

Video-consultation in General Practice

GP practices in Lothian were involved in trialling video-conferencing as a means of offering an additional option for patient consultations and to look at what the advantages / disadvantages were in comparison to telephone consultations which are already common practice in GP surgeries. The link below shows how the results of this study have been translated into practical advice for practices wishing to use this method of communication with their patients.

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/usher/telescot/projects/vico/vico-toolkit>

<https://bjgp.org/content/bjgp/early/2019/06/24/bjgp19X704141.full.pdf>

FAST (four-fold asthma study) study impacts BTS/SIGN guidelines

Results of the FAST study, that 29 practices in Grampian helped recruit to in 2014-5, have made it into the newly published British Thoracic Society (BTS) and Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) asthma guidelines. The study findings recommend that in asthma action plans for adults, health professionals should consider quadrupling the level of the key inhaled preventer medication – inhaled corticosteroids (ICS) – at the onset of an asthma attack – and if necessary for up to 14 days after – in order to abort the attack and the need for ongoing oral steroids.

<https://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/about-us/pressmedia/2019/btssign-british-guideline-on-the-management-of-asthma-2019/>

Blood Glucose Monitoring and Type-2 Diabetes

Back in Oct 2018 we reported on a study which Tayside GP practices supported. This study explored whether using a glucose meter and keeping a food and exercise diary would be of benefit as an intervention for people identified as being at high risk of type 2 diabetes. The results were recently published and indicate that blood glucose monitoring is acceptable to people with impaired glucose regulation and that they would engage with it as part of an intervention to improve their diet.

<https://pilotfeasibilitystudies.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s40814-019-0435-4>

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Early Detection of Cancer of the Lung Scotland (ECLS)

In September this year, this large trial involving over 12,000 people in Scotland, published their initial results. The RCT looked at whether a blood test could be used to predict who is most likely to go on to develop lung cancer. The study showed that the new test is successful at helping to find lung cancer before any symptoms show in people who are at increased risk. Researchers are now looking at how best to roll-out this test either as part of a screening programme, or specifically targeting 'at risk' groups. Their partner company, Oncimmune, who developed the test are also looking at wider implications for cancer detection.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-49638208>

<https://www.eclsstudy.org/study-findings>

Vitamin K2 to reduce falls

A study which recruited participants from Grampian, Tayside and Fife health-boards has published results. K-sway, which was an RCT looking at the effect of Vitamin K2 on postural sway in older people who fall found that oral vitamin K2 supplementation did not improve postural sway or physical function in older people at risk of falls.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/jgs.16024>

Pathway hypertension studies

The Network across Scotland supported the 'Pathway' series of hypertension studies. The initial research found that combination therapy was superior to sequential monotherapy for the initial treatment of hypertension.

<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/JAHA.117.006986>

Subsequent studies have investigated this in more detail and results are now published.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2213858718300718?via%3Dihub>

[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(15\)00257-3](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)00257-3)

[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2213-8587\(15\)00377-0](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2213-8587(15)00377-0)

Current research—GoDARTS

One of our ongoing primary care recruitment studies 'GoDARTS' has a new publication: Investigating the Relationship between Type 2 Diabetes and Dementia using Electronic Medical Records in the GoDARTS Bioresource. This study is developing a cohort of people recently diagnosed with Type 1 or 2 Diabetes in order to investigate further the genetics of diabetes.

<https://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/early/2019/08/05/dc19-0380>

Look out for our monthly recruitment newsletter (sent by local network staff) which details all the studies which are currently recruiting in your area and get in touch if your practice would like support from the network to invite patients.

Scottish Primary Care Information Resource (SPIRE)

We met with members of the SPIRE team (ISD) in order to better understand our roles in terms of primary care data and its use in research. SPIRE requests data from GP practices in order to produce statistics for Scotland as a whole, as well as providing practices in return, with 'local' level data on their own patients. We discussed ways in which we could help with analysis of data quality (e.g. comparing patient lists produced by SPIRE vs. a member of PCN staff searching the practice database, if necessary utilising the 'free text' data). We also discussed collaborating with SPIRE when they receive requests to invite a particular patient group to a research study, in order to reduce workload for practice staff and avoiding the need for patient identifiable data to leave the practice.

NRS Researcher Fellowships are open to GPs

This is a big step forward for Primary Care research. The NRS Primary Care Network clinical lead Bruce Guthrie has been highlighting the inequity for some time and therefore we were very pleased that the NRS fellowships are now more accessible to GPs interested in a research career pathway. Previously GPs were excluded as many didn't have a PhD. Applications closed in November but keep in mind this yearly initiative if you want to pursue a primary care research career. <https://www.cso.scot.nhs.uk/personal-awards-initiative/nrs-career-researcher-fellowships/>

Social Care Research Governance Framework Engagement Event

Ellen Drost, network manager, attended this event, organised by NRS-CMT, to explore the issues, solutions and best practices involved in the integration of health and social care research.

Patient and Public Involvement group support two successful fellowship applications

NRS Primary Care Network Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) Group was established in January 2016 to advise and support researchers to ensure that PPI is helpful and meaningful in the context of Primary Care research. The group meets every three months in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. The PPI group were pleased to provide advice prior to two fellowship applications and both were successful in securing funding from the CSO and MRC.

Network staff conference representation

Network staff have had a presence at several recent conferences and events; The Scottish Practice Management Development Network Annual Conference, NHS Scotland Event, the GP Protected learning time event – Forth Valley and the Scottish School of Primary Care Annual Conference. This has allowed networking and awareness-raising opportunities with primary care staff (practice managers and GPs) as well as NHS staff from a range of backgrounds who may wish to access the network for research support.

It is a pleasure to meet practice staff and researchers at these events so please come and say hello if you spot the NRS Primary Care Network stand.

The **NRS Primary Care Network** was established in 2002 to co-ordinate national research activity in primary care. We are funded by the Chief Scientist Office (CSO) with the overall aim of increasing the amount of research relevant to patient care which is undertaken in a primary care setting. This involves network staff facilitating high-quality research studies, both academic and commercial across the full range of physical and mental health areas. The network contact information is below.

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Visit us at www.nrs.org.uk/primarycare