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Newsletter

CHSS
University of Kent

Centre for Health Services Studies

Issue 41 / Spring 2022

Care in a new climate – CHSS in £10m ESRC Centre for Care collaboration

Kent is one of five universities collaborating on a new £10 million 'Centre for Care'. Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and led by the University of Sheffield, the Centre will produce major research studies investigating diverse experiences of social care.

CHSS Senior Research Fellow [Dr Nadia Brookes](#) leads a key strand of work – '*Care in a new climate: continuity and change in work practices*'. She said, 'Working in partnership with care sector organisations and people who draw on support will be a vital part of the Centre's work. It will help us really understand what we can do to improve the care experience for families, individuals, communities and the people providing care in a variety of settings.'

[More about the centre >](#)



Photo by [Dominik Lange](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Excellence in health research

CHSS news

Research England Award for 'Co-Production Lab'

Co-producing research is an approach where researchers, practitioners and public work together, sharing power and responsibility from start to end of a project. Dr Nadia Brookes, Dr Amanda Bates, Dr Vanessa Abrahamson (CHSS) and Lisa Richardson (PSSRU) received some of the University *Research England 2021-22 Participatory Research funding* to create a 'Co-production Lab'. It represents the first steps towards setting up a learning community, creating a shared understanding of co-production and planning how to resource next steps beyond this initial funding.

They began in March with two online workshops focused on health and social care issues, bringing together researchers, members of the public and practitioners. They plan to include other disciplines in the future and to run some face-to-face activities later this year.

For more information, visit [Learning to work together](#) or contact Nadia Brookes N.K.Brookes@kent.ac.uk

CHSS to host 'Future Human' Funded PhD Student

Funding from the University of Kent's '[Future Human](#)' signature research theme will see a PhD student undertake the project "*Decision design ecology and deciding whether or not to treat*". Simon Bailey (CHSS) and Connal Parsley (KLS) lead the supervision team with Rasa Mikelyte (CHSS), Larry Duffy (SECL) and Daniel Soria (Computing). The PhD is funded from September 2022 for three years.

More news from Future Human to follow in our next CHSS newsletter!

7th ICCHNR Conference, 21-22 June 2022

Professor Sally Kendall and Tamsyn Eida will attend *Community nursing towards sustainable health* hosted by Linnaeus University, Sweden to present abstracts from the BBF (Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly) project. www.icchnr.org



Government progress on improving mental health services 'requires improvement'

New HoC Health and Social Care Committee Expert Panel report

A House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee Expert Panel report says Government progress in delivering policy commitments on a wide range of mental health services in England 'requires improvement'.

The December 2021 report – the second from the Expert Panel – rates Government progress and awards CQC-style ratings on key commitments in four policy areas:

- workforce
- children and young people's mental health
- adult common mental illness
- adult severe mental illness.

CHSS Director [Professor Stephen Peckham](#) is one of the Panel's six core members and has over 20 years of policy analysis and health services research experience. The Panel supports Parliament in holding the UK Government to account against its pledges on health and social care and is chaired by Professor Dame Jane Dacre.

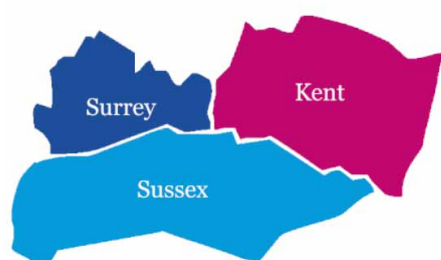
[Read the Expert Panel's report on the UK Parliament website.](#)



NIHR Partners' update

NIHR ARC KSS

NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration
Kent, Surrey and Sussex



ARC KSS Research Week 20-23 June 2022

Themed around equality, diversity and inclusion in applied research. Online Learning sessions and a face-to-face symposium on 23 June.

Further details and last year's presentations available on our events [webpage](#).

Research Week EDI research poster competition – closes 20 May 2022

Winner and runners up will present their posters at the Symposium and receive training bursary prizes.

[Further details.](#)

ARC KSS Priorities for Care: Open funding call for research and evidence projects

ARC KSS is seeking to commission projects addressing key priorities for health and care provision across Kent, Surrey, and Sussex (KSS). Full details and documentation for applicants on the [website](#).

Developing a Public Health Research System to support Local Government in Kent

In 2020, CHSS researchers Lindsay Forbes (lead), Sarah Hotham, Rowena Merritt, Amanda Bates, Melanie Rees-Roberts and Sally Kendall worked with Kent County Council and Medway Council to explore developing ways to enable Local Government to embed research activity and culture and build research capacity and capability among council staff. As part of this National Institute for Health Research-funded study they collected and analysed views of Kent and Medway council staff and councillors, charities and members of the public.

Councils are responsible for public health because what they do has a huge influence on health. But evidence about what does and doesn't work to protect and improve population health is limited. They generally do not routinely use research findings or take part in as much research as the NHS, where research is more strongly embedded. Embedding research activity and culture in councils is likely to promote better decision-making, more efficient use of public funds and improve community health.

The study found that the public and council staff strongly agreed that the council using and doing health and wellbeing research would improve value for the public. Council staff were keen to do research and many already had research skills.



But they lacked the time in the working day to develop ideas and deliver research. They also found applying for funding challenging because of the language used and timelines of research funders.

This work led to the development of a Research Support Service for Kent County Council provided by CHSS since April 2021. Work is underway with senior council leadership to embed a research culture. Since our project, in both Kent and Medway councils there has been a greater level of collaboration with universities to seek research funding.

NIHR RDS SE

NIHR | Research Design Service
South East

Annual NIHR RDS SE Stakeholder event – Make Impact Work, 18 May 2022

The Annual Research Design Service SE Stakeholder event will focus on Impact and its meaning for Health and Social Care research. Featuring key speakers, the event will explore the NIHR's strategic review 'Maximising Impact' and examine the NIHR Impact Toolkit.

[Book your place >](#)

Don't miss other RDS SE upcoming events

Our NIHR Research Funding Programmes [Workshop](#) on 20 April gives an overview of NIHR and how RDS SE can support you in applying for funding.

We offer regular **bookable drop-in slots** with RDS SE Advisers. Get feedback and advice on how to progress an early-stage research idea.

More information on RDS SE events [webpage](#).

New youth projects

CHSS leads major projects to help young people reduce criminalisation and violent behaviour

Re-framing the conversation around tackling substance use

Simon Coulton, CHSS Professor of Health Research, is leading another major Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) funded with £964,513 from the Youth Endowment Fund 'Another Chance' funding stream. This study follows on from the recently completed NIHR Public Health funded study, RISKIT-CJS, to reduce substance use among adolescents in the Criminal Justice System. He heads a University team which includes Kent Professors of Forensic Psychology Theresa Gannon and Jane Wood, and CHSS Research Associate Nadine Hendrie.

The RCT will evaluate the effectiveness of Re-frame, a 'Diversion Programme' which takes a novel approach to dealing with young people who come to the attention of police and are found to be in possession of Class B or C illicit substances. Rather than formally charge young people, the police can instead refer them to receive help in managing their substance use and avoid the negative impact of criminalisation.

Framed around a contextual safeguarding approach, Re-frame sessions give young people a chance to reflect on how their actions have affected their lives, their family and the wider community. It aims to enhance self-confidence and increase motivation to reduce substance use. Re-frame is being delivered by *We Are with You* across Kent, Sefton, Lancashire and Cornwall.

The study is the first time a diversion from criminalisation scheme has been evaluated using a scientifically rigorous RCT in the UK.

The Re-frame RCT trial evaluation will address whether this novel approach to managing these young people is more effective than usual care in reducing substance use, offending behaviour and improving overall wellbeing.

Aims of the Re-frame Evaluation

- Enhance a young person's knowledge of substance use and links with physical and mental health and behaviour
- Explore impact of substance use on the young person, family and social network



- Evaluate whether Re-frame is an effective approach for young people in reducing substance use and offending and improving wellbeing
- Find out if Re-frame works, for whom, in what ways and in what context?
- Assess whether Re-Frame is an acceptable approach from the perspectives of all involved including young people, police and the service provider
- Explore the psychological mechanisms associated with changes.

Young people who meet the eligibility criteria and provide consent, will be randomised to receive either Re-frame or 'care as usual'. They will complete questionnaires exploring substance use, physical and mental health, and wellbeing at both baseline, before their treatment is chosen, and again six months later to follow their progress.

A Young People's Advisory Group has been set up to ensure young people have an active voice in the project. They will assess trial information provided to young people and data collection instruments and offer recommendations for improvement. They will attend trial management meetings throughout the project.



CHSS Research Associate Nadine Hendrie, Trial Manager said, 'We need robust evidence around diversion programmes aiming to steer young people away from criminalisation. We are excited to be carrying out the first RCT in the UK, of this type of programme. We have begun recruiting young people and look forward to working closely with our partners. The Re-frame evaluation will show us whether this novel approach works to reduce offending and future criminalisation among this vulnerable group'.

[Re-Frame: Randomised Controlled Trial of a Diversion Programme for Adolescents in Police Custody who Possess Illicit Substances Dec 2021 – Jan 2025](#)

What programmes work to reduce violent crime and re-offending in young people?

Professor Lindsay Forbes leads an evaluation of Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit's commissioned programmes to tackle serious crime and re-offending among young people. NIHR Clinical Research Network KSS and the KM VRU are funding the nine month evaluation.

With CHSS Research Associate Nadine Hendrie, Research Assistants Abosede Lawal and Rosa Vass, and Alex Stevens, Professor in Criminal Justice at the University of Kent, she is working with a team from KM VRU and KCC Public Health. The resulting research partnership will help build the evidence around 'what works' to help tackle this crucial issue.

What is the VRU?

The Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) is a partnership between the police, local councils, health service providers and other key agencies. It was set up in 2019/20 with national government funding to take a long-term approach to preventing violence. Whilst it has implemented various activities, there is limited research evidence about the effects on meaningful outcomes.

The findings will help guide VRU plans and build robust ongoing evaluation into them.

Ultimately, the work will help show how far interventions can reduce violence and improve young people's lives and health.

Projects being evaluated include:

- school-based initiatives to build self-esteem and reduce school exclusion,
- voluntary GPS (Global Positioning System) tags for young people at risk of involvement with gangs, making them 'too hot to handle',
- a programme promoting skills development in young people soon to leave prison – including coping with adversity, managing impulses and avoiding toxic relationships.

Lindsay said, 'Violent crime affects people's health in many ways. As with many public health issues, the problem is complex and the solution is not straightforward.

'Our work will contribute to the evidence of what works to reduce violence among young people and improve their health and wellbeing.

That can inform what parents, schools, communities, councils, social services, voluntary sector organisations and the police can do to reduce involvement in violent criminal activity.



'It is a privilege to work with the police and the councils who are all committed to finding effective solutions, recognising that law enforcement and the criminal justice system are only part of the solution'.

She added, 'This area is ripe for research and this evaluation will build our knowledge and lay the groundwork for further work. There is a major need to build the evidence base to prevent young people from getting involved in gangs and violent crime and – if already involved – help them remove themselves'.

[More about the VRU](#)



CHSS people

Never say never again!

Dr Emily McKean, Research Assistant and former CHSS PhD Scholarship Student

CHSS Studentships help to develop the researchers of the future. Emily, originally an Occupational Therapist, was convinced she would never study again but recently completed her PhD with us.

Tell us about your beginnings, Emily

I was born in Blackheath in London and we moved to Kent when I was seven. Dad was a publican and Mum a nurse. They ran three pubs in Canterbury and my first ever job was behind the bar. I studied for a BA in Visual Culture at Falmouth College of Arts. Cornwall was great! I graduated with a first then became a Project Manager at a London Branding Agency for a few years. My mother is from the States and I have a US passport so next I worked a year in the Napa Valley, California wine trade, which I really enjoyed!

How did you become interested in Occupational Therapy (OT)?

I didn't care for the London media scene. Mum told me she wished she had done OT and the chance for me to enable and help people was appealing. I applied to Canterbury Christ Church University and moved back home. I was lucky to live rent-free and receive a bursary for the BSc OT. After graduating in 2006 at Canterbury Cathedral, I joined Medway Council as a Care Manager. From there I moved to Kent Community Health Foundation Trust for seven years in the Intermediate Care Team doing community rehabilitation in Canterbury. There was a lot of end-of-life care. It was challenging but I enjoyed developing a therapeutic relationship with patients and enabling them to remain at home as long as possible.

The Trust funded my two-year Taught Masters in advanced Occupational Therapy. I had my first child while studying and working which was quite tough. I decided that would be the end of studying for me!

What made you change your mind and decide to apply for the CHSS PhD Scholarship?

I joined Pilgrims Hospices in a one-year post as end-of-life care coordinator, which I really enjoyed. It was mostly delivering training for EKHUFT (East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust) staff around end-of-life conversations. Pilgrims Medical Director Claire Butler and Research Facilitator Charlotte Brigden were both involved with CHSS research. Charlotte told me about the CHSS Social Policy Studentship, and Claire later became one of my PhD supervisors.

I realised the PhD was what I wanted to do and thought perspectives on hospital discharge at end of life would make a great thesis. I attended a useful 'dragons' den' event run by Kent Health where you could pitch PhD ideas to a panel. They said I was 'authentic', which was good to hear and gave me confidence to apply for the CHSS Scholarship. I wrote my proposal around interviewing key stakeholders in the discharge process to gain all perspectives. I felt that if people were not agreeing on what a hospital discharge should look like, that would have a negative impact. I planned to focus on end of life, and ultimately my thesis was about discharge from community hospitals of older people living with frailty at the end of life. I went into it thinking about the patient but came out of it thinking about patients and their female carers, usually daughters or neighbours. As a practitioner, you have preconceived ideas, but the PhD showed me the systemic issues, and the demands it makes on the discharge process.

How was the PhD Experience?

After success at interview, I started my research PhD in September 2015. It was a leap of faith, and tough but worth it. I had planned to study fulltime, but after falling pregnant with my second child I needed to take a year off and moved to part-time study over five years, which was hard financially, and it was tough juggling everything. Professor Tricia Wilson was my lead supervisor, which was great. Though now retired, she is a continued source of help and advice. CHSS Research Associate Vanessa Abrahamson, my mentor, had gone through the PhD experience and was a former OT too, which was incredibly helpful.

Now you are a CHSS researcher too! –

What are you working on?

As a CHSS Research Assistant, I am working with Stephen and the team on the GP teams project, helping with focus groups in GP practices. It's good to be feeling productive and working in a team after the upheaval during Covid, which had a huge impact. Being isolated and working alone all the time has been a challenge. I caught the virus in December 2020, when the Kent variant was at its peak and before vaccines. I am excited about starting a new NIHR-funded project. ALLIANCE is a partnership bringing together three regions seeking to improve palliative and end of life care for older people living with advancing frailty through research. I will be working with Julie MacInnes and Nadia Brookes at CHSS and Professor Caroline Nicholson at Surrey University.



Would you recommend a CHSS Scholarship to anyone considering it?

Yes, though perhaps avoid the baby bit during it! It is great to have completed. Christmas 2021 was the first time in years without the PhD being there in the background. It is a huge commitment and constantly rolls around your head. I had great support from CHSS colleagues though. Stephen has been very supportive since I joined as an employee and encouraged me to apply for a SeNSS Fellowship (South East Network for Social Sciences), a post-doctoral development award which is 25% research. Nadia and Julie have been championing me. I feel very lucky to have benefited from bursaries, masters funding and PhD Scholarships throughout my career. I would encourage others to apply if they are serious about research.

Tell us something unusual about yourself or your hobbies?

I enjoyed rowing years ago. It is how I met my husband, a Paralympic rower. I used to love dancing back in the day, and was an avid reader, but these days, time is tight. I listen to a lot of books on Audible which you can do while prepping dinner or other multi-tasking. Does appearing in a Chemical Brothers' music video in the 1990s count as unusual? It was called 'Setting Sun' and it is probably still on YouTube!

[Emily's Thesis is available to read on the Kent Academic Repository.](#)

Recent CHSS publications

CHSS featured publications

Quality of Life at Work: What it means for the adult social care workforce in England and recommendations for actions (2022)

Ann-Marie Towers, Sinead Palmer, Nadia Brookes, Sarah Markham, Helen Salisbury, Barbora Silarova, Petra Mäkelä, Shereen Hussein

Care work is rewarding but can be challenging, with significant emotional and physical demands. This guide draws on a study which focused on developing a care worker-related quality of life tool for the adult social care workforce in England. What matters most for care workers' quality of life at work? How do employers support it? What would staff would find helpful in the future? Findings are summarised with recommendations for actions.



[Read the report](#)

What is past is present: Australian Indigenous led primary health care CHSS Professor Sally Kendall is Co-Editor in Chief of Primary Health Care Research & Development.

In Australia and Torres Strait Islands, contemporary health disparities experienced by Indigenous peoples are directly related to colonisation and displacement of communities from their ancestral lands.



Despite this, indigenous cultures have endured and been maintained through sustained advocacy of Indigenous leaders (particularly Elders), giving hope and renewal to younger generations. This special collection includes a selection of Indigenous led primary health care solutions.

[Read the report](#)

Selected CHSS publications 2021-22

McFadden A, Kendall S, Eida T (2022) [Implementing the Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly initiative in Scotland](#). *Matern Child Nutr.* Jan 11: e13304 doi: 10.1111/mcn.13304 Epub ahead of print. PMID: 35014185

Abrahamson V, Zhang W, Wilson PM et al. (2021) [Realist evaluation of Autism Service Delivery \(RE-ASCeD\): which diagnostic pathways work best, for whom and in what context? Findings from a rapid realist review](#) *BMJ Open* 2021 11: e051241 doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2021-051241

Burton J, Wolters A, Towers A, Jones L, Meyer J, et al (2022). Developing a minimum data set for older adult care homes in the UK: exploring the concept and defining early core principles. *The Lancet Healthy Longevity*. (in press)

Silarova B, Brookes N, Palmer S, Towers A & Hussein S (2022) Understanding and measuring the work-related quality of life among those working in adult social care: A scoping review. *Health and Social Care in the Community*. (In press)

Coulton S, Hendrie N et al (2022) The Effectiveness and Cost-Effectiveness of Screening and Brief Alcohol Intervention to Reduce Alcohol Consumption in Young People in the High School Setting: A Pragmatic Randomized Controlled Trial (SIPS JR-HIGH) *Alcohol and Alcoholism* <https://doi.org/10.1093/alcalc/agab087>

Hodgson D, Bailey S, Exworthy M et al (2021) On the character of the new entrepreneurial NHS in England: reforming health care from within? *Public Administration*. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/padm.12797>

Hashem F (2022) So you're new to...the National Institute for Health Research. *Research Professional News*

Stevens A, Hughes C, Hulme S and Cassidy R (2022) Depenalization, diversion and decriminalization: A realist review and programme theory of alternatives to criminalization for simple drug possession. *European Journal of Criminology* 19 (1) pp. 29-54 ISSN 1477-3708. E-ISSN 1741-2609. (doi:10.1177/1477370819887514)

Lea J W D, O'Driscoll J M, Hulbert S et al. Convergent Validity of Ratings of Perceived Exertion During Resistance Exercise in Healthy Participants: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. (2022) *Sports Med – Open* 8, 2. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40798-021-00386-8>

Qualter P, Hennessey A, Yang K, Chester L, Klemmer E & Brooks F (2021) Prevalence and social inequality in youth loneliness in the UK. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(19) 1042bill

Resende T C, de Souza W J, Peckham S et al (2021) Pay-for-performance programme in primary health care: analyzing performance and social participation in the Rio Grande do Norte State in *Revista de Administração da UFESM, Vol.14, No.4* (Nov 2021 pp 769-788) (doi:10.5902/1983465963903)

Merritt R, Tshering P & Suggs L (2021) To Improve Nutrition and Healthy Eating, We Need to Generate Demand. *International Journal of Public Health* 66. doi: 10.3389/ijph.2021.1604390

Ghio D, Lawes-Wickwar S, Tang M Y, Epton T, Howlett N, Jenkinson E, Stanescu S, Westbrook J, Kassianos A. P, Watson D, Sutherland L, Stanulewicz N, Guest E, Scanlan D, Carr N, Chater A, Hotham S et al (2021) What influences people's responses to public health messages for managing risks and preventing infectious diseases? A rapid systematic review of the evidence and recommendations, *BMJ Open*. *BMJ* doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2021-048750.

Checkland J, Hammond J, Coleman A, MacInnes J, Mikelyte R, Sarah Croke, Billings J R, Bailey S and Allen P (2021) 'Success' in policy piloting: process, programmes and politics' in *Public Administration* (October) (doi:10.1111/padm.12790)

Zhang W & Wang Y (2021) *Characterising social integration between rural migrants and local residents in urban China: An exploratory social network analysis of care workers in Shanghai*; in Pryce, Ya Ping Wang, Yu Chen, Jingjing Shan & Houkai Wei (eds) *Urban Inequality, Segregation & Integration in Europe & China, The Urban Book Series* (New York: Springer, Nov 2021) pp.233-250 (doi:10.1007/978-3-030-74544-8)

Details of all CHSS research is available on our website: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/research/current.html

CHSS staff news

Information about all CHSS staff is available on our website: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/staff
Details of current vacancies and studentships: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/vacancies.html

Congratulations

Ann-Marie Towers, Reader in Social Care received one of five prestigious NIHR School for Social Care Research (SSCR) Research Leader Awards. This is fantastic recognition for her excellent social care research and research leadership. It is the second recent NIHR SSCR award to CHSS staff.



Dr Amanda Bates received an award recognising great work as Co-Chair of the Disability Staff Network.



CHSS Promotions from 1 October 2021

Dr Ferhana Hashem
Reader in Health Services Research



Dr Julie Macinnes
Senior Research Fellow



Dr Rebecca Cassidy
Research Fellow



Dr Katerina Gousia
Research Fellow



New Staff Members

Philippa Case
Research Fellow



Kate Day
Research Assistant



Philippa Jevons
NIHR RDS SE Data Information Officer



Dr Maja Niksic
Research Fellow



Roxana Pomplun
PhD student



Palmira Ramos
Research Assistant



Dr Lucy Webster
Research Fellow



PhD success

Well done Dr Abosede Lawal – awarded her PhD with only minor corrections.



NIHR | Research Design Service
South East

RDS SE – FREE advice for health and social care researchers

New to research?
Need help developing an idea?

RDS SE Weekly Drop In Sessions can help you develop an idea into a funding application. Book an hour with our friendly advisers. Details in our [online events programme](#).

www.rds-se.nihr.ac.uk

About CHSS

CHSS is a centre of research excellence carrying out high quality research into a wide range of health systems and health services issues at local, national and international levels. CHSS also supports and advises health care staff to develop and undertake research projects. CHSS collaborates with a wide range of partners in Kent, the UK and in other countries to improve the links between research, policy and practice.

Please see the CHSS website for details of current and previous research and publications.

