

Update from NRS Reproductive Health and Childbirth Specialty Group

January 2021

Burns Night is celebrated in Scotland to commemorate the life and work of the bard Robert Burns, born on 25th Jan 1759.



CSO STATEMENT ON PRIORITISATION OF RESOURCES AND DEPLOYMENT OF STAFF DURING THE CURRENT PHASE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

On January 4th additional lockdown measures were put in place by the Scottish Government to safeguard health, save lives and protect the NHS in the context of a steep rise in Coronavirus (COVID-19) infections.



**CHIEF
SCIENTIST
OFFICE**

The Chief Scientist Office (CSO) recognises that many NHS Scotland sites are facing greatly increased pressure due to the rise in COVID-19 hospital admissions. It is critical under these very challenging circumstances that NHS Scotland continues to recruit patients into Urgent Public Health (UPH) studies.

This research activity is essential to develop approaches that will reduce transmission, reduce the number of patients that require hospitalisation and guide the treatment and care of patients, now and in the future. CSO can therefore confirm that the current levels of prioritisation for research studies still apply, namely:

- Level 1a (Top Priority) – COVID-19 UPH vaccine and prophylactic studies (as prioritised by the Vaccines Task Force) and platform therapeutics trials (currently **RECOVERY/RECOVERY +; PRINCIPLE; REMAP CAP**).
- Level 1b – Other COVID-19 UPH studies
- Level 2 – Studies where the research protocol includes an urgent treatment or intervention without which patients could come to harm. These might be studies that provide access to potentially life preserving or life-extending treatment not otherwise available to the patient.
- Level 3 – All other studies (including COVID-19 studies not in Level 1a or 1b).

The approach to building resilience into the NHS Research Scotland portfolio in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic is guided by the Restart Framework developed by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) in consultation with the Devolved Administrations [Restart Framework \(nihr.ac.uk\)](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/restart-framework)

As indicated by the Restart Framework, currently we need to continue to prioritise our support for the most urgent COVID-19 research as part of the response to tackle the pandemic. At the same time we need to ensure we continue to try and maintain support to deliver non-COVID studies currently open on the NHS Research Scotland portfolio, particularly those within Level 2.

[Full statement](#)

Scottish Government COVID-19 stay at home guidance - Clinical Trials

Please note that participation in medical trials is now specifically referenced in the Scottish Government **Coronavirus (COVID-19): stay at home guidance** as a reasonable excuse to leave home: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): stay at home guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance-gov-scot/www.gov.scot)



TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES. Cochrane Training via Web:

Introduction to Cochrane Methodology Workshop -

Athens, Greece. 19-20 Feb 2021. [Full details](#)



Trusted evidence.
Informed decisions.
Better health.

The workshop will provide an introduction on practical and methodological issues in preparing a Cochrane systematic review of the effects of interventions.

COVID-19 UPH STUDIES. UPDATE

PAN-COVID Pregnancy and Neonatal Outcomes in COVID-19. <https://pan-covid.org/>



The recruitment as of 22nd Jan 2021 was over 6120 participants from 180 hospital sites in 12 countries. The recruitment period ends at the end of March.

The pre-print of data analysis from PAN-COVID and the US American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Neonatal Perinatal Medicine (AAP SONPM) National Perinatal COVID-19 Registry is now available:

Pregnancy and neonatal outcomes of COVID-19 – co-reporting of common outcomes from the PAN-COVID and AAP SONPM registry. [Full details.](#)

The study team would like to thank all participants and investigators for their involvement and hard work!

Scottish participating sites are NHS Grampian, Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Lanarkshire, Lothian and Tayside.

Many thanks to everyone for their contribution to this important study!

GOOD NEWS STORIES



Fertility 2021. British Fertility Society Prize winners.



British
Fertility
Society

Congratulations to **Jen Ulyatt** for winning the **nurse prize**. Her presentation was titled “Nurse sedation service for assisted reproduction procedures – a patient centred approach” and described development and delivery of Ninewells Assisted Conception Unit nurse-led sedation service as well as presenting data showing 100% patient safety and a very high level of patient satisfaction. Dr Sarah Martins da Silva, consultant gynaecologist and Person Responsible said:

“Ninewells is the only UK IVF unit to have nurse-led sedation and this is wonderful recognition at a national level. Jen has been an integral part of nurse-sedation from its inception, and has led this service for a number of years. Huge congratulations to her. Very well deserved”.

Congratulations to **Morven Dean**, she was awarded the **Jean Purdy pre-registration prize**. She is currently an embryology trainee at Ninewells Assisted Conception Unit and was previously a PhD student at the University of Dundee supervised by Professor Chris Barratt and Dr Sarah Martins da Silva. Her presentation “Exploring the maximal intracellular calcium potential in human sperm” described work showing stimulation and manipulation of calcium responses in sperm. Her research contributes much-needed understanding of sperm processes important for function and fertilization and has exciting translational potential for clinical application.



FUNDING. [The Borne Foundation](#) is a medical research charity established in 2016 that supports the advancement of understanding and prevention of premature birth. Two funding opportunities:



Borne’s Uterine Mapping Project (BUMP) grant call announcement. Invitation to groups of collaborating clinicians and scientists from multiple institutions to apply for funds to undertake an initial feasibility study for BUMP. BUMP involves the investment in clinical and bioinformatic data that can power a global scientific collaboration to advance our understanding of human parturition and to identify novel interventions.

Full details [Funding for Researchers](#). The deadline for applications is Friday 5 March 2021, 17:00 pm.

Joint awards with MRC. [MRC Career Development Awards](#). Closing date: 21 April 2021 16:00 pm.

Further enquiries can be directed to Borne’s COO, Mei Li Powell at meili@borne.org.uk

Please send us your Good News stories and comments: Abha (abha.maheshwari@abdn.ac.uk) or Txaro (maria.amezaga@nhs.scot)