

## Reflections On Our First Year

Helen Papworth, PenCLAHRC's Operational Manager, looks back over the last year.

**It's hard to believe that Peninsula CLAHRC was established on 1st October 2008. The first appointment was our Director, Professor Stuart Logan and, slowly but surely, more people got involved and were recruited, so that by our welcome lunch in July 2009, we were able to invite nearly 30 people.**

We've all been so busy trying to get up and running that there hasn't been much time to reflect on what we've achieved – and there's certainly plenty more to be done! But just looking back for a few minutes on a sunny day gave me plenty of reasons to be pleased about we've accomplished so far...

The first stage of the Engagement by Design® model – question generation and prioritisation – has been piloted with the launch of an interactive web-tool in May 2009 leading to the first stakeholder project selection meeting on the 9th October. Workshops have been held with clinicians, with the six, part-time Locality Leads recruited on behalf of PenCLAHRC by Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust, Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust and NHS Cornwall, playing a key role in stimulating interest in research amongst their colleagues. In parallel, two implementation research projects responding to local health service priorities have already been initiated on risk assessment of Venous Thromboembolism with Plymouth

Hospitals NHS Trust, and prevention of falls in the elderly with Torbay Care Trust.

PenCLAHRC has been putting funds towards academic-led projects within its initial research areas which are already showing promise and producing results: A team led by Richard Byng successfully tendered in January 2009 to evaluate the regional commissioning programme for IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapy), securing funding of nearly £275K over 3 years. PenCLAHRC has provided support to purchase additional measuring equipment for the Healthy Lifestyles Programme (HeLP) led by Katrina Wyatt, a school-based intervention to prevent and reduce obesity in primary school children. Following an exploratory randomised controlled trial and process evaluation of the programme with 4 Exeter primary schools, a full funding proposal has been shortlisted by the NIHR Public Health Research programme.



*...on the eve of our second year, there is good reason to be optimistic about what we can do...*



## Reflections On Our First Year (cont.)

Some of the direct NIHR funding has already been invested in senior academic posts: Katarina Kos will join as a Senior Lecturer in Diabetes (Exeter), with matched funding from the University of Exeter's Science Strategy Translational Medicine and Personalised Healthcare theme and, and Richard Byng has been appointed Senior Lecturer in Primary Care with a specific remit to develop research in Plymouth and Cornwall. Reflecting PenCLAHRC's commitment to embedding genuine patient involvement throughout the research process, we have also recruited a full-time research fellow, Andy Gibson, who will develop a comprehensive strategy in conjunction with Professor Nicky Britten. Finally, with support from PenCLAHRC, Chris Hyde from the University of Birmingham has taken a Chair in Clinical Epidemiology.

...So, on the eve of our second year, there is good reason to be optimistic about what we can do: The outlook is much brighter now than it was on a cold grey day in January 2009 when I joined PenCLAHRC: I'm looking forward to working with you all on the challenges ahead.

*These are exciting challenges and an opportunity we must take for the good of our patients.*

### LOCALITY LEADS:

## the Perspective from Plymouth

**Professor Robert (Bob) Freeman, a PenCLAHRC Locality Lead, talks about the role:**



As one of the Locality Leads for PenCLAHRC at Derriford Hospital, Plymouth, I am very excited about this new venture. Having been involved in clinical research for many years I have been frustrated firstly at our failure to address many of the important research questions which affect the management of our patients and secondly to implement the evidence which exists. There are probably several reasons for this including lack of knowledge, information and support. I believe that PenCLAHRC can address these issues and ultimately impact on patient care. The financial commitment from the Universities and Strategic Health Authorities is to be welcomed; it is now up to us as clinicians and academics to 'deliver'. Our first task as clinical leads is to engage with colleagues to identify the important research questions relevant to them and take these forward to PenCLAHRC.

Having been a consultant in Plymouth for over 20 years I know many clinicians and would like to think we have a good relationship; this should (hopefully!) help with participation. It is also good to see the proposed engagement with all health care professionals and the public who will be able to identify questions which they feel are important for patient care.

Implementation will be the key to success for PenCLAHRC. Why evidence isn't implemented into clinical practice is complex and not fully understood. These are areas we will investigate and hopefully identify the barriers and provide solutions.

All Clinicians are keen to employ evidence-based practice but need support to implement change. At a time when the NHS is under considerable pressure to 'deliver' e.g. on waiting times, it might not be possible for clinicians to give implementation the priority it deserves. This should be a role for PenCLAHRC: if we can help colleagues implement evidence-based practice then clinical effectiveness (i.e. providing the right treatment for the right patient) should



result in improved outcomes and patient satisfaction.

These are exciting challenges and an opportunity we must take for the good of our patients.

I look forward to meeting as many interested colleagues as possible and please feel free to discuss any research questions with me and my Co-Locality Lead Mark Perry, Consultant Rheumatologist.

Mark and Bob can be contacted via e-mail:  
Robert.Freeman@phnt.swest.nhs.uk mark.perry@phnt.swest.nhs.uk

## EVENTS DIARY

**MONDAY 5th OCTOBER**

**PenCLAHRC Seminar:**

**Addressing the wider social determinants of health inequalities: is conditionality an effective way forward?**

Jenny Popay, Professor of Sociology and Public Health University of Lancaster

**12pm, followed by lunch at 1pm Exeter, St Luke's campus**

**MONDAY 5th OCTOBER**

**PenCLAHRC Lunch**

**1pm Exeter, St Luke's campus**

For those who have not attended before, our regular lunchtime meeting is an opportunity to meet other members of staff involved in the collaboration informally over a buffet lunch. We hope to be able to introduce our newest team members and provide an opportunity to ask any questions you might have of the PenCLAHRC Executive.

**Please RSVP to [pamela.frost@pcmd.ac.uk](mailto:pamela.frost@pcmd.ac.uk)**

**FRIDAY 9th OCTOBER**

**PENCLAHRC STAKEHOLDER PRIORITISATION PANEL**

**10am - 4 pm, Future Inn, Derriford, Plymouth**

**13th AND 14th OCTOBER**

**CLAHRC Learning Together Event, Patient and Public Involvement, London**

**WEDNESDAY 4th NOVEMBER**

**PenCLAHRC Management Board**

9am-11am, Exeter and Plymouth.

**MONDAY 30th NOVEMBER**

**Institute of Health Service Research, Research Day,**

PenCLAHRC people are welcome to attend this annual event at Buckfast, Devon. A coach will be laid on from Exeter, and if there is enough interest, one may also be booked from Plymouth. However, our places are limited to 15, so if you would like to attend, please register your interest by emailing [helen.papworth@pms.ac.uk](mailto:helen.papworth@pms.ac.uk)

**SAVE THESE DATES!**

**THURSDAY 17th DECEMBER**

**PenCLAHRC Christmas Social**

**Exeter, St Luke's, 4pm - 6pm.**

Details for Plymouth/Cornwall TBC.

**MONDAY 18th JANUARY 2010**

**PenCLAHRC Lunch**

Details to follow in the next issue.



## PenCLAHRC on the Move!

In Plymouth, the appointment of the Deputy Director, together with a smaller team of researchers and support staff, led to a rethink of the office space in Portland Square on the University of Plymouth's main campus. PenCLAHRC in Plymouth therefore moved across to B block, which is used mainly by the Faculty of Science, at the end of September 2009.

In Exeter, PenCLAHRC appointments have increased pressure on PCMD's current accommodation at the University's St Luke's campus and the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital. The College is currently working with the University of Plymouth to refurbish the Veysey building, a large facility off Earl Richards Road North which was previously occupied by the Faculties of Art and Education and the Faculty of Health and Social Work. This work is about to get underway and will happen over the Autumn, with the plan to relocate PenCLAHRC staff in January 2010.

## PenCLAHRC Recent Appointments

- **Richard Byng**  
Senior Lecturer, Primary Care
- **Sue Child**  
Research Fellow, Health Service Research
- **Katarina Los**  
Senior Lecturer, Diabetes
- **Lanting Lu**  
Associate Research Fellow, Modeling
- **Jayne Royle**  
Locality Lead, Cornwall
- **Jo Thompson-Coon**  
Research Fellow, Health Service Research
- **Julie Tomlinson**  
Locality Lead, Cornwall
- **Janet Heaton**  
Research Fellow, Evaluation



## PenCLAHRC Staff Interview

**Name: Andy Gibson**

**Job Title: Research Fellow in Patient and Public Involvement**

### Describe your role within PenCLAHRC:

I'll be working closely with Nicky Britten to embed meaningful patient and public involvement in all PenCLAHRC activities. My initial task is to meet the people already doing PPI work in the Peninsula, and to facilitate patient and carer involvement in the generation and structuring of research questions. I'm also working closely with Folk.us so that we build on, rather than duplicate, the excellent PPI work already underway locally. Folk.us is an organisation based in Exeter, which brings the world of research and researching to people who use health or social care services across Devon.

### Who would you most like to have dinner with (past or present)?

My wife (Jak) - but without the kids! We've recently moved to Devon and haven't got the baby sitting network organised yet. I love the kids but it would be really good to go out and eat a meal without constant interruptions for trips to the toilet etc!

### What is your greatest extravagance?

I don't think I'm bad with money but I have spent large amounts of money on concert tickets to see bands I really like. Still, it doesn't happen that often and I think there is something special about seeing a good band play live.

*My job is really  
interesting and rewarding  
and I'm working with  
some great people.*

### What is your most precious possession?

My unrivalled collection of 1970s progressive rock. This is also the possession my wife values least.

### What do you value most in a friend?

Honesty.

### If you had a motto what would it be?

Question everything.

### What is your greatest temptation?

Good food and beer, lots of it!

### What is your favourite meal?

I love nearly all food but Chinese is my favourite.

### Where do you like to go on holiday?

Anywhere that provides a combination of sunshine, time to chill out plus time to explore new things be it food, drink, places to see or things to do.

### How do you chill out?

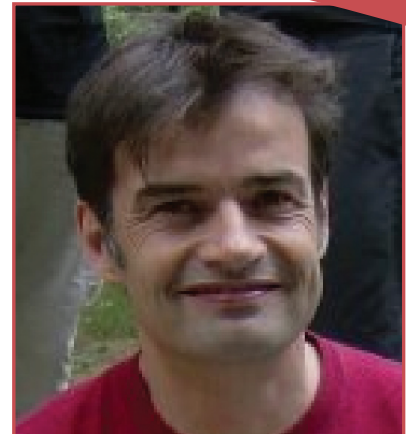
I love walking or going out somewhere on the bikes. We're really enjoying exploring the Devon coast and countryside.

### What do you take when you have a cold?

Anadin and, if possible, I'd lie on the settee, under a duvet and watch my Battlestar Galactica DVDs. The new version is the only US drama I've seen that deals with the issues raised by the war in Iraq in an intelligent and accessible way. It's really worth a look, even if you don't like SF.

### What is your favourite type of music?

Late 60s and early 70s rock music. Yes, I'm a bit of a dinosaur!



### What is the most important virtue for a scientist?

An open and questioning mind.

### If you could do any job what would you be?

As it happens I'm really enjoying the job I'm doing at the moment. It's really interesting and rewarding and I'm working with some great people. If I let my inner child out then I'd say I want to go into space. I think that to look down and see the entire earth, including everything we know, both good and bad, in one glance must be something truly awe inspiring and humbling.

### What's your perfect Friday night?

Jak and I'd go for a meal, then go and see a band, then get legless afterwards!

## PenCLAHRC People

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