

**Welcome to our Summer Newsletter**

We hope you have been enjoying the fantastic weather. Summer offers a great opportunity to welcome students to HERU. In this newsletter we highlight our summer capacity building activities, including welcoming MSc students from Université Paris 12, and celebrating ten years of our Summer Internship scheme. We also feature an exciting new research project, funded by Pharmacy Research UK, exploring the use of choice experiments to develop a decision aid tool.

We hope you enjoy reading about our work and activities. Further information is available on our website and you can see more frequent updates on the HERU twitter account (@HERU\_Abdn).



In May, Verity Watson attended the Scottish Rural Health Partnership's second 'Rethinking Remote' International Conference, presenting a plenary on 'Using public preferences to inform remote and rural healthcare choices' with examples drawn from research at HERU.

**Addressing Remote and Rural Issues**

The Scottish Rural Health Partnership is based in Inverness in the Scottish Highlands and aims to develop and share ideas around the many challenges of providing healthcare to remote and rural communities. These are issues which have been addressed in HERU research, with recent and on-going projects on the location of GP practices, the influence of location on doctors' career choices, the use of telehealth technology, and the healthcare delivery preferences of people in remote and rural areas.

Verity's plenary presentation was well received and the event gave a

great opportunity to discuss potential collaboration in this important area.



Verity Watson's plenary at the Rethinking Remote and Rural conference



**NHSScotland Event 2018**  
DELIVERING NOW,  
IMPROVING FOR THE FUTURE

18-19 June 2018, Scottish Event Campus, Glasgow



Rodolfo Hernández at the HERU stand for the 'NHS Scotland Event, 2018' in Glasgow

Patrícia Norwood and Rodolfo Hernández attended the annual NHS Scotland Event.

This event provides an opportunity for those working in, and with, the NHS in Scotland to come together to share best practice and the most innovative approaches to delivering the highest quality of care, and to take away tools and techniques that will support them in their various roles. When not attending sessions Patrícia and Rodolfo staffed the HERU stand, providing information on HERU's research and teaching activities.

**Building Health Economics Capacity – PLACES STILL AVAILABLE**

- Health Economics Network Scotland (HENS) Workshop: Identifying, Appraising and Applying Health Economics Evidence for Public Health, 1st November 2018, Edinburgh <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/heru/courses/workshops/hens-workshop/>
- HERU Expert Discrete Choice Experiment Workshop, 21–23rd November 2018, Aberdeen <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/heru/courses/workshops/annual-dce-workshop/>
- MSc/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate in Health Economics for Health Professionals (online) <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/heru/courses/pgcert/>

## Helping patients decide: using choice experiments to develop a decision-aid tool

Pharmacy Research UK (PRUK) has awarded HERU, in collaboration with colleagues from Academic Primary Care at the University of Aberdeen, funding to develop a decision aid tool (DAT) to promote shared decision making in pharmacy.

The two year project will employ the choice experiment (CE) methodology to develop a DAT. The CE methodology involves asking patients to compare two or more treatment alternatives and state their preference in a series of hypothetical scenarios. Through respondent's repeated choices, one can mathematically work out information on the relative importance of treatment attributes, how patients trade between treatment attributes, and the overall treatment benefit to patients. The study will be conducted in the context of managing chronic pain in pharmacy. Responses gathered from the CE will be analysed in real time so that personalised information about patients' preferences can be used by patients and pharmacist during a consultation.

The project will include a review of the literature followed by qualitative interviews with patients, pharmacists and doctors to confirm what is important in the delivery of chronic pain management; the development of the computer based DAT using a CE; and a pilot randomized trial to assess the acceptability of the DAT.

This funding provides an exciting opportunity to apply the CE methodology in a novel context, whilst also helping to promote shared decision making in the delivery of health care. If successful, the application of the DAT will be explored in a number of other clinical areas to help patients make more informed decisions.

On announcing the funding, Dr Rachel Joynes, Executive Director at PRUK said: "We are delighted to fund Professor Ryan and her team at the University of Aberdeen. Pharmacists are increasingly involved in the management of chronic pain and there are clear benefits to involving the patient in



decisions around their care. We hope this research will result in a tool that will benefit all pharmacists in the management of chronic pain."

**Research Team:** Professor Mandy Ryan (HERU), Professor Christine Bond (Primary Care), Dr Nicolas Krucien (HERU), Dr Terry Porteous (HERU), Dr Rosalind Adam (Primary Care), Dr Peter Murchie (Primary Care) and Dr Gin Nie Chua (HERU).

For further information please contact Mandy Ryan at [m.ryan@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:m.ryan@abdn.ac.uk)

## Raising awareness and money for a new world class centre for cancer research



NC500 cyclists celebrating their achievement at Inverness Castle

Congratulations to Mandy Ryan, who, along with a team of cyclists from the University of Aberdeen and NHS Grampian, cycled the North Coast 500, raising awareness and funds (more than £30,000!) to support the University's new world-class centre for cancer research. The North Coast 500 is a route around the far north of Scotland through some of the most spectacular scenery in the world – a ride of over 500 miles with 33,000

feet uphill (higher than Everest!). Speaking about the challenge, Mandy said: "It was a privilege to ride this amazing route, with fantastic colleagues, raising awareness and funds for our planned world class cancer research centre. Three years post cancer diagnosis and treatment, what better way to celebrate!" It's not too late to donate: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/mandy-ryan3>

HERU have been involved in a range of cancer research-related work, including the assessment of new drugs, exploring preferences for cancer screening programmes and follow-up care, and exploring lifestyle interventions to improve health and well-being. Working alongside clinicians and scientists our aim is to improve the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of cancer.



Mandy Ryan enjoying the NC500 ride

# Capacity Building

**Celebrating 10 years of our Summer Internship Programme** – the scheme is aimed at economic students interested in learning about health economics. Interns work alongside researchers to get a taste of working in an academic health economics research unit.



L to r back row: Gerry McQuade, Amalia Pape, Iva Parvanova, Alastair Irvine, Luis Loria Rebolledo; L to r front row: Sara Rahmon, Darina Proshenska, Mélanie Antunes

## Welcoming our visiting Student Interns

### Amalia Pape – University of Glasgow.

Amalia is working with Rodolfo Hernández on the costing component of the 'HEALTH' trial (concerned with treatment options for heavy menstrual bleeding), with Patricia Norwood and Verity Watson on a Q-Methodology study looking at preferences for maternity care in rural areas, and with Marjon van der Pol analysing cost and outcome data from a feasibility study looking at financial incentives for weight loss.

### Gerald McQuade – Herriot Watt University, Edinburgh.

Gerry is working with Daniel Kopasker on mapping work-related fluctuations in mental health from the 12-item General Health Questionnaire onto a utility scale, and with Paul McNamee conducting a rapid review of the evidence on the costs and benefits of social prescribing.

### Iva Parvanova – University of Glasgow.

Iva is working with Verity Watson on the application of the theory of spatial location to GP practices, and with Nicolas Krucien and Patricia Norwood on the influence of nutritional labelling in food choice.

## Welcoming our visiting French MSc students

We warmly welcomed two MSc students from Université Paris 12:

**Darina Proshenska** is working with Paul McNamee on a project using new longitudinal data, collected as part of the Personality And Total Health (PATH) Through Life project, to consider the relationship between diet and life satisfaction and well-being.

**Sara Rahmon** is working with Patricia Norwood and Mandy Ryan, looking at the evidence on the benefits of Sistema Scotland's Big Noise projects. The projects use the Big Noise orchestra programme to enable children from the most deprived areas of Scotland to reach their potential.

Darina and Sara join **Mélanie Antunes**, another Université Paris 12 MSc student, who started her placement in April.

## PhD Success

Congratulations to **Luis Loria Rebolledo** (*Investigating preferences for low emission buses*) and **Alastair Irvine** (*Time preferences and the patient-doctor interaction*) who successfully defended their PhDs (with minor changes).

## PhD Graduation Ceremony

**Gin Nie Chua** celebrated her Graduation Ceremony at King's College, Old Aberdeen in June. Gin Nie's PhD was the first within sample field study to explore the external validity of choice experiments in health.



PhD Student Gin Nie Chua celebrates her Graduation, June 18

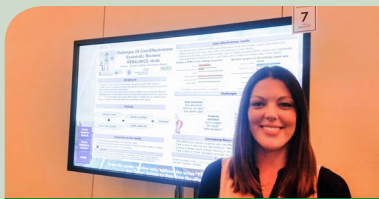
# Other News...

## New Staff

**Alastair Irvine's** research focuses on behavioural health economics. He joined HERU as a PhD student in October 2014, submitting his thesis on time preferences in the patient-doctor interaction in June 2018. Now a Research Assistant, he is working on a project to understand how doctors use decision aids.

**Gin Nie Chua** joined HERU as a Research Fellow after completing her PhD in Health Economics. Gin Nie is working on our Pharmacy Research UK funded project using choice experiments to develop a decision aid tool to facilitate shared decision making in pharmacy.

## Out and About Over the Summer



Elizabeth Jacobsen attending the HTAi (Health Technology Association international) Conference in Vancouver, July 18

**Health Technology Assessment international (HTAi) Vancouver** – Three HERU researchers attended the Health Technology Assessment international (HTAi) Annual Meeting in Vancouver. Elizabeth Jacobsen presented on the challenges of conducting a systematic review of economic evaluations with a large number of included studies, and Rodolfo Hernández presented the results of a cost-effectiveness study on surveillance strategies following endovascular aneurysm repair. Graham Scotland presented his work on economists' addiction to adoption, proposing a new framework to evaluate existing technologies (as opposed to new technologies). Rodolfo was also part of a panel discussing the incorporation of patient preference data into HTA. Additionally, the conference provided the opportunity to network with those in the world-wide HTA community.

### European Health Economics Association (EuHEA) Conference, Maastricht –

Eight HERU researchers attended the European Health Economics Association (EuHEA) Conference in Maastricht. The conference provided a great opportunity to showcase our policy and methodological research. Verity Watson and Paul McNamee were involved in organised sessions: Verity presented on the role of qualitative work in designing person-centred choice experiments, and Paul presented evidence on population-wide interventions to reduce obesity. Mandy Ryan chaired a HERU session on new developments in choice experiments. This session highlighted some of our cutting-edge methodological work, with presentations by Nicolas Krucien (eye-tracking to understand information processing), Alastair Irvine (time preferences and adherence), Verity (certainty and deliberation) and Mandy (testing external validity). Challenging the clinical approach to valuation, Dwayne Boyers presented a cost-benefit analysis of scale and polish in dentistry. At a session on physicians mobility, Marjon van der Pol presented on risk attitudes and GP migration. Daniel Kopasker chaired a session on the interface of labour markets and health economics, presenting on economic insecurity as a determinant of mental health. The conference also provided an opportunity to discuss potential collaborations with our colleagues from across Europe.



L to R: Mandy Ryan, Alastair Irvine, Verity Watson, Nicolas Krucien, Daniel Kopasker, Marjon van der Pol and Dwayne Boyers at the EuHEA (European Health Economics Association) Conference in Maastricht, July 2018

In other conferences Attakrit Leckcivliz presented 'The effects of retirement on health and health behaviour: evidence from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing' at the Health Studies User Conference, University College London, and Yu Aoki presented her work on the relationship between immigrants language proficiency and health and labour market outcomes at the International Association for Applied Econometrics Annual Conference (Université du Québec à Montréal and Université de Montréal). Marjon van der Pol's paper on 'Cognitive ability and the measurement of time and risk preferences' was discussed at the summer Health Economists' Study Group meeting in Bristol, and Daniel Kopasker presented his work on 'Economic insecurity: a socioeconomic determinant of mental health' at the Essen Economics of Mental Health Workshop.


## External Seminar Programme

We had the pleasure of welcoming the following external seminar presenters to HERU:

- Dr Rebecca McDonald, Lecturer in Economics, Department of Economics, University of Birmingham. Title: *Understanding the composite dimensions of the EQ-5D: an experimental approach.*
- Dr Nora Ferdjaoui-Moumjid, Associate Professor, Claude Bernard Lyon 1 University, France. Title: *From healthcare users' preferences to shared decision-making in the medical encounter: key messages and future issues in France.*
- Professor Andrew Jones, Professor of Economics, University of York. Title: *Equity, opportunity and health.*

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