre for Primary Care, with Steph Taylor leading a celebration of Chris Griffiths' extraordinary 33 years of work at QM as he moves on to spend most of his time working in Oxford. It was a great pleasure to welcome back our colleague Prof Gene Feder, from Bristol, and also to hear from Julia Hippisley-Cox, who has recently undertaken the reverse journey to Chris, moving to join us from Oxford.



Prof Amrita Ahluwalia, FMD Dean for Research, gave us an interesting overview of FMD's current research and future plans, and then, finally, we had a lovely WIPH Award Ceremony (see winners below):

- Research Excellence: Runguo Wu, CEM
(Highly commended - Anna De Simoni, CPC)
- Research Supervisor of the Year: Moneeza Siddiqui, CPC
(Highly commended - Samantha Quaife & Georgia Black, CCSPED)
- Outstanding Early Career Researcher: Daniel Stow CPC
(Highly commended - Sharifa Battashi, CPN)
- Postdoctoral Research Assistant: Lucy Johnson CPC
(Highly commended - Yue Liu, CPN)
- Education Excellence - Sania Shakoor, CP&MH
(Highly commended - Fiona Samuels, CPHP)
- Student Experience Excellence: Laksha Thulasitharan PS
(Highly commended - Sammy Quaife, CCSPED)
- Excellence in Citizenship: Libor Vlach PS
(Highly commended - Federica Biotti CPMH, Laura Smith CPN)
- Outstanding Team Contribution: The MS Participatory Research Team CPN
(Highly commended - BEST4 Screening Trial team CCSPED)
- Outstanding Professional Support: Basia Behnke, CCSPED
(Highly commended - Sheik Dowlut CPC, Natalie Donkor CPN)
- Outstanding Contribution to Public Engagement: Nia Otake John CCSPED
(Highly commended - Heather McMullen CPHP, Cherelle Salmon CEM)





(Our fabulous CPN MS Participatory Research Team, in action on Tuesday!)



Sending huge congratulations to the winners of our staff awards, and thanks to all who presented and participated to make the Showcase such a success.

With best wishes

Fiona

MEET WIPH

MEET – Lady Akwa (Post-Doc Research Fellow, CCSPED)

How would you describe your roles and responsibilities?

As a postdoc research fellow in behavioural science, I am part of the Yorkshire Lung Screening Trial Pathway Navigation project. My primary responsibility is the process evaluation of a pathway navigation intervention aimed at reaching high-risk individuals who don't respond to standard screening invitations. Currently, I am immersed in the analysis of quantitative and qualitative datasets, exploring insights that will help refine our approach to pathway navigation in lung cancer screening and patient experience. I am also developing an e-learning training resource on pathway navigation, which will empower health professionals across England with the knowledge and tools they need to support lung cancer screening efforts.

What has been your greatest professional achievement?

It is still early in my research career, but earning a PhD during a global pandemic stands out as a defining achievement that tested my resilience and dedication in ways I never expected. Stepping into my first postdoc role, I am excited about the potential impact of the Pathway Navigation study on lung cancer screening across the UK. It can drive meaningful change, and I consider being part of the journey both a privilege and an inspiring challenge.

What aspects of your role do you enjoy the most?

I enjoy diving into all the fascinating data. As a mixed method researcher, it is incredibly satisfying exploring how the quantitative and qualitative elements complement each other. There is something compelling about seeing patterns emerge, and understanding the real-world implications of the findings. Additionally, developing a training module has been a completely new venture for me. I'm enjoying the challenge of piecing together the various elements that make a resource truly useful, translating research into practical tools that can support health professionals in lung cancer screening.

What would be your second choice as a profession?

In another life, I would have loved to follow my mother's footsteps and pursue fashion design. The artistry behind constructing complex patterns and seeing a design come to life has always tantalized me. Alternatively, I would love to own a cozy small town bakery. Whether in fabric or flour, I love the idea of creating something meaningful and beautiful.

What do you enjoy doing outside work?

I love getting creative with crocheting and sewing, and yoga keeps me active and relaxed. As a devoted fiction reader (real life can wait!), I'm always lost in a good book. I have recently rekindled my love for building complex LEGO sets, which is incredibly satisfying for the child in me. With my background in sports and exercise medicine, an absolute non-negotiable indulgence is my Discovery Plus TNT sports subscription where I follow football, cycling, and tennis. Listening to music is an essential part of daily life; I enjoy discovering new music, but my go-to genres are Jazz, Afro-Soul and 80s Soft Rock.

Something most people don't know about you?

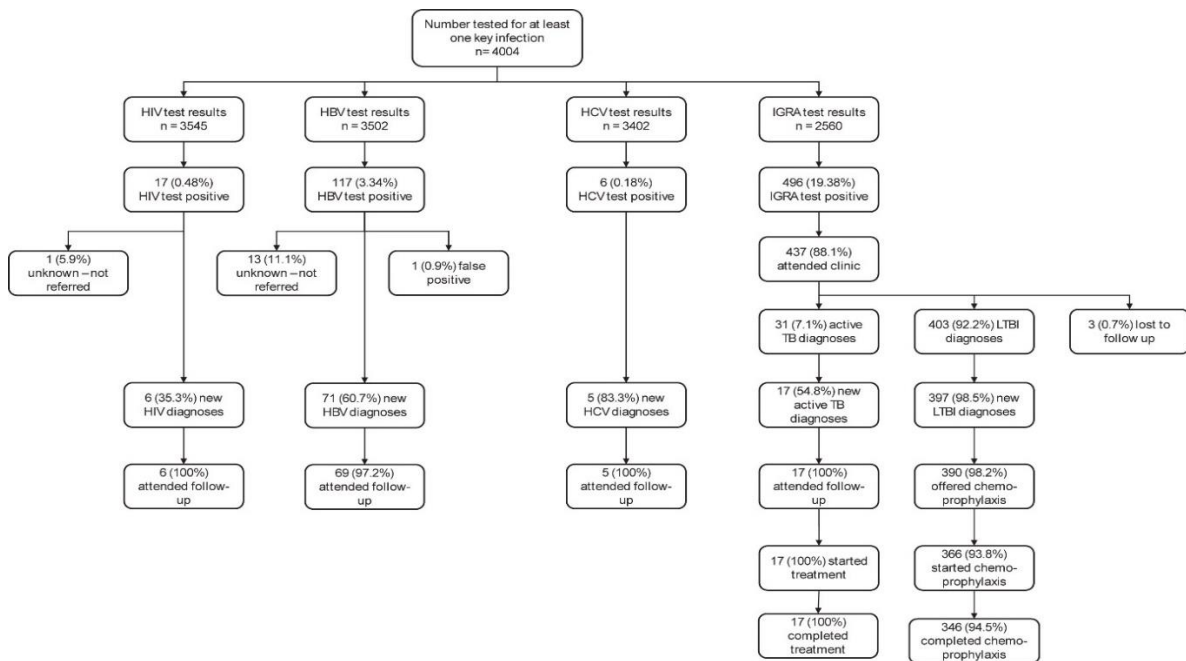
I like to think of myself as a closet poet, quietly weaving words together in moments of inspiration. My naturally introverted nature lends itself well to this creative escape, with my best ideas sparked by travel, intriguing encounters, and the discovery of new places. Ironically, despite being from Ghana, one of the world's largest producers of cocoa, I have never developed a taste for chocolate. It is such a surprising contradiction, but proof that personal preferences can defy expectations!



Routine primary care testing for infectious diseases among migrants

30 May (Chris Griffiths. Centre for Primary Care)

Evaluation of the effectiveness of an integrated approach to screen migrants for TB infection, HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C when they first register with general practices shows high test yields for latent/active TB, HIV and hepatitis B, with substantial new diagnoses. The study included 4004 migrant GP patients referred for testing between 2016-19 in Leicester, one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the UK. Test yields were 19.38% for TB, 0.48% for HIV, 3.34% for HepB, and 0.18% HepC. Authors say high rates of linkage to care for those newly diagnosed and high treatment completion rates demonstrate the effectiveness of the programme, and that to influence UK screening guidelines, cost-effectiveness and acceptability to other primary care settings must be evaluated, along with evidence of the generalisability of their findings to other UK settings.



4AT delirium detection tool scores as indicators of possible dementia

31 May (Liz Sampson. Centre for Psychiatry and Mental Health)

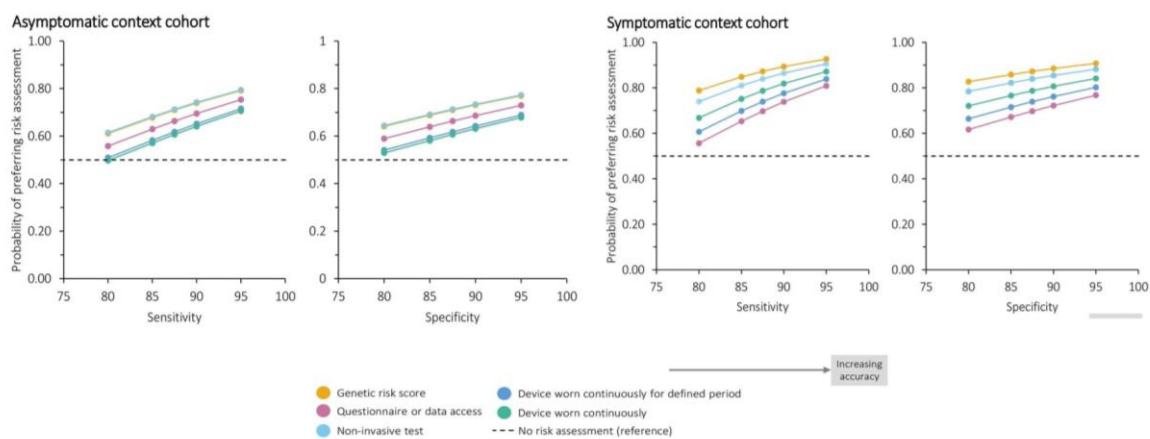


A study of 62,188 older adult hospital admissions with 4AT cognitive and functional assessment scores investigates whether the 4AT tool could help identify patients with undiagnosed dementia. Clinical dementia diagnosis was ascertained from linked primary care, hospital discharge and community prescribing data. Positive 4AT scores were associated with clinically diagnosed dementia. The results suggest that routinely collected 4AT scores could be leveraged, with other clinical indicators, to identify patients with possible undiagnosed dementia who could undergo further inpatient diagnostic assessment and/or post-discharge specialist follow-up.

Public priorities for risk-based cancer screening and diagnosis in UK

31 May (Jo Waller. Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis)

Evaluating the importance to the public of features in risk-based assessments for cancer screening and diagnosis, researchers conducted an online test survey, randomly allocating UK participants to consider their choices in an asymptomatic or symptomatic context. Participants then chose between 2 risk assessment options or opting out of risk assessment. Results showed that participants preferred risk assessments over opting out, prioritised test sensitivity, favoured genetic and non-invasive tests, and would be more likely to take up a risk assessment with a sensitivity and specificity of $\geq 80\%$. Comparing asymptomatic v symptomatic cohorts, 65% and 73% of participants would be very likely to participate, regardless of the innovation. The results demonstrate high levels of public support for risk-based innovations in risk-stratified cancer healthcare, especially for referral decision-making and using genetic and non-invasive tests. Authors say risk-based innovations need to be optimised to engage those whose participation is contingent on test methods and performance metrics.



Are there billions more people on Earth than we thought?

31 May (Jonathan Kennedy. Centre for Public Health and Policy)

A recent Finnish study suggests that UN figures may underestimate world population by several billion. In a Guardian opinion piece, Jonathan Kennedy reflects on overpopulation, widely perceived as the cause of many of the world's biggest problems. He notes that the approach to population control now focuses on women's empowerment, and that giving them control over their lives has transformed fertility rates, from an average of 5 children each in the 1960s, to 2.3 today. By 2100 the global birthrate is projected to fall to 1.8. While ethnonationalists in Europe and N. America see international disparities in birthrates as a threat to western civilisation, in a few decades our shrinking, ageing societies will desperately need these newcomers to pay taxes and work in healthcare and social care: "This vision of the future may be unsettling for some, but the alternative is much worse."



Are there billions more people on Earth than we thought? If so, it's no bad thing

Jonathan Kennedy



A study suggests the global population has been undercounted - but we shouldn't let the overpopulation alarmists win the argument



Unemployment in the Context of Long-Term Illness

1 June (Esca van Blarikom, Nina Fudge, Deborah Swinglehurst. Centre for Primary Care)

ANTHROPOLOGY OF WORK REVIEW



WILEY

Published by the Society for the Anthropology of Work, a section of the American Anthropology Association

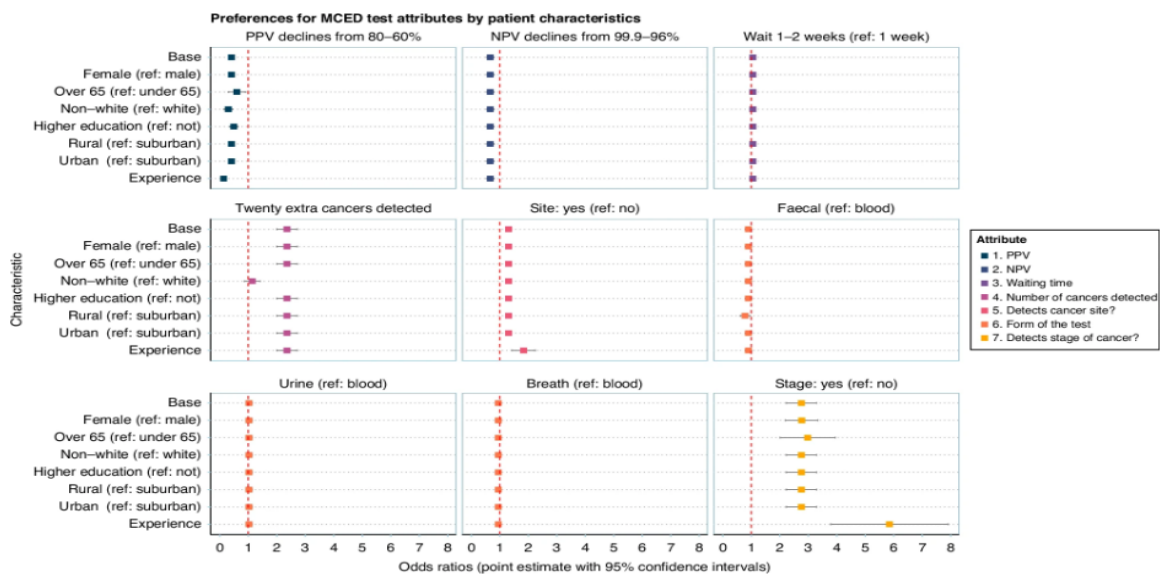


Research examining the experiences of work and unemployment among E. London residents living with multiple long-term health conditions focuses on the cyclical relationship between (un)employment and (ill-) health. Findings show that, while participants desired employment and could only imagine a fulfilling life through work, they found it impossible to remain in most workplaces they had experienced, as these environments worsened their health conditions. The study concludes that people with long-term illness are trapped in a system that both punishes incapacity and obstructs recovery or return to work, contextualising these findings within a broader critique of the neoliberal framing of work as the only route to dignified living.

GP and public preferences for multi-cancer tests in primary care

2 June (James Buchanan. Centre for Evaluation and Methods)

Exploring preferences for multi-cancer tests, researchers conducted online discrete choice experiments among GPs and the public in England. Responses indicated a preference for MCTs that maximised negative predictive value, positive predictive value, and could test for a larger number of cancer sites. People from ethnic minority backgrounds placed less importance on multiple cancer detection, and people with more knowledge and experience of cancer placed substantial importance on the MCT being able to detect cancer at an early stage. The findings provide a basis for designing clinical implementation strategies for MCTs according to their performance characteristics.



Will the UK disposable vape ban drive up smoking rates?

2 June (Peter Hajek. Centre for Public Health and Policy)

Sale of single-use vapes was banned in the UK from 1 June to reduce use among young people, but a Yorkshire Cancer Research survey showed that 18% of those using disposable vapes planned to switch to tobacco when the ban began. In an interview with the Manchester Evening News, Peter Hajek said "Vaping poses only a small fraction of risks of smoking, and so smokers who find stopping smoking difficult or do not want to stop using nicotine should be encouraged to switch to vapes. Any regulation of vapes needs to be careful, so that it does not deter smokers from switching. It also needs to avoid pushing smokers who had already switched to vapes, or are in the process of doing so, back to cigarettes. Another risk is that the ban reinforces the common misconception that vaping is as bad as smoking. It is to be hoped that the roll-out of the ban will be accompanied by clear information about the benefits of switching from smoking to vaping."



Will the disposable vape ban drive up smoking rates?

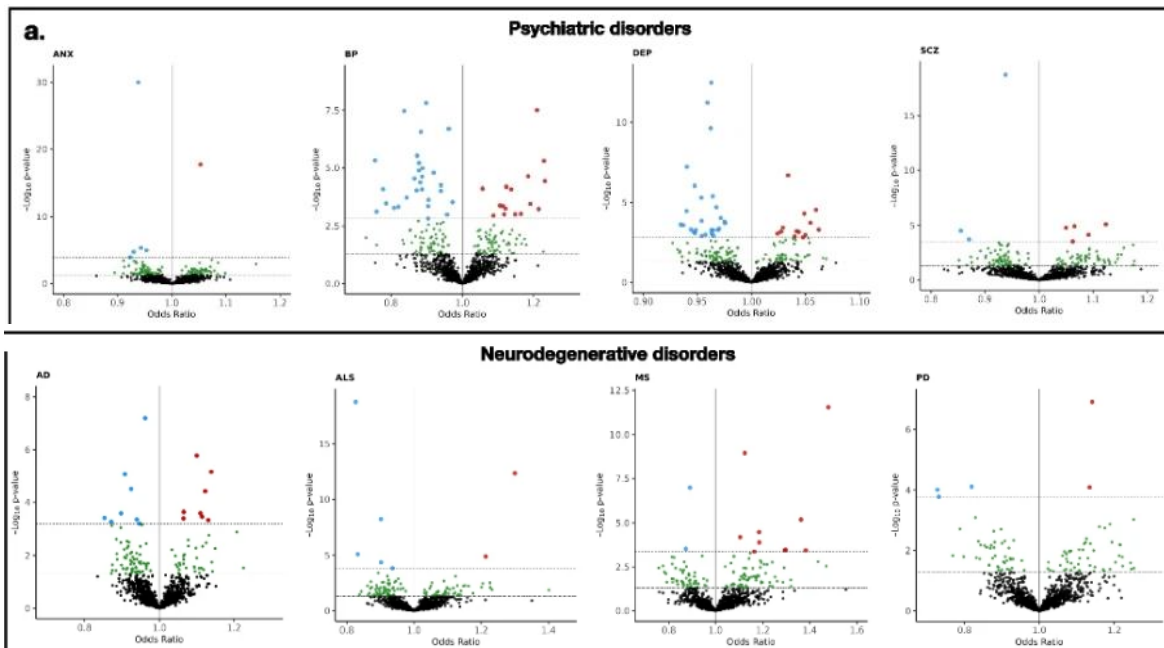
A ban on single-use vapes has come into force in the UK - and research hints that vapers could now turn to smoking



Causal effects on risk for psychiatric/neurodegenerative disorders

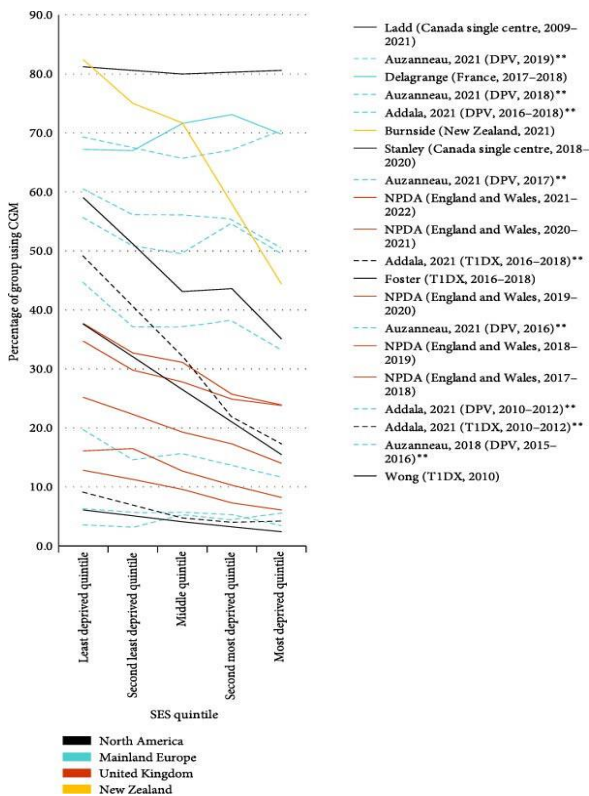
2 June (Petroula Priotsi. Centre for Preventive Neurology)

As phenotypic and biological overlap may exist between psychiatric and neurodegenerative disorders, identifying underlying mutual and unique biological mechanisms may yield novel therapeutic targets. Testing the effects of 1000 plasma metabolites and ~300 metabolic ratios on anxiety, bipolar disorder, depression, schizophrenia, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's, and MS, researchers identified 85 causal effects, involving 77 unique metabolites. Analyses implicate sphingolipid metabolism in psychiatric disorder risk, and carnitine derivatives in risk for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and MS. No single metabolite had a causal effect on both a psychiatric and a neurodegenerative disease, but results suggest a broad effect of lipids across brain disorders, with a particular role for lipids containing linoleic or arachidonic acid in psychiatric disorders.



Inequity of continuous glucose monitoring in young people with T1D diabetes

3 June (Lucy Johnson, John Ford. Centre for Primary Care)



A review of 27 studies reporting Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) for type 1 diabetes patients under age 26 summarises the evidence for inequalities in the prevalence of CGM use in children and young people with T1D. Findings show decreased CGM use and higher discontinuation for low socioeconomic status (SES), low education, publicly insured and minority ethnic, especially Black, children and young people. The associations were generally robust to adjustment for other sociodemographic variables, suggesting an independent effect. Lower SES inequalities were seen in countries where CGM is reimbursed. Authors conclude that this inequity contributes to inequalities in T1D outcomes, and that increasing CGM funding and use is likely to reduce outcome inequalities.

Impact of physician associates in primary care in the UK

4 June (Lola Oyebo. Centre for Public Health and Policy)

A literature review assessing the impact of physician associates (PAs) in delivering primary care in the UK examines workload, safety, efficacy and cost-effectiveness. Results show that PAs were considered clinically safe, but impacts on workload and efficacy were less clear, and it was not possible to calculate the cost effectiveness. Authors say that the limited published evidence indicates a clear need for further research, including a comparison of PAs with the non-GP primary care workforce.



Annual Graduate Studies Day for WIPH PhD students

4 June (Nina Fudge, on behalf of the Director of Graduate Studies team)

Over 70 PhD students gathered for our annual WIPH Graduate Studies Day, focused on building community, enhancing writing and viva skills, sharing research, and exploring careers. The event was led by our excellent PhD reps, and chaired with great energy and enthusiasm by Moonsun Barj, Imogen Collier, and Sonja Jacobs, who created a relaxed atmosphere. A highlight was the career panel featuring recent PhD graduates Duncan Reynolds, Jing Hui Law, Monique Tan, and Rikeen Jobanputra, who offered honest reflections on transitioning into careers in academia, research funding, policy, and industry. One key takeaway was how little career discussion students had with their supervisors, especially when exploring non-academic paths. The day concluded with presentations from 10 students, showcasing the rich diversity of research within WIPH.



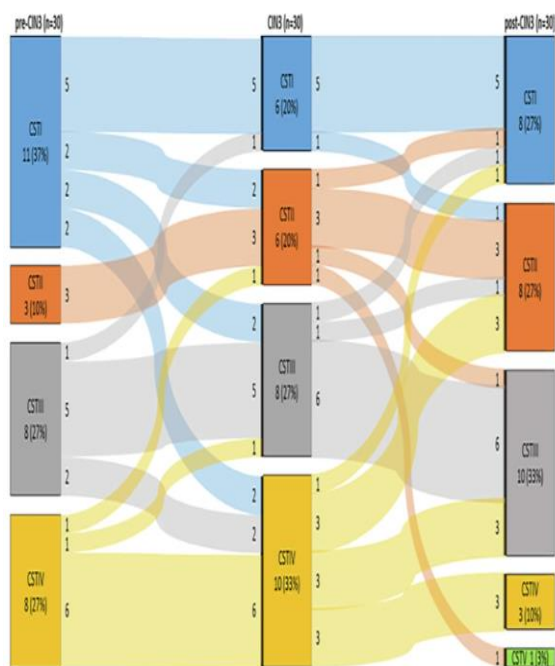
Effectiveness of post-stroke psychological therapy

5 June (Claudia Cooper, Centre for Psychiatry and Mental Health)

More than 1 in 3 stroke survivors are affected by depression or anxiety. Using records from the NHS Talking Therapies services in England, a [study](#) of 7,597 stroke survivors finds that psychological treatment is effective for these patients. Those who started attending the services ≥ 1 yr after a stroke were less likely to reliably recover from symptoms of depression or anxiety than those seen within 6 months. The study concludes that clinicians working with stroke survivors should screen for symptoms of depression and anxiety and consider referring patients to primary care psychological therapies as early as possible.



Link between cervicovaginal microbiome and CIN3 progression and recovery
 6 June (Efthymios Ladoukakis, Belinda Nedjai. Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis)

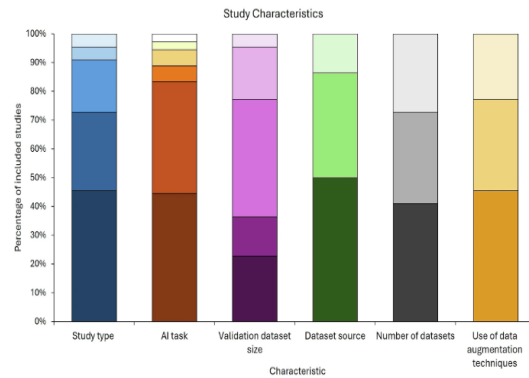
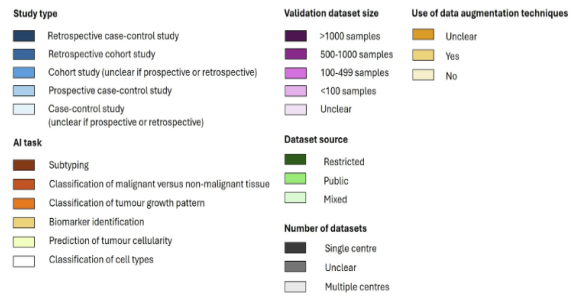


A pilot study investigating the potential of vaginal microbiome biomarkers to predict CIN3 development in high risk HPV positive women from the ARTISTIC trial [finds](#) that higher presence of *Lactobacillus gasseri* in post-CIN3 specimens was associated with faster HPV clearance, suggesting it may have a potential protective or recovery-promoting role in cervical health. *Sneathia amnii* consistently appeared as a potential microbial biomarker for CIN3 development, exhibiting differential abundance in CIN3 compared with post-CIN3 specimens, persistently hrHPV+, and control groups. Authors conclude that these microbial biomarkers could complement HPV screening to refine risk stratification.

Pathology-based AI models for lung cancer diagnosis

7 June (Soumya Arun, Oleg Blyuss, Rhian Gabe, Judith Offman. Centres for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis/Evaluation and Methods)

Lack of external validation has limited adoption of digital pathology-based AI models for lung cancer diagnosis. A [review](#) of 22 studies examines the performance and validation of these tools, finding that AI model tasks include classifying malignant v non-malignant tissue and tumour growth patterns, and (most commonly) subtyping adeno- v squamous cell carcinomas. Subtyping models performed highly (average AUC values 0.746-0.999). Methodological issues affecting the applicability of models in real-world settings included small and/or non-representative datasets, retrospective studies and case-control studies without further real-world validation. Authors conclude that more rigorous external validation of models is warranted for increased clinical adoption.



Characteristics of included studies.

Implementation of electronic blood transfusion systems in English hospitals

10 June (Florian Tomini, Hiro Farabi. Centre for Evaluation and Methods)



WILEY

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British Society for
Haematology
Learning • Training • Leading

Electronic blood transfusion (EBT) systems, recommended in national guidelines, could significantly enhance patient safety and healthcare efficiency, but widespread adoption is hampered by lack of evidence. A [study](#) of 114 English hospitals finds that electronic blood fridges were the most adopted technology (57.5%), followed by bedside patient identification systems (32.7%). Advanced systems such as clinical decision support were implemented in only 14.2% of sites. Barriers to adoption included financial constraints, limited senior management engagement, and technical challenges. Researchers say that cost-effectiveness analyses to support investment decisions, and evidence of clinical effectiveness to justify advanced EBT systems and overcome organisational barriers are needed.

First evidence review from the London NHS Violence Reduction Academy

11 June (Sania Shakoor, Heather McMullen. Centres for Psychiatry and Mental Health/Public Health and Policy)

NHS England have announced publication of the first academic-led evidence review from the London NHS Violence Reduction Academy, authored by Sania Shakoor and Heather McMullen. The 2-year review published on the Academy [website](#) identifies 4 categories of health-based interventions focused on reducing violence affecting young people: hospital-based violence reduction, psychological models of care, bleed control and 'zero responder' (bystander First Aid) skills, and integrated health approaches, such as GP practices in youth centres. The academy has developed a three-year plan to build on the report findings, with a goal to provide guidance on how healthcare services can implement some of the recommendations.



NHS
**Violence
Reduction
Programme**
London



**EVIDENCE
REVIEW**

**Health-based interventions
FOR VIOLENCE AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE**

Dr Heather McMullen and Dr Sania Shakoor
with Tabassum Adelyar, Abigail Kemley and Elena Mitali
Queen Mary University of London,
Academic partners to the NHS Violence Reduction Academy

'No reason to panic' - Desogestrel link to increased brain tumour risk

11 June (Mangesh Thorat. Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis)

Long-Term Use of This Contraceptive Pill Linked to Increased Brain Tumor Risk

Newsweek



Responding to results from a new [paper](#) showing an association between long term desogestrel use and meningioma risk, Mangesh Thorat told [Newsweek](#): "There is no reason to panic, as the risk is very small, and even in those who developed meningioma, stopping the specific drug was shown to cause regression in the size of meningioma." Mangesh was also quoted in the Daily Mail.

QMUL Research and Innovation Awards

11 June (N2O Know the Risks team, Avi Chandra. Centre for Preventive Neurology)

WIPH excellence was recognised at the 2025 QMUL Research and Innovation Awards, in the outstanding work of our WIPH winning team in the 'Impact: Civic, Community, Culture and Policy' category, for the *N2O: Know The Risks* project. Led by Alastair Noyce and Laura Smith, the team has significantly improved treatment of nitrous oxide neurotoxicity in vulnerable groups in East London, and launched a prevention campaign with local charities and councils. The Panel chair said that the team truly represented the core QM principles and ethos, and that their research with real world impact creates positive change which can be felt in our local communities and beyond. Congratulations are also in order for Avi Chandra, who was highly commended in the Post Doc/Research Fellow award category.



National Diet and Nutrition Survey highlights UK nutrition failings

11 June (Sonia Pombo. Centre for Public Health and Policy)

MailOnline



Almost all Brits are missing out on key nutrient linked to bowel cancer explosion in under 50s, shock report finds

• [READ MORE: Eating specific type of bread linked to deadly colon cancer](#)

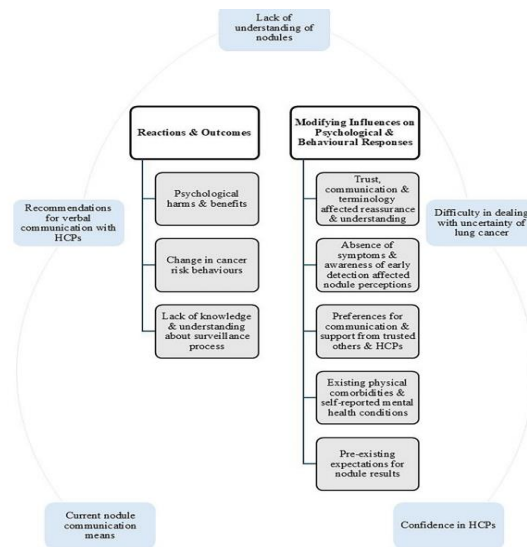
By [EMILY STEARN](#), SENIOR HEALTH REPORTER FOR MAILONLINE

Data on UK diets from 2019-23 from the National Diet and Nutrition Survey show that 96% of adults fail to eat enough fibre, <1 in 10 children eat the recommended amount of fruit and vegetables, and 9/10 children eat too much sugar. Sonia Pombo told the MailOnline that the findings are a stark reminder that the UK population, particularly children, are not getting the required nutrition for good health: "The persistently low intake of fruit, vegetables, and fibre, coupled with excessive consumption of free sugars and saturated fats, is setting the stage for serious public health consequences, including cardiovascular disease, obesity and type2 diabetes. We need the Government to learn from previous failures, and be bold and ambitious in their policymaking, including mandatory targets for sugar and salt reduction, with financial penalties on those who fail to comply."

Communication on surveillance for pulmonary nodules: Patient experiences

12 June (Stephen Duffy, Sammy Quaife. Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis)

Low-dose CT screening reduces lung cancer mortality, but also detects pulmonary nodules that require surveillance. In 1-1 remote semi-structured interviews, a multicentre qualitative study finds that understanding what a nodule is and what a surveillance process entails is important for explaining patient psychological reactions and behavioural outcomes. Perceived support and effective communication with healthcare professionals were instrumental in decreasing patients' distress, uncertainty and concern, and increasing reassurance, knowledge about nodules and psychological preparation for the possibility of surveillance. Current letter-based advice of nodule detection was acceptable to patients, but there is a need to improve communication using lay language. These findings may shape healthcare practices in lung cancer screening communication protocols.



BMJ Open Respiratory Research



2025 George Cholmeley Cattlin prize

13 June (Stephen Hibbs. Centre for Primary Care)

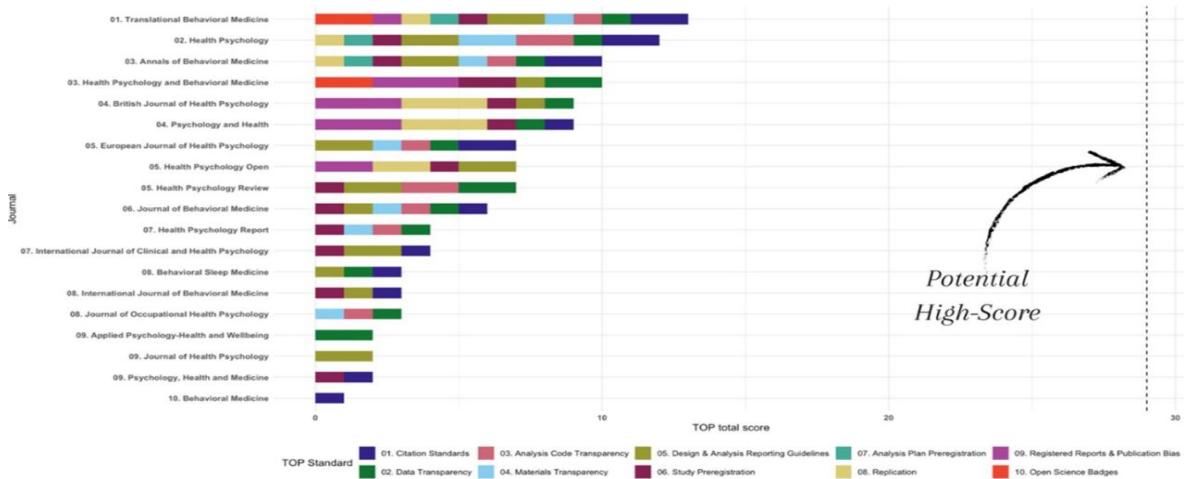


Huge congratulations to Stephen Hibbs, who has been awarded the 2025 George Cholmeley Cattlin prize for postgraduate clinical or laboratory research in medicine. The winner is selected by the FMD Graduate Studies Committee and the Board of the Voluntary Hospital of St Bartholomew Trustees from PGR students nominated by their PhD/MD supervisor or a member of academic staff. Well deserved Stephen!

Journal policies on Transparency and Openness Promotion guidelines

13 June (Christina Derksen. Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis)

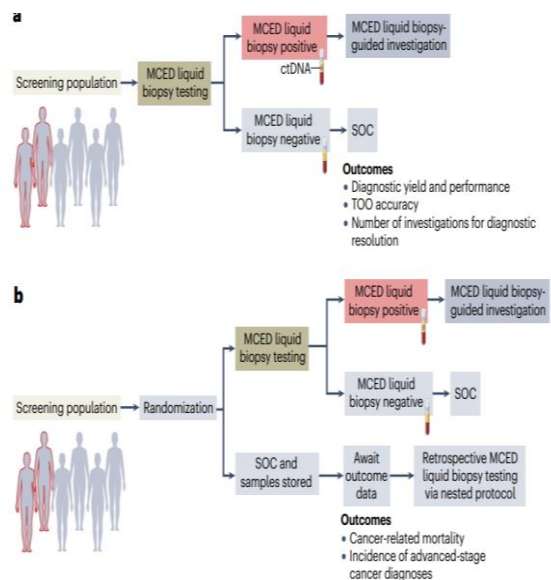
A cross sectional study evaluates adoption by 19 health psychology and behavioural medicine journals of the Transparency and Openness Promotion (TOP) guidelines, which identify standards for journals to promote the verifiability of research. Journal scores ranged from 1 to 13 out of a possible 29. Standards related to use of reporting guidelines and data transparency were the most adopted. Least adopted were those relating to pre-registration of study analysis plans and citation of code. Authors identify opportunities for improvement, such as expanding policies around research data to also consider code and materials, and reducing ambiguity of wording TOP guidelines.



Multi-cancer early detection using liquid biopsy tests

13 June (Peter Sasieni. Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis)

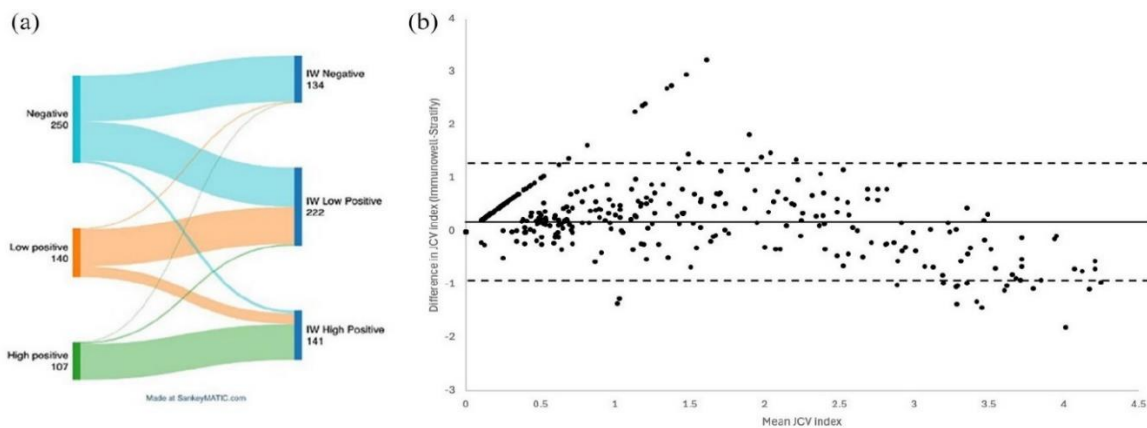
Large scale RCTs are now evaluating multi-cancer early detection (MCED) liquid biopsy-based testing, a minimally invasive and broadly applicable screening approach. A new review discusses the promises and pitfalls of MCED tests, including the primary issue of analytical performance (current tests are not yet sensitive enough to rule out cancer), and the question of whether the lead time gained from current liquid biopsy-based MCED screening is sufficient to produce cost-effective clinical benefits. Authors say that the outcomes from the first wave of RCTs evaluating MCED tests (eg: NHS-Galleri), will be crucial for guiding implementation decisions, and in the development of the next generation of assays, trial designs and experimental medicines.



JC virus assay performance with originator and biosimilar natalizumab

14 June (Ruth Dobson. Centre for Preventive Neurology)

Risk of progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML), a rare complication of natalizumab treatment, can be stratified using JC virus (JCV) antibody status. Addressing increased JC virus (JCV) seropositive results following the switch to biosimilar natalizumab and the associated test switch, researchers assessed clinical implications in 497 people with MS who had switched. Of 250 patients negative on Stratify-JCV, 119 were subsequently positive on ImmunoWELL, with agreement poorest at lower JCV index, where positive/negative cutoffs inform risk stratification and pharmacovigilance protocols most significantly. The differences create uncertainty around counselling patients and conducting PML surveillance, with specific concerns include overestimating risk, increased monitoring burden and associated healthcare costs, and lack of access to a highly effective therapy.



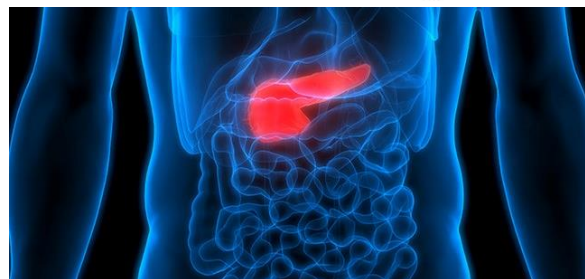
Risk factors for pancreatic cancer in electronic health records

14 June (Fiona Walter. Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis)

An umbrella review of 168 studies examines factors that could provide earlier identification and improve outcomes for pancreatic cancer. Of 80 potential risk factors identified, 38 were associated with increased pancreatic cancer risk and 11 had a protective effect. Major newly found risk factors were autoimmune liver disease, BRCA gene mutation, co-infection with hepatitis B and C, and insulin use.

eClinicalMedicine

Part of THE LANCET *Discovery Science*

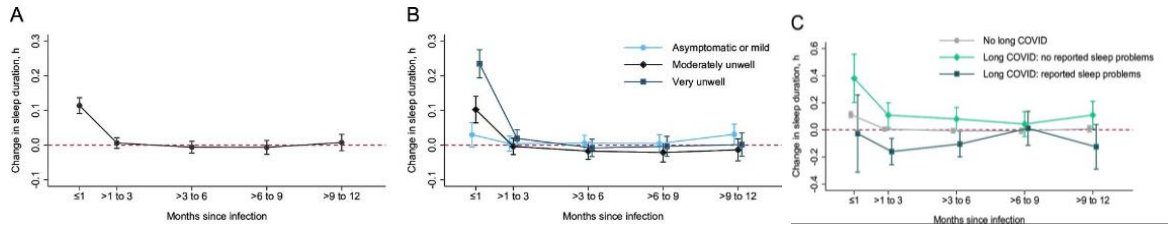


Relationship between sleep problems and long COVID

15 June (Mohammad Talaei, Seif Shaheen. Centre for Preventive Neurology)

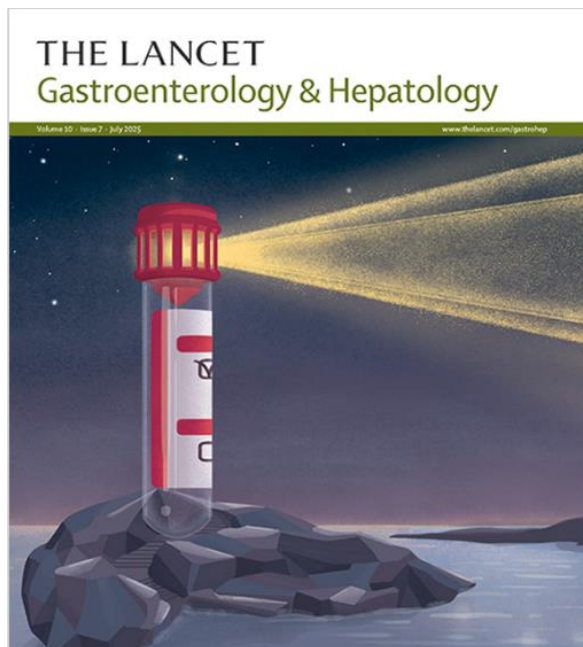
Poor sleep quality has been described as both a risk factor for long COVID and a symptom of the condition. Using prospectively collected monthly data on 6860 participants in the COVIDENCE UK study, new research finds that lower quality pre-

infection sleep is associated with higher risk of developing long COVID. In non-hospitalised cases, SARS-CoV-2 infection had a modest impact on sleep, but changes largely resolved within 6 months. Authors say the findings highlight the potential impact of sleep on post-infection syndromes more generally, and further research should explore its role in post-acute sequelae caused by other pathogens.



Barrett's surveillance and screening: Time for a new direction

16 June (Peter Sasieni. Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis)



BEST4

In a Lancet Gastroenterology & Hepatology commentary, Peter Sasieni sets out options for dealing with the problem of poor oesophageal adenocarcinoma prognosis, caused by low compliance, high cost, and lack of capacity. With <10% of patients with Barrett's oesophagus diagnosed, the UK endoscopic surveillance strategy will not markedly change mortality from oesophageal adenocarcinoma. To do better for patients: "we need to step back and think outside the box about the most promising tools we have in our armamentarium today, and what research we can do for a new and better approach in future." A non-endoscopic approach in a targeted population enriched for risk-factors is needed: "This is the goal of the randomised BEST4 screening trial, which will compare the offer of GP usual care versus a capsule sponge test for Barrett's to reduce the oesophageal cancer specific morbidity and mortality."

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Large Language Models in Healthcare and Research – Animation Screening
30 June 3-5pm, Old Library QMUL

Mel Ramasawmy (CCSPED) and Lizzie Remfry (WHRI), working with public contributors, Social Action for Health, and colleagues at KCL and BSMS, have produced two short, animated explainers on large language models (LLMs) in healthcare and research. The animations aim to increase public understanding of LLMs, to enable safe use and to facilitate engagement in LLM research. Please register [here](#) to attend, and email Mel if you would like to talk about to our PPI contributors about your LLM-related research.



Large Language Models in Health - Animation Screening

Monday 30th June, 3-5pm, Old Library, QMUL.
Please complete these details to register for the event.

Many thanks to all who so enthusiastically contribute. Please send any news items for the next newsletter to j.a.mackie@qmul.ac.uk