Newsletter

## Volume 2, Issue 4. 30/10/20

**‘Game of Stones’** By Pat Hoddinott

**In brief:**

* Anne Whittaker received a Scottish Government Drug Deaths Taskforce grant award to examine the role of primary care in the prevention of drug deaths.
* An online 'expert event' for the PuP4Dads feasibility study (NIHR funded) was convened on Wed 7 Oct to disseminate findings, discuss implications and co-produce recommendations for a future larger study.
* Kirsteen Goodman has been recently invited to join the ICTMC scientific Committee to organise the next conference.
* The **Research**

**Partnership Group** will celebrate its 2nd birthday on the 20th

November! The group is meeting virtually to celebrate with tea and cake!

* **TOPSY** has completed its 6 month follow ups with a questionnaire return rate of 92%. We hope to have an equally successful return rate at 12 and 18 months!

Finding new solutions to the obesity problem has become more important than ever with recent knowledge about risk factors for Covid-19. Men tend not to engage with existing weight management services as often as women. The Game of Stones full trial (led by

Pat Hoddinott) aims to help men who want to lose weight and is now gathering momentum, with three new members of staff joining the research team this month. We welcome Catriona O’Dolan and Lisa Macaulay as job share trial managers. They recently managed the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) funded

Electric trial at GCU and we look forward to learning

from their wealth of trial conduct expertise. We also welcome Claire Torrens as Research Fellow who will be leading the process evaluation with Fiona Harris, whilst also recruiting men living in the Greater Glasgow region to join the trial. Andy Elders is overseeing the statistics.

The team is delighted that four open access publications from the feasibility stage of Game of Stones are now available. The feasibility study showed that text messages both with and without financial incentives delivered over a year to men, with a waiting list control group, are acceptable and show

promise as a strategy for weight loss. NIHR are now funding a [full randomised](https://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/phr/phr08110%23/abstract)

 [controlled trial](https://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/phr/phr08110%23/abstract) to see if the interventions are both effective and cost- effective, with an important focus on health inequalities.

COVID permitting, we hope to start recruiting men in spring 2021 and for more information please email

 gameofstones@stir.ac.uk or visit our website at

 [www.gameofstonesresearch.](https://www.gameofstonesresearch.com/)

 [com](https://www.gameofstonesresearch.com/)

**Results of the OPAL trial** By Suzanne Hagen

Urinary incontinence (accidental urine leakage) is a common problem for women and pelvic floor muscle exercises are an effective treatment.

In the OPAL trial we recruited 600 women with urinary incontinence from 23 centres across the UK. 300 women were chosen at random to use the biofeedback unit when exercising their pelvic floor muscles (biofeedback plus exercise group); and 300 exercised their pelvic floor muscles without this unit (exercise group).

Results of the **1**

OPAL trial

**1**

Game of Stones

**Inside this issue:**

Participants attended appointments and received instruction on how to exercise the pelvic floor

Improving the **2**

mental health of farmers

muscles correctly, and how to use the biofeedback unit if appropriate.

After two years, most women in both groups reported that their urinary incontinence was improved or cured (about 7 in 10 women). We found no significant difference in urinary incontinence between the two groups.

That is, the outcome of treatment after two years was the same for women who did pelvic floor muscle exercises alone and those who did exercises along with biofeedback. We concluded that biofeedback should not be used routinely in the treatment of female urinary

incontinence.

The OPAL Trial was funded by the NIHR programme (project number 11/71/03) and published results can be found [here.](http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/bmj.m3719)

**Improving the mental health of farmers** By Margaret Maxwell

**Find us on the web!** [**www.nmahp-ru.ac.uk**](http://www.nmahp-ru.ac.uk/) **@NMAHPRu**

**Contact NMAHP-RU**

**GCU**

 nmahpruadmin@gcu.ac.uk 0141 331 8100

Govan Mbeki Building, Glasgow Caledonian University, Cowcaddens Road, Glasgow, G4 0BA

**Stirling**

 nmahp.ru@stir.ac.uk 01786 466341

Unit 13 Scion House, University of

Stirling Innovation Park, Stirling, FK9 4NF

The NMAHP Research Unit in partnership with Scotland’s Rural College (SRUC) is conducting a study to find out what type of intervention is more acceptable and helpful in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of farmers. The study will take place within Highland and Shetland Health Board regions and will be open to anyone from the farming community, which includes all farm workers, unpaid workers and family members, who are currently experiencing a common mental health problem, such as anxiety or depression.

The study will explore farmers’ preferences and at the same time establish their views, up-

**Recent publications**

take and acceptability of two possible interventions. The study will include qualitative interviews and/or focus groups with members of the farming community (including Vets and farming advisors). It will also include a preference trial based on 2 different types of support. One will deliver emotional and social support – including financial advice – and the other will be an online psychological therapy specifically developed for the farming community. A sample within the study will be randomly allocated to receive both interventions. The early qualitative work will help to adapt

intervention content and delivery, and follow-up qualitative work will feedback on the acceptability of the interventions. The findings from this study will inform a ‘best candidate’ intervention for a larger full-scale trial.

This research study is funded by the Chief Scientist Office of the Scottish Government and is led by Professor Margaret Maxwell from the University of Stirling.

* Cronin, O., Subedi, D., Forsyth, L., Goodman, K. and et al. (2020) Characteristics of Early Paget's Disease in SQSTM1 Mutation Carriers: Baseline Analysis of the ZiPP Study Cohort. *Journal of Bone and Mineral Research,* 35 (7), pp. 1246-1252.
* Daly, C., Mathew, J., Aloyscious, J., Hagen, S., Tyagi, V. and Guerrero, K. (2020) Urethral bulking agents: A retrospective review of primary versus salvage procedure outcomes. *World Journal of Urology (e-Pub Ahead of print) Doi: 10.1007/s00345-020-03413-7*.
* Dombrowski, S., Mcdonald, M., Van Der Pol, M., Grindle, M., Avenell, A., Carroll, P., Calveley, E., Elders, A., Gray, C., Harris, F., Glennie, N., Hapca, A., Jones, C., Kee, F., Mckinley, M., Skinner, R., Tod, M. and Hoddinott, P. (2020) Text messaging and financial incentives to encourage weight loss in men with obesity: the Game of Stones feasibility RCT (report). *Public Health Research,* 20 (11).
* Krishnaswamy, P., Guerrero, K., Hagen, S. and Booth, J. (2020) Systematic review on the use of D- mannose and its combinations with other non-antibiotic and antibiotic agents for the prevention and treatment of urinary tract infections in non-pregnant women. *Prospero*.
* Mitchell, E., Ahmed, K., Breeman, S., Cotton, S., Constable, L., Ferry, G., Goodman, K., Hickey, H., Meakin, G., Mironov, K., Quann, N., Wakefield, N. and McDonald, A. (2020) It’s unprecedented: trial management during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. *Trials (e-Pub ahead of print) Doi: 10.1186/s13063-020-04711-6*
* Thomson, G., Ingram, J., Clarke, J., Johnson, D., Trickey, H., Dombrowski, S., Hoddinott, P., Darwent, K., Jolly, K. and on behalf of the ABA research team. (2020) Exploring the use and experience of an infant feeding genogram to facilitate an assets-based approach to support infant feeding. 2020; 16, S1. *Maternal and Child Nutrition,* 16 (S1), pp. e12958.

The full list of papers is available at <https://www.nmahp-ru.ac.uk/research/publications/>

# Directors Blog:

We may be facing more lockdown restrictions in the coming weeks/months but research activity in the Unit is very much open for business. All current projects are back up and running

– although there were very few that we could not keep going throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. I have previously reported

on the multiple Covid-19 related projects that the Unit is involved in. We are now learning about the longer-term health impacts of Covid-19 on those who have been infected, and this is another area where the Unit will be able to contribute. We have a long-standing reputation in long-term conditions and rehabilitation research (e.g. in

Stroke), which we believe will be applicable to long-term Covid-19 impacts.

Additionally, our expertise in mental health and wellbeing is being put to good use in several projects, which will help to tackle the longer-term mental health impacts of Covid-19, not least of all on the health and social care workforce. Our focus in the coming months will be to contribute to research efforts on ‘long-Covid’, as well as looking to see how our current knowledge and expertise can be applied to the global health challenges of the pandemic, especially in low and middle-income countries.

**Best Wishes, Margaret Maxwell**

