



NRS Ageing Specialty Group

*NRS Ageing Specialty Group is affiliated to NIHR CRN: Ageing*

Newsletter, Winter 2023

## Some changes (and some things staying the same)

As we approach the holiday period, it is a time to both reflect and give thanks.

This year has given ageing researchers a LOT to think about (if you even had time to think), but it has also given us a lot to be thankful for. I will include some highlights in this newsletter.

I am mindful that in our busy lives, even taking the time to read a newsletter like this one is a luxury. So, this will be the last email newsletter from NRS Ageing. However, fear not, for I will continue to keep you up to date with all things ageing research related through a new **ageing research webinar series planned for Spring 2024**. These online, open meetings will be around 45 minutes, on the first Tuesday of the month. The first section of each meeting will be an update on ageing research in Scotland, and then we will have invited speakers. I have some fantastic speakers lined up. Something to look forward to in 2024, watch this space.....

Have a peaceful and happy holiday season. Very best wishes, Terry.

Contact us: [scmh-ageingscotland@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:scmh-ageingscotland@glasgow.ac.uk)

<https://www.nhsresearchscotland.org.uk/research-areas/age-and-ageing>



## A chance to shape future research

NHS Research Scotland and the NIHR Health technology Appraisal groups are looking to identify new research questions for future commissioned research calls. Our NRS Ageing group have been selected to submit their research priorities, and the focus is brain health. The plan is to submit around 10 possible research questions, often 1 or 2 are selected for a funding call. So, now I need your help. **If you have ideas for clinical trials in older adults, then please share them with me at the email address above.**

## Update from Ageing National Speciality Group

There are big changes in clinical research infrastructure planned for 2024, with a new Department of Health and Social Care Research Delivery contract. While the most substantial changes will be seen South of the Border, these developments are still relevant to Scottish researchers. **The University of Leeds will host the NIHR Research Delivery Network Coordinating Centre (RDNCC) and will work with 12 Regional Research Delivery Networks across NHS England.** What these changes will mean for researchers and research centres is still unclear, but given the attention generated by the Recovery, Resilience and Growth programme (aiming to get 80% trials recruiting to time and target) and the Lord O'Shaughnessy review (aiming to increase commercial trial activity in the UK) – these are likely to be a major focus of future activities.



## Scottish researchers access to UK schemes

The Chief Scientist Office has worked with colleagues from across the UK to allow **Scottish researchers to access more NIHR funding schemes**. From Autumn, researchers based in Scotland will be able to apply to: Evidence Synthesis, Invention for Innovation (i4i), Research for Social Care (RfSC), Programme Grants for Applied Research programme (PGfAR), Programme Development Grants. Now that we have this opportunity, we need to start submitting applications.



<https://www.cso.scot.nhs.uk/scottish-researchers-to-be-able-to-access-further-nihr-research-funding/>

To keep the research 'pipeline' active we need to attract and retain the best people from early in their research career. The **NIHR Associate Principal Investigator (API) scheme** allows clinicians in training to work on studies under the supervision of a more experienced investigator. One of the conditions of the scheme inadvertently excluded Scottish only studies. Thankfully this is now resolved and applications for Scottish studies to the API scheme can be considered. <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/associate-pi-scheme-fags/11698#studyteams>

## Annual Chief Medical Officer Report

This year's Chief Medical Officer's report is especially pertinent to people with an interest in older adult research. Entitled **Health in an Ageing Society**, Professor Chris Whitty recommends actions to improve quality of life for older adults and prioritise areas with the fastest growth in older people. I was pleased to contribute to the section on research in older people and highlight some of the challenges and opportunities in the field.



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-2023-health-in-an-ageing-society>

## Research resources and opportunities

The **British Geriatric Society** website has recently relaunched its **Research Hub**. The Hub is curated by the BGS Research and Academic Development Committee and aims to bring together information relating to research into older people's health and care. The Hub has three main themes, getting involved, sharing research and helpful resources. This will be a valuable resource and is available to all working in the field of older adult research, not just members of the BGS. <https://www.bgs.org.uk/research>



The **Advanced Care Research Centre in Edinburgh** is offering PhD opportunities for researchers with an interest in care of older adults. <https://www.findaphd.com/phds/program/acrc-academy/?p5125>

## Study looking for Scottish sites

The FORCE:SEE study (**Frailty and Outcomes Record in Clinical Environments: probable Sarcopenia, geriatric Evaluation, and Events**) is a product of the trainee led, Geriatric Medicine Research Collaborative. The study is observational and involves taking some simple measures of frailty in acutely admitted older people. The study now has approval to open sites in Scotland and the anticipation is that most of the recruitment, follow-up, and management will be conducted by trainees. Obtaining research experience is now part of the Geriatric Medicine curriculum, so this really is an ideal opportunity to get involved in research.



If this sounds interesting email Carly Welch for more details [carly.welch@nhs.net](mailto:carly.welch@nhs.net)

## New film on care home research

ENRICH Scotland (**ENabling Research In Care Homes**) is proud to present a new short (2 minute) film about research in care homes, bringing to life its mission to unify care home staff, residents, and their families with researchers to improve lives (and starring Abbotsford Care!). The film was designed and developed by ENRICH's 'patient and public involvement group' known as RICH (Research in Care Homes) Voices.



ENRICH Scotland knows that research can seem a daunting topic, and that there are a lot of misconceptions about what it is like to live and work in care homes. Therefore, ENRICH Scotland hopes that the short film will spark conversations about getting involved and ultimately improving the way it enables research. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1R4u8uadaGI>

## Report on older adult research

A recent report from the **Nuffield Council on Bioethics** has highlighted that the needs of older people should be put at the heart of any research concerned with ageing. The report follows an inquiry by the Nuffield Council and makes for sombre reading. They note that research is being adversely affected by ageist attitudes in society, and raise concerns over the extent to which older people's values and perspectives are included in research planning, conduct and dissemination.


**NUFFIELD  
COUNCIL ON  
BIOETHICS**

The report recommends that funders, regulators, ethics committees and journals all require "meaningful collaboration" with older people and that research projects "reflect the diversity of those likely to be affected, including those who are most disadvantaged."

<https://www.nuffieldbioethics.org/news/more-must-be-done-to-ensure-that-the-needs-of-older-people-are-at-the-heart-of-research-and-innovation-concerned-with-ageing>

A step in the right direction is the publication of **guidance around including older adults in research**.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ageing/afad082>

Does your unit have any news you would like to share with the group in future communications? If so, we would love to hear from you at [scmh-ageingscotland@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:scmh-ageingscotland@glasgow.ac.uk) You can unsubscribe at any time by replying to this email.

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