

Exciting times for Public Health Research!



CISHE staff, October 2006

During the period 2003-2004, numerous high level reports highlighted the need for increased investment in public health research. For example, the Wanless reports in England and Wales highlighted the pressing need for more evidence of the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of public health interventions; the National Cancer Research Institute called for greater investment in behavioural intervention research, and the Wellcome report on Public Health Sciences identified the mismatch between the increased importance of health promotion and disease prevention with the lack of investment in the public health research base.

The evidence base for health improvement interventions was particularly weak, and the need for investment in intervention research, and particularly multidisciplinary public health improvement research, was emphasised. Subsequent to these reports, research funders such as Wellcome, Medical Research Council (MRC), Department of Health, Cancer Research UK, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), all included commitments to increase funding of public health or prevention research in their strategic documents, and recognised the critical need for multidisciplinary research in this

area. However, apart from the first round of the National Prevention Research Initiative, few specific actions were taken to deliver the intended increase in funding.

More recently however, these influential reports and strategic documents have delivered a raft of increased funding

opportunities. Just in the last few months, the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) programme has convened a prevention panel, highlighted prevention as a priority area for responsive mode applications and many of the topics in its latest call have been for prevention research; the Service Delivery Organisation (SDO) programme has issued a specific call for public health projects; BUPA have issued a research call for public health research; while a second round of the National Prevention Research Initiative (NPRI) is expected to be announced very soon. Although this massive increase in the availability of public health research funding is welcome, since it follows a historic period of chronic underfunding of research in this area, the capacity to bid for and deliver projects is very limited. This particularly applies to multidisciplinary public health improvement research, which has always been the Cinderella subject in public health medicine compared for example to aetiological, genetic and environmental epidemiology, and has always suffered from the discipline-based organisation of universities, research funders and the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), which have acted as a barrier to the development of multidisciplinary research groups.

It is therefore particularly welcome when the need to invest in public health research infrastructure is recognised. In Wales, we have been fortunate that the Wales Office of Research and Development for Health and Social Care (WORD) have invested in the Public Health Improvement Research Network (PHIRN) to facilitate and catalyse the development of collaborations to develop high quality research proposals.

However, PHIRN has found that the key barrier to achieving its aims is the limited availability of individuals with the skills, experience and time required to lead a Research Development Group and develop a research proposal. The recent announcement of the call for proposals for Centres of Public Health Research Excellence will hopefully be a major step in the creation of the required public health research capacity. Under this call, a consortium of funders co-ordinated by the United Kingdom Clinical research Collaboration (UKCRC) aims to fund five new centres, each funded to the tune of £5M over the initial five year funding period. The aim of this funding is to create sustainable new multidisciplinary research capacity to develop and deliver a greater quality and quantity of public health intervention research, particularly in the behavioural areas of diet and nutrition, physical activity, smoking, alcohol and drugs. As leads of PHIRN, we will be leading a strategic partnership which will aim to win funding of one of these centres, and encourage readers to contact us if they would be interested in contributing to the proposal. If successful, we will then have the capacity in Wales to take advantage of the increased funding of public health research projects that will be available in the future.

Page 2

- Events
- Forthcoming Events

Page 3

- CISHE News and Activities

Page 4

- PHIRN Updates
- New CISHE Projects

Page 5

- Completed CISHE Project

Page 6

- CISHE spotlight
- External Notices

Page 7

- CISHE Collaborators

Page 8

- New staff & Staff farewells

Events



The fourth seminar in the Health Challenge Wales quarterly series, “Tackling alcohol misuse: setting the scene for research priorities” took place on 5th December 2006. Over 50 delegates attended from academia, practice and policy and contributed to a lively interactive session.

The seminar was opened by Chris Roberts, Senior Principal Research Officer and Head of Research and Evaluation at the Public Health Improvement Division, Welsh Assembly Government who highlighted an increasing need to understand the influences on alcohol use and misuse and what interventions work to reduce such misuse. The scene was then set by Martin Plant, Professor of Addiction Studies, Alcohol and Health Research Trust, Centre for Public Health Research, University of the West of England, Bristol. His talk, entitled “Binge Britain and Prevention in Context: Recent Trends & Current Policies”, highlighted how alcohol has played a major part in British life for centuries. In many countries, alcohol

consumption has been decreasing in recent years, yet in Britain we are drinking more and more, and from an earlier age. Professor Plant presented a lively argument as to why our drinking culture is maintained, and why politicians seem reluctant to act to reduce the problem. He then went on to present an overview and critique of recent developments in alcohol consumption, alcohol-related social problems and national alcohol related policy.

This presentation was followed by two speakers who addressed interventions to reduce alcohol misuse and its associated harm.

David Foxcroft, Professor of Health Care, School of Health and Social Care, Oxford Brookes University highlighted the fact that the current evidence base for the effectiveness of substance misuse prevention programmes for young people indicates that particular prevention approaches may be efficacious. However, his talk “Evaluating Drug and Alcohol Misuse Prevention: Moving from Evidence of Efficacy to Issues of Cost-effectiveness and Cost-benefit” demonstrated how such results may not



be sufficient for effective evidence-based policy making. In the United Kingdom policy decisions on the implementation of prevention interventions should also consider a number of other issues, including “real world” implementation and cost effectiveness.

Finally, Jonathan Shepherd, Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Vice Dean, Cardiff University, in his talk “Preventing Alcohol Related Violence” went on to show how a series of community, clinical and magistrates’ court randomised control trial evaluations demonstrated the effectiveness of toughened glass, brief alcohol motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioural therapy to reduce injury, alcohol misuse and post traumatic stress. This highlighted not only how primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of alcohol related violence can be combined but how science-based interventions are meeting the needs of policy makers.

A plenary discussion raised many issues from researchers, practitioners and policy makers and a number of opportunities arose to develop and evaluate innovative approaches to alcohol misuse prevention. These can be found at www.phirn.org.uk, where you can register as a member of the discussion forum and contribute to their development.

Forthcoming Events

Health Challenge Wales Seminars



The next Health Challenge Wales seminar will be held on Wednesday 7th February, 2007. The topic is *Physical activity and the importance of environment and context*. Confirmed speakers include:

Ashley Cooper - Senior Lecturer & Head of Department of Exercise and Health Sciences at the University of Bristol:

Childrens activity: travel to school and the environment.

Len Almond - Director of the British Heart Foundation National Centre for Physical Activity and Health at Loughborough University: *Challenging current practice in physical activity promotion.*

Lamine Mahdjoubi - Professor of ICT in Built Environment, Construction Economics, Management and Engineering at the University of the West of England: *Outdoor design issues and challenges for promoting youth's physical activity.*

Sign up to attend by contacting Zoë Macdonald at macdonaldz@cardiff.ac.uk.

Julian Tudor Hart Annual lecture

Professor Mansell Aylward will present the next Julian Tudor Hart Annual lecture: *Changing the culture about work, health, and inactivity: avenues to happiness and wellbeing* on 16th May 2007 at 5pm in the Glamorgan Building, Cardiff University

Summary of lecture: Whatever different means they employ, all people seek happiness.¹ Enjoyment of an optimal state of health is key to human wellbeing. Economic, social, and moral arguments are advanced which favour work as the most effective means to improve wellbeing

of individuals, their families and their communities.² Worklessness, which includes, but is broader than unemployment and economic inactivity, can be destructive to self-respect, brings risks of poor physical and mental health, thwarts the pursuit of happiness, and profoundly handicaps the achievement of wellbeing.³ Moreover the “psychosocial scar” of worklessness persists, even affecting future generations. It is thus difficult to refute a moral obligation on society to do all at its disposal to move people of working age into a life of work; but what kind of work? In most circumstances do the beneficial effects of work outweigh the risks of worklessness and harmful effects of long-term unemployment or prolonged sickness absence from work? There is a broad consensus that encouragement and support should be given to sick and disabled people to remain in, or (re-)enter work as soon as possible, when their health condition so

permits. But how far should society go, and what ways are acceptable of achieving this? The social contexts of economic inactivity and worklessness must be fully recognised and soundly addressed if the desirable shift in culture about work and health is to be attained. Lack of autonomy in life is an enduring negative which leads to poor health, economic inactivity and unhappiness. Work may be central to wellbeing and correlated with happiness, but disadvantage is a cumulative process which can only be altered by prioritising transition to a more advantaged trajectory. A person’s past social experiences become, and are written into the body’s physiology and pathology.⁴ Tackling effectively the social determinants of disadvantage, economic inactivity, and thereby health, is not a matter for public health alone; it is central to the UK Government’s realisation of its aspiration for an 80 per cent employment rate for the working age population. Family

relationships, financial situation, social integration, personal freedom and values, as well as work, are among the principal factors that contribute to happiness. All these too are inextricably linked to the life-course perspective. Only by addressing the social gradient in health, advantage, income and happiness will culture change about health and work be achievable, and avenues to wellbeing be open to those who wish to pass along them.

¹ Pascal, B. “Pensees”, In *Pensees*, ed W. F. Trotter (1660; New York: Dutton, 1908)

² Waddell, G., Burton A K. *Is Work Good for your Health and Wellbeing?* TSO, London: 2006

³ Waddell G, Aylward M. *The Scientific and Conceptual Basis of Incapacity Benefits*. TSO, London: 2005

⁴ Blaney, D. *Social Determinants of health*. WHO: 1998

Further details will be available shortly on the CISHE website www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/cishe. To pre register for this event contact cishe@cf.ac.uk.

CISHE News and Activities

Dr Simon Murphy has been invited to provide expert comment on the Department of Health consultation for picture warnings on tobacco products by the British Psychological Society.

Professor Laurence Moore is co-applicant on two recently funded research proposals. First, a team led by Professor Rona Campbell of the University of Bristol have secured funding from the Department of Health for a feasibility study to develop and test the potential effectiveness of a peer-led intervention to increase physical activity and healthy eating in adolescence. Second, a team lead by Professor Mick Bloor of Glasgow University have been awarded funding by the Medical Research Council to undertake a feasibility study for a schools-based, peer-led, drugs prevention programme. Both of these projects are exploratory trials to test adaptations of the ASSIST programme (see <http://www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/cishe/pages/projects/assist.html>).

CISHE Abroad

Dr Alex Faulkner was invited to participate in a workshop: *Shaping the Future of Health Innovation Research in Canada*, 28-29 September 2006, University of Montreal.

Dr Faulkner presented a talk entitled: *Desirable innovation, stakeholders, connectivity - tissue engineered technologies*. The workshop brought together a unique group of 25 international participants concerned with ‘upstream’ innovation in healthcare - including healthcare evaluators, product designers, industrialists, medical device industry representatives, medical/healthcare sociologists and innovation system analysts, development agencies, patent and intellectual property specialists, health policymakers, and users of innovations. Discussions focused around four ‘technological clusters’. The participants will produce a scientific paper outlining a new research agenda, and a health policy-oriented report.

CISHE in the UK

Professor Laurence Moore has presented the Public Health Improvement Research Network (PHIRN) at the Public Health Alliance Cymru conference, November 26th, 2006.

Personal Recognition

Professor Laurence Moore has been offered the position of Adjunct Professor at the University of Bergen, with effect from

1st January 2007. In this role, Laurence will contribute to postgraduate and postdoctoral training in the Graduate School of Human Growth and Interaction, and the development of collaborative publications and grant proposals. Collaborators in Bergen will include Professors Bente Wold and Leif Aarø, and Drs. Oddrun Samdal and Torbjorn Torsheim.

Particular areas of joint interest are the psychosocial determinants of adolescent health behaviour, the WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study, and school smoking policies. Professor Wold visited CISHE in November 2006 when she gave a presentation on opportunities for collaboration, while Dr Nora Wium recently completed a postdoctoral six-month study visit at CISHE.

Fiona West and **Sue Moore** have achieved distinctions in their MSc studies. Both were supervised by Dr Simon Murphy and Dr Katy Tapper. Fiona West is currently working on the free healthy breakfasts in schools evaluation and Sue Moore is registered for a PhD examining diet and obesity in children.

PHIRN Updates

PHIRN members area – www.phirn.org.uk



PHIRN

The Public Health Improvement Research Network (PHIRN) members' area has been set up to allow information exchange and cross-fertilisation of ideas between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers across Wales and elsewhere. To date there are over 70 registered users and 46 posted messages.

If you have a potential research question, posting a notice in the forum can help generate wider interest and provide the impetus to establish a Research Development Group (RDG) and submit a funding proposal. Alternatively, if you already have a well-developed area of research but require a specific source of expertise, then the members' area can connect you with relevant collaborators.

Registration

From the main PHIRN homepage (www.phirn.org.uk) select the members' tab and you will be directed to the members' area welcome page. You will be asked to register a username and password and enter details about your professional background and areas of interest. This will be entered onto your profile which you can amend at any time.

The members' area is open to any academic, practitioner or policy maker with an interest in public health improvement. Membership is vetted by the PHIRN co-ordinating team.

Searching members' profiles

Members' profiles can be searched by general terms and specific research areas. Contact can then be made via on-line forums or via a private message by clicking on the private message icon:



Discussion forums

Forums currently set up relate to a range of research interests in the field of public health improvement: mental health; smoking; social determinants of health; alcohol and substance misuse; physical activity and exercise; obesity; and research methods. There is also a forum on news and announcements which includes messages relating to conferences, events and new funding calls.

All members can set up a new topic within each of these forums by selecting the 'new topic' icon.



Add a subject title, message and press submit when finalised. Your new message will appear in the discussion forum list for others to view.

If you want to reply to an existing topic click on 'post a reply' icon and add your message.



You can activate email alerts at the forum or topic level by selecting the following icon:



An email will be sent to you when someone has posted a new message in your selected topic or forum.

The discussion forum will also assist the progression of RDGs. If you have a well developed research question contact the PHIRN team to register as an RDG. The PHIRN team will assist RDGs in their project management and prompt to ensure that timelines are met. Through linkage with the rest of the R&D infrastructure in Wales and through links with the wider research community in the UK and internationally, PHIRN will act as a broker to identify and bring into RDGs appropriate specialist expertise. A dedicated forum will be established in the members' area for each new RDG.

Feedback

The PHIRN co-ordinating team are striving to achieve a network that is user-friendly and helpful to its members and we welcome your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Please send your comments to PHIRN@cardiff.ac.uk

Acknowledgements

The PHIRN team would like to thank Andrew Frayling and Liam Goldstein at the Information Services department at Cardiff University for all their help with setting up the PHIRN website.

New CISHE Projects



Research Support for applicants to the Big Lottery Fund October 2007 – October 2009

Dr Myfanwy Davies, AWARD Research Fellow is part of a collaboration of researchers and practitioners who will be

working with the Big Lottery to support charities submitting bids to the Health and Social Care streams of the Big Lottery fund.

The three-year Research Programme will open in Spring 2007 to fund high quality medical and social research projects across the United Kingdom. Charities and voluntary sector organisations will be invited to submit proposals for grants under the programme.

The programme is to be led by Momenta, an organisation which specialises in turning policy into practice by offering a range of programme management services, including research

management, knowledge transfer, best practice, fund management and behaviour change programmes. Also involved are Third Sector First, a collaboration of specialists in research and social policy, working primarily in the public and 'third' sectors and Professor Helen Snooks from AWARD at Swansea University.

Working closely with Professor Snooks, Dr Davies, a native Welsh speaker, will provide advice on qualitative research approaches and on policy context of delivering health and social care initiatives in Wales as well as offering a Welsh medium service to the partnership.

CHANGES IN CHILD EXPOSURE TO ENVIRONMENTAL TOBACCO SMOKE WALES

CHETS Wales



Cardiff Institute of Society, Health and Ethics in collaboration with researchers at the Child and Adolescent Health Research Unit

(CAHRU) at the University of Edinburgh have been commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to investigate the impact of the ban on smoking in enclosed public places on the exposure of primary school children to second-hand smoke.

The legislation, which will come into effect on 2nd April 2007, states that it will be an offence to:

- Fail to display no-smoking signs in premises covered by the law
- Smoke in a smoke-free place
- Fail to prevent smoking in a smoke-free place

Implementation of the smoking ban in Wales is anticipated to produce significant reductions in exposure to second-hand smoke (particularly in workplaces and in leisure facilities linked to the hospitality trade) and, linked to this, reductions in mortality. It may also have another important public health benefit by reducing smoking among current smokers and changing social attitudes and norms around smoking.

The CHETS Wales survey is designed to primarily address two hypotheses:

- Among children who live in households with other smokers, there will be no change in children's exposure to second-hand smoke in the home following the introduction of smoking ban legislation.
- Among all children, there will be a reduction in children's exposure to smoking, children's perception of smoking as a normative behaviour, and primarily, second-hand smoke.



The study involves conducting a repeated cross-sectional study of children in Year 6 (aged 10-11) on two occasions. The first survey will take place between January and March 2007, before the ban comes into force. The second will be with a different group of students between April and June 2008, after the ban. On each occasion, approximately 2,000 students in 80 primary schools across Wales will be asked to provide questionnaire data (on own smoking behaviour and exposure to second-hand smoke in public places) and saliva samples (for cotinine analysis to biochemically measure exposure to second-hand smoke).

Recruitment of schools is currently underway with a view to beginning data collection at the end of January.

Research team:

Professor Laurence Moore, CISHE (Principal Investigator)
Dr Jo Holliday, CISHE (Project Manager)
Anna Hamilton, CISHE (Clerical Assistant)

South Wales research team:

Heather Rothwell, CISHE
Claire Pimm, CISHE

North Wales research team:

Keith Humphreys
Rosie Salazar
Margaret Humphreys

Advisory group:

Professor Candace Currie, CAHRU
Dr Patricia Akhtar, CAHRU
Dr Simon Murphy, CISHE
Professor Odette Parry, North East Wales Institute

For further details contact Jo Holliday (hollidayj1@cardiff.ac.uk).

Cardiff Institute of Society Health and Ethics is also collaborating with the Social Inclusion Research Unit (NEWI) to examine the roll out of the policy in bars, clubs and pubs. The study will use interviews, observations and analysis of air quality before and after the ban.

For further details contact Dr Simon Murphy (MurphyS7@cardiff.ac.uk).

Completed CISHE Project



Commissioned under the AWARD contract to support the Welsh Assembly Government's strategy for older people, a new report from researchers at CISHE highlights the health and social care needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) older people.

Estimates suggest there are about 65,000 people over 50 are lesbian, gay or bisexual in Wales (no estimates of transgender people

are available at present). For the most part, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) older people suffer from the same illnesses and complaints other older members of the community in Wales.

The research found that older LGBT people are subject to discrimination which may be overtly practiced by some public figures and the mainstream media. Older LGBT people sometimes seek to conceal their sexuality as a result of guilt, shame or past experiences of discrimination.

Institutional discrimination can directly impact on the quality care provided and may result in excluding LGBT people from access

to care, result in delays or poorer quality of care and may exclude carers from proper access to patients. Supportive networks appear important in maintaining self-esteem in the face of discrimination. Lesbian and gay people in particular have been found to rely on durable friendship networks.

The report also concludes that despite the small number of good studies in this area, mental health, including depression, stress, addictions and suicide are a particular concern, while physical health may be affected by higher levels of alcohol consumption, drug taking and smoking. The report is available on the AWARD website (www.awardresearch.org.uk).

CISHE spotlight

Engineering Regenerative Medicine – between bench and bedside



Tissue-engineering already supplies therapies including living human cells in treatments for burns victims, chronic diabetic ulcers and for sportspeople with damaged knee cartilage. Scientists and engineers from a wide range of disciplines are developing new therapeutic technologies such as the ‘neo-bladder’, cell-cultured blood vessels and heart muscle, and cell therapy for pancreatic islets – seeking a cure for diabetes. The new regenerative medicine aims to make a real impact on widely prevalent public health problems. Following a dip in confidence in the tissue engineering sector in the early 2000’s, the sector is now enjoying renewed confidence. Venture capital is again looking at the field, the engineers are moving toward increasingly large-scale and even automated methods of producing therapies, and scientists are talking increasingly about translational research – how to move technologies from ‘bench to bedside’. The technologies also raise difficult questions of proving safety and efficacy, the appropriate business models for commercial exploitation and the interface with academic scientists and with public healthcare systems. Some raise ethical issues about sources of tissues and cells and certain types of possible cell manipulations.

How should these new medical technologies be produced, commercialised, tested, assessed, and controlled in their potential introduction into the national healthcare systems of contemporary global society? Regulatory policy plays a large

part in shaping the field of tissue engineering, both promoting it and introducing checks, and this is the subject of a second CISHE-based research project, started in April 2006. The project tracks and analyses the development of regulation of the tissue engineering field. Tissue engineered technologies have been



Public Hearing about Tissue Engineering Regulation in the European Parliament

the object of regulatory policy development in Europe since the late 1990’s. The process involves negotiation in policy and issue networks between national regulatory authorities and a variety of interacting stakeholders including industry, medical professions, tissue banks and hospitals, regulatory policymakers, European Union parliamentarians, and organised patient groups. The research takes a qualitative case study approach, drawing upon interviews with participants in stakeholder networks, attendance at scientific and regulatory forums and analysis of extensive documentary materials including position statements, draft legislative texts, proposed amendments, commentaries, and EU/EC briefing papers and summaries of public consultations.

Initial findings show a number of points of controversy in negotiating the terms of engagement for those involved in the emerging tissue engineering sector. Industry

and regulators interact closely. The main development is to define these technologies as pharmaceuticals for the purposes of regulation, to be controlled through a high-powered expert committee within the centralised European medicines regulatory agency. This has major implications for research scientists and for manufacturers. Issues of how to deal with ‘medical device’ components remain to be resolved, as do questions of hospitals that might produce in-house individually customised therapies. Parliamentarians remain concerned about therapies that might interfere with the human germ line. Small biotech companies, the majority in this field, may wish to operate only in a national marketplace, so a centralised system may not be required and some stakeholders wish to see ‘subsidiarity’ used here to allow approval by national authorities.

Two conference papers analysing recent developments have already been presented, at EASST (European Association of Studies in Science & Technology), August 2006 (<http://www2.unil.ch/easst2006/Papers/F/Faulkner.pdf>), and at SPRU – Science and Technology Policy Research, 40th Anniversary Conference, University of Sussex, Sept 2006 (<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/spru/events/ocs/viewabstract.php?id=188>).

Funding: Economic and Social Research Council, 2006 to 2008.

Collaborators:

Professor Peter Glasner, CESAGen, Cardiff University;

Dr David FitzPatrick, University College Dublin.

Contact:

Dr Alex Faulkner faulknerac@cf.ac.uk.

External Notices

University of Bristol short courses: Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods

26th – 30th March 2007. This course will provide an overview of qualitative research methods. It will focus on sampling techniques and recruitment issues, interviewing, focus groups, ethnography, data analysis, using qualitative research methods in Health Services Research and publishing. Cost £750.

Questionnaire Design and Analysis

18th – 20th April 2007. This course will provide a theoretical and practical introduction to questionnaire design, administration and analysis. Cost £450.

Critical Appraisal of a Qualitative Paper

11th June 2007. Short lectures and practical sessions in which participants will review 2-3 published papers. Cost £150.

For further information about the above courses, please contact short-course@bristol.ac.uk

If any institution or organisation would like to advertise their event or course in CISHE News, please contact Zoë Macdonald, macdonaldz@cardiff.ac.uk

CISHE Collaborators



The UnumProvident Centre for Psychosocial and Disability Research is now halfway through its second year since becoming fully operational. Work is now well underway to extend knowledge and understanding of the psychosocial, economic and cultural factors that influence health and wellbeing, illness and disease and obstacles to recovery to optimal health. Common themes that underpin the Centre's research programmes are enablement, autonomy, and integration of disadvantaged people into society that includes the world of rewarding work. The intention is to bring about a significant reorientation in customary health care, occupational health practice, and the ways in which recovery from illness are perceived and managed. This is of considerable importance at a time when public trust in science and medicine is faltering. The Centre's ethos, strategic objectives, and spheres of research share much in common with CISHE, with which a highly valued collaboration is being pursued.



Some of the Centre's staff at the *Scientific and Conceptual Basis of Incapacity Benefits* book launch at the Savoy Hotel in January 2006.

The Major Research Programmes:

Why and how do ubiquitous symptoms and common health problems (CHPs), which are experienced by most of us at times, become transformed in some people into chronic illness, disability and work-incapacity? The Centre's *Common Health Problems Research Programme* is attempting to answer these questions. Following recent completion of a series of focus group studies that explored how people think about, and respond to, CHPs, the *Cardiff Health Experiences Scale*

(CHES) has been developed and is being tested in a South Wales Population. The focus groups' findings confirmed the high prevalence of, and the public's preoccupation with, perceived mental health conditions. The CHES adapts a systematic approach to documenting in substantial detail the nature, range and prevalence of CHPs in society; how people interpret, handle and cope with them; the impact on their day-to-day lives; and what external resources, if any, are called upon. Informed by this first phase of the work further large scale surveys are envisaged. As well as exploring the reasons why some people do not recover from CHPs as expected, and identifying those at risk of chronic illness, the cardinal objective is to develop and evaluate interventions with a sound evidence-base that more successfully reverse pathways to ill-health, discontent, and social exclusion. The *Wellbeing in Work (WiW)* project in collaboration with Swansea and Keele Universities has now entered its second stage. In partnership with employers in a South Wales Valley's community, the study investigates relationships between health and work among employees, and scopes work-retention, and return-to-work, and health promoting initiatives. Occupational, psychosocial, and cultural risk factors which have a high impact on health status and performance at work should be better recognised in the context of this stage of the work, and will serve the drive to establish healthier and more efficient workplaces in the stage 3 of the project. Working with colleagues in the university's Department of General Practice considerable insight has been gained into the nature and form of the general practitioner's fitness for work consultation with the patient. This *Sicknote or Bust (SNORB)* research aimed at behaviour change improving practitioner's performance shows considerable promise for supporting general practitioners with the more difficult and demanding consultations. This work has captured the attention of a number of private and public sector sponsors which has moved the development and application of this model into other areas for securing effective engagement with, and supporting health professionals.

The Centre is a partner in the *Healthy Minds at Work* (HMAW) project to establish the nature and extent of mental health issues

at work in Wales, and to review activities, policies, and effective practices in Wales, elsewhere in the UK and internationally. The effectiveness of interventions delivered as part of the HMAW Project will also be assessed. There will be a particular focus on raising awareness and self-help solutions for employers with regard to employees with mental health issues.

Books and Conferences:

Staff at the Centre have published two books in the last 12 months. *The Scientific and Conceptual Basis of Incapacity Benefit* (TSO, London) by Gordon Waddell and Mansell Aylward was launched at The Savoy Hotel, London, in January.



Lord Archie Kirkwood – former Chair of the Work and Pensions Selection Committee, talks about the *The Scientific and Conceptual Basis of Incapacity Benefit*.

The Power of Belief (Oxford University Press) edited by Peter Halligan and Mansel Aylward, examines how beliefs can affect not only the patient, in terms of recovery from illness, but also the way in which health professionals view and treat illness. The book was launched at The Royal Society of Medicine in June.

Several conferences were also organised by the Centre covering topic ranging from "Happiness and Resilience at Work," through "Communicating with the Public" to "Historical Perspectives on Health".



Professor Peter Halligan and Professor Mansel Aylward at *The Power of Belief* book launch in June

Website: <http://www.cf.ac.uk/psych/cpdr>
Email: UPCDR@Cardiff.ac.uk

New staff

Anna Hamilton



Anna Hamilton graduated from Cardiff University in July 2006 with a BA Honours in English Literature. She is now working in the Cardiff Institute of Society, Health and Ethics providing clerical support for the ESRC/HEFCW scoping study and the *Changes in Child Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke* (CHETS) Wales project (page 5) and the evaluation of the National Exercise Referral Scheme.

Hayley Collicott



Hayley Collicott graduated from Cardiff University in July 2006 with a BA Honours in History and Sociology. She is now working as a clerical assistant in the Cardiff Institute of Society Health and Ethics on the *Social Network Analysis of Peers and Smoking in adolescence* (SNAPS) project. In the future she hopes to complete a Masters in Social Science and perhaps embark upon a career in social science research. She hopes her current job will provide valuable insight, understanding and experience.

For more information about CISHE's projects and research please contact:

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Please note: back issues of this Newsletter and a full list of CISHE's publications can be found on our web site at: <http://www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/cishe>

Staff farewells

Sheila Foley

A plaque has been placed in the University's garden of remembrance, Aberconwy Building, Column Drive, in honour of Sheila Foley, Institute Secretary, who passed away on September 3rd 2006.

Nora Wiium



Dr Nora Wiium joined CISHE as a visiting fellow as part of her postdoctoral position at The Research Centre for Health Promotion, University of Bergen, Norway.

The collaboration between CISHE and The Research Centre for Health Promotion had been established primarily through the Health Behaviour of School-aged Children (HBSC) study, a trans-national survey that involves several countries across Europe and North America including Wales and Norway. During Nora's stay in CISHE, her mentor, Professor Bente Wold visited the Institute with the main goal to strengthen the already existing collaboration as well as to discuss possible ways of future collaboration. Nora is especially thankful for the opportunity she had to work with Laurence Moore, the Director of CISHE and Stephen Burgess, a Research Associate at CISHE on a project which is examining school policy and pupil smoking behaviour. During her time at CISHE, Nora worked on the analysis of the HBSC Welsh data that formed part of the project. Nora was part of a multilevel group that met on weekly basis to discuss issues surrounding multilevel analysis and also led a session of the reading group with multilevel analysis as its theme. She will always remember the support, care and friendliness of CISHE colleagues.

Acknowledgements to Newsletter staff

The CISHE newsletter is compiled by the newsletter working group: Stephen Burgess; Eva Elliott; Søren Holm; Jo Holliday; Rebecca Lynch; Simon Murphy; Laurence Moore and Zoë Macdonald.

We welcome any feedback or contributions, please contact us at CISHE@cardiff.ac.uk

Rowan Brockman



Rowan started to work at Cardiff Institute of Society Health and Ethics at the beginning of September 2006, as a Research Assistant on the *Free Breakfast Evaluation* project: her first post after completing a MSc in Nutrition, Physical Activity and Public Health at the University of Bristol. Although only spending a short time in the department, she has found this time immensely rewarding and has found CISHE to be an extremely friendly and positive environment to work in. Rowan will now be returning to the University of Bristol, to co-ordinate a project investigating peer and parental influences on physical activity in 10-11 year olds. Rowan is grateful for the experience she has gained from working at CISHE and the excellent support she received throughout her time spent at CISHE. She would like to especially thank her Breakfast Team colleagues, who she says have all been fantastic and a joy to work with.

Dr Sara MacBride-Stewart



Sara has recently started a new post as Lecturer in Social Sciences, Cardiff University, she would like to thank all her colleagues at CISHE for sharing enthusiasm and passion for social research in health and ethics. She is immensely grateful to all the people at CISHE who have supported her in professional endeavours and who have added fun to the social elements. Whilst at CISHE Sara had a great opportunity to work with and research GPs across Wales. This project has explored aspects of both modernisation and feminisation in General Practice in Wales. The research was made possible by the generous time given by GPs, and most importantly, through the support of the School of Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education, Cardiff University. Sara wants to thank in particular Prof Laurence Moore and Dr Malcolm Lewis, who were excellent managers. As she continues her work in health, medicine and society, Sara looks forward to future collaborations in both research and teaching.