

JULY 2017

HERU NEWS

HEALTH ECONOMICS RESEARCH UNIT

Welcome to our July 2017 HERU Newsletter. We were delighted to host the Health Economists' Study Group (HESG) meeting in June and to welcome Professor Deborah Marshall on sabbatical from the University of Calgary over the summer months. We also feature the activities of Luis Enrique Loría, a PhD student who has impressed us all with his energy to tell the public about his research. We report on new funding, including an exciting new area of research into the economics of whole genome sequencing in Scotland. We have welcomed visitors, MSc students and interns to HERU, ensuring a vibrant academic environment.

We hope you enjoy reading about our recent activities. Further information is available on our website and you can see more frequent updates on the HERU Twitter page (http://twitter.com/HERU_Abdn).

HERU host Health Economists' Study Group (HESG) Conference

We were delighted to host the 3-day bi-annual Health Economists' Study Group (HESG) Conference which ran from Wednesday 28th to Friday 30th June. The conference took place at King's College Conference Centre, Old Aberdeen. The conference is a great opportunity for health economists to network, collaborate and share their ongoing research.

HESG has an unusual format with papers being discussed by a discussant rather than presented by an author. The aim is to maximise feedback. The event also showcases PhD students and early career researchers and is a great opportunity to support their academic development. Over 100 delegates attended the conference. There was a diverse and excellent set of presentations on topics including health behaviour, financing health systems, stated preference and economic evaluation.

A plenary session on the history of health economics was given by Professor Sally Sheard of the University of Liverpool and Professor Anne Ludbrook of HERU. Professor Sheard traced the beginnings of health economics to a concern over health expenditure as early as the start of the NHS in 1948 and reminded the audience about the role of the 'pioneer' centres in health economics (the universities of Aberdeen, York, Brunel and London School of Economics). She also spoke about the need for health economists to work alongside policy makers and convince them of the usefulness and practicality of health economics now and in the future. The plenary session prompted constructive discussion and was a great 'keynote' session for the conference.

Outside of conference business, delegates were offered a 'taste of Scotland' at the conference dinner, an opportunity to take part in a historical tour of Old Aberdeen and were not spared the Aberdeen weather... The conference was a great success, prompting discussions, ideas and participation from the delegates and it was a privilege and wonderful experience for HERU to host this very friendly and beneficial HESG event.



Left to right: Mandy Ryan, Anne Ludbrook and Sally Sheard

Places still available...

DCE EXPERT WORKSHOP

Our next discrete choice experiment workshop 'Using DCEs in health economics: theoretical and practical issues' will take place from 15th-17th November in Aberdeen.

For further details see: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/heru/courses/workshops/annual-dce-workshop/>

NEW online MSc/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate in Health Economics for Health Professionals

Our new online postgraduate programme in Health Economics for Health Professionals commences October 2017. This programme builds on our Post Graduate Certificate in Health Economics, offering students a new opportunity to extend their studies to Diploma and MSc level.

The new programme is aimed at health professionals, and other interested students, who would like to improve their understanding of health economics and research methods. No experience of economics is necessary.

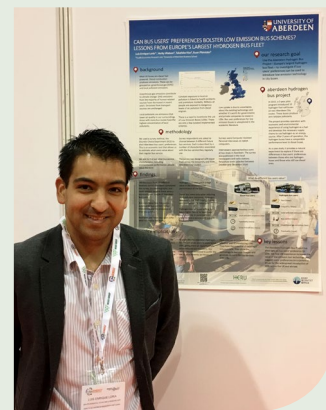
Further details are available at: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/heru/courses/pgcert/>

Spotlight on Luis Enrique Loría...

Luis, a PhD Student at HERU, has recently taken part in some events where he has been able to showcase his research.

- At a recent TEDx event in Aberdeen he gave a talk on *'Familiarity breeds liking: experiences from Europe's largest hydrogen bus fleet'*.
- At a PechaKucha event he gave a talk on *'Lessons from the Aberdeen hydrogen project'*. HERU staff member Attakrit Leckcivivilize also gave a talk on *'Exploring causality'* at this event.

Luis also showcased his research to a wide audience of industry experts and policy makers at the UK's largest renewable and low carbon energy event – the All Energy 2017 conference. At his poster presentation Luis was pleased to meet the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon. During her conference address the First Minister confirmed a commitment to low emission transport and noted that, *"it is a vital part of meeting our climate change targets – but it's also hugely important to protecting public health"*.



Project News...

Whole Genome Sequencing in Scotland: should we do it?

As England's Chief Medical Officer, Professor Sally Davies, states in her annual report that she wants whole genome sequencing (WGS) to be as standard as blood tests and biopsies within five years, HERU embark on a project to look at the costs and benefits of WGS in Scotland. This work will be carried out in collaboration with the Scottish Genomes Partnership. We look forward to presenting results in future Newsletters.

For further information contact **Mandy Ryan** at m.ryan@abdn.ac.uk



Tackling the obesity crisis in Scotland: improving dietary habits

The prevalence of obesity in Scotland is high and the underlying trend is increasing. Being overweight or obese in early and mid-adulthood increases the risk of developing a wide range of diseases in later life and has large financial implications for the Scottish NHS. Work funded by Food Standards Scotland, and in collaboration with the Health Services Research Unit, will conduct a rapid review of the costs of obesity in Scotland and a critical appraisal of the cost-effectiveness of population based dietary interventions. A final report will be available towards the end of 2017.

For further information contact **Paul McNamee** at p.mcnamee@abdn.ac.uk



Karen MacDonald and Professor Deborah Marshall

On sabbatical to HERU – Professor Deborah Marshall

We warmly welcomed Professor Deborah Marshall, a Professor of Health Economics and Health Services Research at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada. Professor Marshall's research program focuses on methods to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of healthcare services. This includes the measurement of stated preferences, patient engagement, and simulation modelling in healthcare delivery. She is a founding co-investigator of the Patient and Community Engagement Research (PaCER) Program at the University of Calgary which trains patients to design and conduct health research, using specific adapted methods of qualitative inquiry.

Our Director, Professor Mandy Ryan, is the host for Professor Marshall's visit, which runs from June to August. They will explore potential opportunities for collaboration between HERU and the University of Calgary in applied and methodological research in preference elicitation, particularly with respect to costing, cost-effectiveness and preferences in genomics and rare diseases; and in patient engagement in research. In addition, they will plan an update to the discrete choice experiment workshop to be held in 2019 in Banff, Alberta, Canada.

Professor Marshall will also work with Dr Graham Scotland and Professor Stirling Bryan on a proposal regarding frameworks for sustainable decision analytic models for health technology management.

Deborah's research manager, Karen MacDonald, who specialises in stated preferences studies and teaches on our Banff DCE workshop, also visited HERU from June 12-16th.

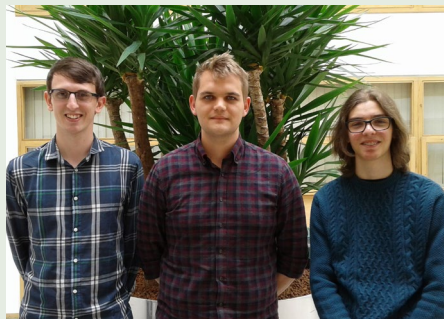
Professor Marshall has delivered two seminars as part of her visit:

- **Patient engagement in health research: what's happening in Canada? What learnings for Scotland?** Professor Stirling Bryan (University of British Columbia/Aberdeen) and Professor Marshall jointly presented.
- **Measuring the value of information in personalised medicine testing** at the HERU Stated Preferences Seminar Series. Professor Marshall and Karen MacDonald both presented.

We welcome a Visiting Student, Summer Internships and York MSc Placements

Ophelie Bezannier, an MSc student in Health Economics from Paris 12, arrived in HERU for a two month internship. During this time Ophelie will

be working with **Marjon van der Pol** on the topic '*risk preferences and physician migration*'. The main purposes of this internship is to learn more about the work of a research unit and to improve her knowledge about health economics and the statistical processing of data.



We welcome three student interns – (left to right) Michael Abbott, University of St. Andrews; Maximilian Perl, Lancaster University; Gregor Anicic, University of Manchester.



We also welcome Chenxue Liang (Tracy) and Zhu Xuemin. They are carrying out their 3-month dissertation placements as part of the MSc in Health Economics at the University of York.

Other News...

New funding...

In collaboration with Jan Jansen (NHS Grampian) and colleagues in The Centre for Healthcare Randomised Trials (CHART) (HSRU), **Dwayne Boyers** secured funding from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to research 'A randomised controlled trial of the effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness, of Resuscitative Endovascular Balloon Occlusion of the Aorta (REBOA) for trauma'. This study will run for 48 months and was awarded just over £1 million.



HERU has secured funding from the CSO and MRC which comes via the Scottish Genomes Partnership (<https://www.scottishgenomespartnership.org/>). This funding is for a 1 year post to research 'Valuing whole genome sequencing to improve diagnosis of rare disorders: a health economic perspective'. The post holder will work with **Mandy Ryan, Lynda McKenzie, Sebastian Heidenreich** and members of the SGP.



National Institute for Health Research

After four years, we said a fond farewell to **Dr Debbie McLaggan**, who worked as Project Administrator on the European funded project 'MUNROS: health care reform: the iMPact on practice, oUtcomes and costs of New roles for health pROfeSSIONals'. We wish Debbie all the very best for the future.

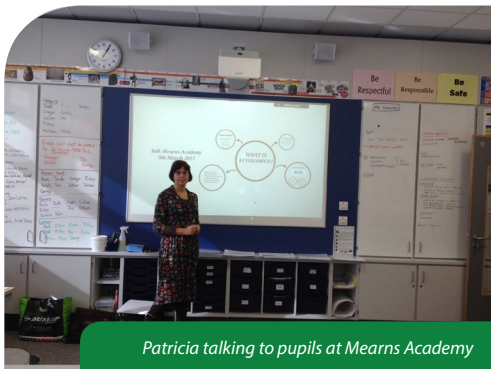


Contemporary guidance for stated preference studies published:

Johnston, R.J., Boyle, K.J., Adamowicz, W., Bennett, J., Brouwer, R., Cameron, T.A., Hanemann, W.M., Hanley, N., **Ryan, M.**, Scarpa, R., Tourangeau, R. and Vossler, C.A. (2017) 'Contemporary guidance for stated preference studies', *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*, 4(2), 319-405.

HERU contribute to new book on patient involvement in health technology assessment: **Tockhorn-Heidenreich, A. Ryan, M. and Hernández, R.** Discrete choice experiments, In: Facey, K.M., Ploug Hansen, H. & Single, A.N.V. (eds.) *Patient involvement in health technology assessment*, Singapore: Adis.

The book was launched at the Health Technology Assessment international (HTAi) conference in Rome where **Rodolfo Hernández** also presented a paper on 'Optical coherence tomography for neovascular AMD: economic evaluation'.



Patricia talking to pupils at Mearns Academy

Patricia Norwood gave a talk to a *Café Scientifique* audience asking 'Can we tax our way out of obesity?' and also spoke to pupils at Mearns Academy in Laurencekirk, Aberdeenshire on 'Selling Advanced Higher Maths'.

Mandy Ryan, Shona Christie and Emma Tassie attended the annual 'NHS Scotland Event' in Glasgow. Emma presented her poster on 'A model based cost-effectiveness analysis of opportunistic screening for identifying atrial fibrillation with a single lead handheld electrocardiogram monitor in general practices in Scotland'. All three attended sessions throughout the two day event and chatted to delegates at the HERU stand.

Mandy Ryan delivered the closing plenary talk at the annual Canadian Conference of the Association for Cancer Control (ARCC). Her presentation was concerned with 'Valuing the patient experience: reflection of a health economist and patient'.



Mandy giving a plenary talk at the Canadian Conference of the ARCC



Mandy and Shona at the HERU stand

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