New Staff/Leavers

We bid fond farewell to Dr Lin Wu, the Visiting Fellow from Sichuan University Hospital, China, who conducted research within the Maternal and Fetal Disease Group over the past year. Good luck in your future career, Lin!

Announcements

Professor Jane Sandall, as an international member of a steering group, has been invited by the Minister for Health in Ireland to develop a national maternity strategy in Ireland. The new National Maternity Strategy will put the needs of mothers, babies and their families at its centre. The focus will be on maximising patient safety, quality of care, clinical outcomes as well as the desirability of greater patient choice, the move towards more services in the community, and a renewed focus on prevention and wellbeing. The Group will hold its first meeting in early May and is expected to conclude its work by the end of the year. The publication of the Maternity Strategy is one of the Minister's key priorities for 2015.  

Professor Sandall has also been recommended as an NIHR Senior Investigator, for 4 years, effective from 1 April 2015. The full list of NIHR Senior Investigator appointments is available on the NIHR website (www.nihr.ac.uk). Professor Sandall was also the keynote speaker at a national conference in Bergen to celebrate a 20 year anniversary of Norway’s first midwife-led birth centre in Norway.

Professor Debra Bick was a keynote speaker at two recent conferences. On 12 May, Professor Bick presented a paper on ‘Lessons learnt from the Perineal Repair Assessment and Repair Longitudinal Study (PEARLS)’ at a conference organised by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. PEARLS was a UK-wide, matched pair cluster trial which evaluated the implementation of an education intervention to support midwives and obstetricians to implement evidence-based assessment and repair of birth-related perineal trauma. The audience comprised obstetricians from the UK and a number of other countries.

On 15 May, Professor Bick was also a keynote speaker at a conference on evidence-based maternity care organised by the Changing Maternity and Infant Hospital in Shanghai. Changing is one of the largest maternity units in Shanghai, with over 10,000 births a year. Efforts are being made to introduce evidence into practice to increase the normal birth rate at the unit, which had a CS rate of 33% in 2014.

Hannah Nathan reports that the application to the MRC/DBT/DFid for £1.1 million to fund a CRADLE randomised control trial was successful. The trial will be evaluating the impact of the introduction of the Microlife CRADLE VSA device to improve maternal health in low-resource settings across ten sites in Africa, Asia and the Americas. Furthermore, the Microlife CRADLE VSA device has also been nominated for the Innovation Countdown 2030 initiative, led by PATH, as a technology with great promise to help meet the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals. The device will be presented at the UN Financing for Development conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in July.

‘Supporting NHS staff who want to make health services in south-east London better’ is newspaper-style annual report that chronicles the activities of King’s Improvement Science (KIS) during 2014. KIS aims to help improve health services at GSTT, King’s College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. KIS specialist researchers offer support to health professionals and NHS managers who want to use an established and recognised quality improvement method to make health services better. KIS is funded for five years by King’s Health Partners organisations and is part of the CLAHRC South London. The annual report is available as a pdf via the KIS website Publications page, www.kingsimprovementscience.org/publications

Dusko Illic was interviewed by BBC London 94.9 FM on 17 May on the genetic engineering of embryos, following scientists in China announcing they had successfully edited the genome of a human embryo.

If you have any items for next month’s newsletter please email them to Leslie (leslie.mcmurtry@kcl.ac.uk) by the 15th of each month.


Talks/Seminars

Research in Progress Seminar Series – Seminars are held on the 3rd Friday each month at 4 pm, Rayne Institute Seminar Room, 4th floor Lambeth Wing, St Thomas’ unless otherwise stated. Contact: katharina.mahn@kcl.ac.uk 19 June: the speakers are Prof Jane Sandall: “Impact of maternity staffing on maternal and infant birth outcomes in England” and Dr Leo Gurney “Cell Penetrating Peptide linked inhibitors as a novel approach to downregulating inflammatory responses in human uterine cells.”

Implementation Science Masterclass: 1st and 2nd of June 2015, King’s College London –Organised by the CLAHRC South London and led by experts in the field of implementation science from all over the world, the two-day Masterclass is suitable for healthcare professionals, NHS managers, researchers and service users and patients who have some formal training in research methods. There will be a combination of lectures and group work, with a focus on participants’ own improvement projects.

The two-day Masterclass takes place at Waterloo campus. Find out about costs and how to book a place by visiting the King’s College London website: www.kcl.ac.uk/prospectus/shortcourses/index/name/implementationscience2015/

(CLAHRC stands for Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care: the research organisation is funded by the National Institute for Health Research and led by researchers from King’s College London and St George’s, University of London. Find out more about CLAHRC South London activities at www.clahrc-southlondon.nihr.ac.uk) Booking is now open for the Royal Society of Medicine’s Human Trafficking and Health meeting. The meeting is accredited for 6 CPD points and will be held on Saturday 20th June 2015. Organised by the Royal Society of Medicine and King’s College London’s Section for Women’s Mental Health, this meeting will inform participants about human trafficking and how to care for survivors of human trafficking in healthcare settings. Please see http://www.rsm.ac.uk/events/clf04 for booking and further details.

A 2-day short course on Women’s Mental Health Research will be held by the Section of Women’s Mental Health, King’s College London on the 28th and 29th September 2015. Led by Prof Louise Howard, the course will teach participants about research methods for investigating risk factors and the effectiveness of interventions for women’s mental health problems. The course will also provide practical guidance on safety and ethical issues in women’s health research. For more information and to secure your place, please go to https://www.kcl.ac.uk/prospectus/shortcourses/list/keyword/psychiatry-amp-mental-health

Abstracts/Deadlines

2015 Project Call for KBI PhD Programme in Biomedical and Translational Sciences -Project Call: http://www.kcl.ac.uk/health/research/kbi/phd/call.aspx The deadline is 12 June.

Student Competition: A prize to test your research skills. The competition consists of four protocols for hypothetical clinical trials. Your task is to rank them by giving a rating =1 for trial that you consider is most likely to provide a reliable answer to the stated aim of the trial, and 4 for that least likely to do so. In each class (medical / dental and nursing / midwifery / allied health professions) there is a first prize of £500 and runner-up prizes of £100. See: http://www.healthwatch-uk.org/student-prize Closing date 30 June.

Physiology Society travel grant deadlines occur every month. See http://www.physsoc.org/travel-grants

Coming Events

Upcoming events include:

The next Breakfast Meeting is 4 June in the ‘Teaching Room at St Thomas’ (10th Floor) at 9 am.

Kings Improvement Science reading group: 12.30 – 13.30hrs on last Monday of the month. Researchers, academic staff and PhD students are all welcome; focus of the group is to discuss theoretical paper or an empirical paper that fits loosely within the field of improvement science in order to debate some of the issues around methodology, epistemology, application, scale-up etc. Contact: nicola.mackintosh@kcl.ac.uk ●