

Health Economics Unit

With negotiations for any sort of Brexit partnership proving as contentious as ever and the cliff edge becoming a reality... a focus on promoting better working partnerships and good sexual health may prove a welcome distraction (but perhaps let's not think of our politicians in this context!)? The research focus in this issue is on the clinical area of sexual health - a significant research theme for HEU.

HEU's MSc Health Economics & Health Policy programme will be celebrating its 21st Birthday in September 2019 and we call on all Alumni of this programme and former staff from the last two decades *to get in touch* with us to provide your latest contact details so that you can be personally invited to our exciting celebration event. Whilst the programme itself celebrates 21 years, we celebrate 10 years of the 'Policy' module which was launched exclusively from HEU along with our equally famous 'Modelling' module, a decade ago. We introduce our new article 'Spotlight on' which in this edition is on the man behind the 'Pen' - HEU's **Pelham Barton**, who provides a number of insights into his personal side as well as on his left handed party piece (but not whether this was ever performed for the now Mrs May!).

Inside this issue:	
Welcome message	1
What's new in HEU...	
Contact us	
Research	2
Have you heard...	3
Spotlight on Staff news	
Pelham's Pen	
Capacity building news	4
Recent publications	

As always, we are pleased to share the celebrations of all our graduating MSc and PhD students. We extend congratulations to **Samuel Frempong** and his supervisors for his recent successful viva defence. Sam along with graduating PhD students **Duby** and **Lavanya** (pictured) undertook the MSc Health Economics and Health Policy prior to their PhD pursuits. We look forward to celebrating further with them and many more of our Alumni at our 21st Birthday Party in September 2019.... if we survive the cliff edge, but anyhow there will always be an EU in HEU!!



Tracy Roberts,
Head of Unit

What's new in HEU?

HEU's Emma Frew and Hareth Al-Janabi are taking on new roles which will see them promoting equality, diversity and capacity building within health economics!

As a Unit, we proud of our contribution through academic citizenship to the wider health economics community, and the contributions of HEU's **Tracy Roberts, Emma Frew** and **Sue Jowett** to NIHR funding panels was highlighted in a previous issue of HEU news. In this edition we report on exciting new roles being taken up by HEU's **Emma Frew** and **Hareth Al-Janabi**.

We are thrilled that **Emma** has been elected onto the Board of Directors for the International Health Economics Association (iHEA). One of Emma's first tasks will be to lead a programme of work exploring 'equality and diversity' within health economics; in particular Emma aims to promote greater representation of women and to represent the needs of early and mid-career research in iHEA's leadership and management team. Emma also leads the iHEA Special Interest Group on the Economics of Obesity.



Hareth has been appointed to the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) pre-doctoral fellowship funding panel for a 3 year term. This new panel will fund 12 month personal awards for aspiring methodologists, including, but not limited to health economics, qualitative research, and modelling. Fellows can use the fellowships to gain a masters in one of the target subjects or additional support and training to set them up for a PhD and a career in health research methodology. The deadline for applications for 2019 awards is the 24th April 2019. Hareth is, himself, an NIHR Career Development Fellow.

Understanding the costs and benefits of online and clinic-based screening for sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

With rising pressures on local health budgets, it is important to find the most cost-effective ways to promote good sexual health, carry out STI screening and treat infections. Digital technologies are increasingly being adopted to increase STI screening uptake. However, there is limited evidence on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of such technologies. Since August 2015, Umbrella (part of University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust) has provided online home based STI screening to those living in the Birmingham and Solihull areas.

HEU's **Louise Jackson** and **Lorraine Munetsi** are collaborating with Professor Jonathan Ross and Dr Nicola Thorley (University Hospitals Birmingham) on a project evaluating the costs and benefits of online STI screening versus clinic-based screening. The objectives of the study are: to assess whether there are differences between those accessing screening online and in clinic; to evaluate the health outcomes associated with screening by setting; and to analyse the costs associated with online services and clinic-based services. The study involves a retrospective analysis of the clinic and online databases for home-based and clinic-based testing between January and December 2017. The results will be used to inform the further development of sexual health services both in the local area and more widely.

This project is funded by Umbrella Sexual Health Services.



Lorraine and Louise

Limiting Undetected Sexually Transmitted Infections to Reduce Morbidity

LUSTRUM is a five-year programme of research funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) under its Programme Grants for Applied Research and is led by Professor Claudia Estcourt (Glasgow Caledonian University). LUSTRUM aims to improve the sexual health of heterosexual people and men who have sex with men (MSM). The programme aims to achieve this by preventing transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and reducing undiagnosed HIV. The programme is at the half way stage and HEU's **Chidubem (Duby) Ogwulu** and **Tracy Roberts** are preparing for the work package that comprises a cross-over cluster randomised controlled trial of Accelerated Partner Therapy (APT) to improve partner notification (PN) outcomes for heterosexual people with chlamydia infection.

Duby recently completed (and graduated from) her PhD (supervised by HEU's Tracy Roberts, **Louise Jackson**, and **Phil Kinghorn**) in which she developed and piloted approaches for valuing the outcomes associated with the sexually transmitted infection Chlamydia trachomatis. Health state utility values were elicited for seven health states associated with chlamydia in women using both conventional and chained Time Trade-off techniques to account for the temporary nature of the associated health states.

As part of the LUSTRUM Health Economic analysis, a pre-trial analysis has been carried out and in collaboration with some other members of the research team at the University of Bern, Switzerland, a transmission dynamic model is being developed which will use the health state utility values derived from Duby's PhD as some of the input parameters.



Tracy and Duby

Have you heard...

about the 10th anniversary of one of our flagship MSc modules?

In January we celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the Policy and Economics of Healthcare Delivery module. The module, which is coordinated by HEU's Hugh McLeod and Hareth Al-Janabi, explores health policy evolution and how it is influenced by economic theory, and how economic principles can be applied to the study and evaluation of health policy and service delivery.

The module content spans behavioural economics to health system reforms, in both the UK and internationally. Assessing NHS commissioning arrangements has been an enduring challenge for students, and the relationship between economic evidence and pro-competition policy rhetoric has also been a key theme. Highlights included the students' team presentations and the 'Question Time' (QT) session, where a panel of experts answer our students' questions.

On this year's QT panel (Chaired by HEU's own 'Fiona Bruce' Tracy Roberts), we were delighted to have Professor Andrew Stevens (University of Birmingham and NICE), Professor Kara Hanson (London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine), Professor Anita Charlesworth CBE (The Health Foundation) and Kirsten Major (Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust).



Question Time Panel

Staff News



We welcome **Nishit Dhanji**, who joins HEU as a Research Associate, after graduating from the MSc in Health Economics at City, University of London. Nishit will be working with HEU's Hareth Al-Janabi on his NIHR career development fellowship ('Techniques to include carer quality of life in economic evaluations'). Nishit will focus on valuing carer effects using economic methods (through well-being valuation) and including carer effects in economic evaluation.

Pelham's Pen

A man walked into a health economics consultant's office and enquired about the rates for undertaking a project.

"Well, typically we scope, structure and plan the project in advance, and charge £100k plus VAT and expenses, for three questions", replied the consultant.

"Isn't that ridiculously expensive?" asked the man.

"Yes," the consultant replied, "and what was your third question?"

Spotlight on... Dr Pelham Barton



Dr Pelham Barton graduated from The Queen's College, Oxford with a BA in Mathematics in 1979 and an MA in Mathematics in 1983. Pelham spent eleven years as a secondary school teacher, before coming to Birmingham as a PGT student in Operational Research, where he obtained a PG Diploma with Distinction and followed this by completing his PhD thesis entitled "Extending System Dynamics". Pelham joined the Health Economics Unit in 1998 and has progressed to the rank of Reader, and is lead coordinator for the 'Modelling' module. Pelham's job is to decide on the appropriate type of decision model to use, construct the model using suitable software, and then present and explain the results obtained from the model.

HEUnews asked Pelham:

What did you want to be when you grew up?

A Professor of Mathematics.

Where did you grow up?

Hayes, Middlesex.

What is your favourite...

Chocolate bar? M&S Dark Chocolate.

Sandwich? Chicken and Bacon on brown bread.

Book? The Man Who Won The Pools by J.I.M. Stewart.

Film? The Lavender Hill Mob.

Who is the most famous person you have met?

Theresa Brasier (before she married Philip May).

If you could have a chat with anyone, who would it be?

Anyone who really wanted to chat with me.

If you are happy to share it, do you have a fear of anything?

Being disliked because of a misunderstanding.

Tell us something about yourself that people may not know?

I once spent part of a concert turning the pages for a school-mate who was playing the cymbals.

You travel all around the UK to watch cricket, where do you enjoy visiting the most and why?

Durham, because the people there are so friendly.

What are you most well known for?

Pelham's Pen!

Do you have a party trick?

I used to play the Prelude and Nocturne for Piano (left hand only) by Scriabin, but I am out of practice.

Congratulations



Congratulations to all of those who graduated from our two Masters programmes in December 2018. It was such a pleasure for staff to catch-up with those who were able to attend the ceremony in person.

The ceremony was held in the grand setting of the University of Birmingham's Great Hall. In particular we would like to congratulate Geoffrey Modise and Sam Perry who received Awards for Academic Excellence in Postgraduate Studies, Geoff for the MSc in Health Economics and Health Policy and Sam for the MSc in Health Economics and Econometrics.

HEU staff members **Chidubem Ogwulu** and **Lavanya Diwakar**



(pictured with Lead Supervisor **Tracy Roberts**) also received their doctorates in Health Economics at the ceremony.



Sam Perry (centre) receiving his award from Louise Jackson (MSc Programme Lead) and Patrick Moore (Deputy Head of Teaching)

Congratulations to **Samuel Frempong**, who successfully defended his PhD thesis at a Viva held on 16th January 2019, and was awarded the degree subject to minor corrections.

The title of Sam's thesis is "Test evaluation in a resource-limited country context from a health economics perspective". Sam's supervisors were HEU's **Pelham Barton**, along with Andrew Sutton (formerly HEU, now in the Institute of Health Economics, Alberta, Canada) and Clare Davenport (Public Health, Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Birmingham). The examiners were **Sue Jowett** (HEU) and Dr Peter Hall (University of Edinburgh) and the viva was chaired by **Hugh McLeod** (HEU).



Pelham, Sam, Peter, Sue

Selected recent publications

Aguiar M, Andronis L, Pallan M, Högl W, **Frew E**. Micronutrient deficiencies and health-related quality of life: The case of children with vitamin D deficiency. *Public Health Nutrition* 2018. DOI: [10.1017/S1368980018003841](https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980018003841)

McLoughlin C, Roberts TE, Jackson LJ on behalf of the SALVO study group, et al. Cost-effectiveness of cell salvage and donor blood transfusion during caesarean section: results from a randomised controlled trial. *BMJ Open* 2019. DOI: [10.1136/bmjopen-2018-022352](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2018-022352)

Nolan A, McCrory C, **Moore P**. Personality and preventive healthcare utilisation: Evidence from the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing. *Preventative Medicine* 2019. DOI: [10.1016/j.ypmed.2018.12.029](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2018.12.029)

MSc & PhD publications

Grand TS, Basarir H, **Jackson LJ**. The cost-effectiveness of oral contraceptives compared to 'no hormonal treatment' for endometriosis-related pain: An economic evaluation. *PLoS ONE* 2019. DOI: [10.1371/journal.pone.0210089](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0210089)

Proud P, **McLoughlin C, Kinghorn P**. ICECAP-O, the current state of play: a systematic review of studies reporting the psychometric properties and use of the instrument over the decade since its publication. *Quality of Life Research* 2019. DOI: [10.1007/s11136-019-02114-y](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11136-019-02114-y)

Zanganeh M, Adab P, Li B, Frew E. A systematic review of methods, study quality, and results of economic evaluation for childhood and adolescent obesity intervention. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2019. DOI: [10.3390/ijerph16030485](https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16030485)

Health Economics MSc Programmes and associated short courses

HEU runs two separate but allied MSc programmes: **MSc Health Economics and Health Policy** and **MSc Health Economics and Econometrics**. Both programmes explore the key principles and theories upon which health economics is based as well as developing practical skills for the conduct of empirical work. Selected modules are also accessible as short courses (see website for details). For more information visit: www.birmingham.ac.uk/healthconomics or email healthconomics@contacts.bham.ac.uk