A FEW WORDS ON THE UNIT

AUHE was established in 2007 to create a health economics research and education centre with a portfolio of applied and methodological research. The research includes: economic evaluations alongside clinical trials; value of information studies; valuation of health, health care and wellbeing; priority setting in health care; health care policy; early stage efficiency in research and development; and applied health econometrics.

WELCOME TO OUR SUMMER NEWSLETTER,

Focus this edition is on our new Test Evaluation Group (TEG) and our Information Specialist Group. Both groups have seen rapid expansion over the past 6 months with lots of research to keep them busy! Welcome to Andrew Sutton and Gurdeep Sagoo who have joined the TEG and information specialists Naila Dracup and Rocio Rodriguez-Lopez. It’s great to see the innovative work both groups are doing.

It’s been a busy few months with members of AUHE presenting their work at seminars and conferences nationally and internationally.

Sandy Tubeuf wins this newsletter’s award for the furthest travelled, presenting her work in Japan in June at the Universities of Keio and Nagoya. Sandy tells me that she thoroughly enjoyed her time there and was given a very warm welcome by her hosts. Special mention also goes to Paul Kind who won the 2016 ISPOR Value in Health Regional Issues Excellent Article Award for the paper “Societal Preferences for EQ-5D Health States from a Brazilian Population Survey” led by Monica Viegas Andrade. Monica is based at the Universidad Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil. It is hoped that she will visit Leeds later this year to complete analysis of data from other Brazilian studies.

We have also had the privilege of experiencing new (to us) teaching environments; Roberta Longo spent a few days last month as a guest lecturer at the University of Pisa whilst Paul Kind, David Meads, Armando Vargas Palacios and Alison Smith will be teaching in St Petersburg later this month. Our PhD students are no slouches either with presentations at symposiums and conferences. I was lucky enough to chair the most recent Leeds Institute of Health Sciences PhD Symposium and it was great to see the progress they’re making.

Finally I would like to say congratulations to John O’Dwyer on his recent promotion and to David Meads for the successful completion of his PhD – both very well deserved.

Have a good summer

Claire
Test Evaluation Group (TEG)

Finite resources and ever-increasing demands on the health care system reinforce the pivotal role of health economics to guide decision making. Just like any other intervention or medical device, medical tests require rigorous evaluation before being implemented in clinical practice. Test evaluation is notoriously complex however, in part due to the indirect nature of their impact on patient outcomes.

Rapid advancements in technology and the recent focus on precision medicine have brought about a surge of novel in-vitro tests, all of which impact on patient treatment and management, and downstream patient outcomes. Often the introduction of a new test to a clinical pathway will provide clear benefits (e.g. more targeted treatment, less invasive tests, reduced costs), but also involve some underlying costs (e.g. more expensive, greater side effects, over-diagnosis). Economic evaluation weighs up these costs and benefits in order to determine whether the benefits of a new test are sufficiently large to warrant investment.

In response to the demand for economic evaluations of tests, the AUHE at Leeds has developed a core team of health economists who specialise in this evolving area of research. The TEG team has experience in both trial-based and model-based economic evaluations. In particular, we have adopted a philosophy of decision modelling early in the development pathway for tests to enable optimisation of resource use in the research pathway itself. Our team of information specialists have extensive experience in navigating through the difficulties encountered when searching for evidence on tests. This ensures that we capture the best available evidence in our economic models. TEG collaborates with a number of organisations: NIHR Leeds Diagnostics Evidence Co-operative; NIHR Healthcare Technology Co-operatives; Leeds Precision Medicine Catapult; Leeds Institute of Data Analytics; Genomics England 100,000 Genomes Project; Health Economics GeCIP.

The TEG is led by Bethany Shinkins. The members from our unit are: Health Economists: Alison Smith, Andrew Sutton, Gurdeep Sagoo, Roberta Longo; Information specialists & systematic reviewers: Judy Wright, Liz Mitchell and Natalie King. The team is happy to work with both academic and industry partners. To date, we have been successful in winning funding from multiple sources e.g. Innovate UK, NIHR, MRC, HTA, H2020, and industry funding.

Spotlight on: Andrew Sutton

Andrew joined the unit in January 2016 from the University of Birmingham as an Associate Professor in Decision Analytic Modelling. His research interests are in the areas of diagnostics and model based economic evaluations of health care interventions. He has done extensive work on economic evaluations of diagnostics focused on cancer, particularly urological cancers. He also has an interest in infectious disease modelling. He has a PhD in biological sciences which was focused on the mathematical modelling of prison-based interventions that target drug users against blood-borne viruses. He also has an MSc in Mathematical modelling. His current research is focused on diagnostic and prognostic tests for bladder cancer and aims to reduce the number of invasive tests that patients receive at diagnosis, and also ensuring that diagnosed patients receive the most appropriate treatment.

Spotlight on: Gurdeep Sagoo

Gurdeep joined the Unit as a Lecturer in Health Economics in April with an interest in the economic evaluation of diagnostic tests, in particular genome-based tests, as well as personalised healthcare and medicine. He joined from the PHG Foundation, a health policy think-tank based in Cambridge, where he led the health economics work programme including the economic evaluation of array-based and exome-based diagnostic testing.

Gurdeep holds a PhD in Genomic Medicine, an MSc in Genetic Epidemiology, an MSc in Health Economics, a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education and a BSc in Human Genetics. Gurdeep will now be involved in working on health economic evaluations of diagnostic tests, such as the Randox HaBio project, and also providing health economics support to the NIHR Diagnostic Co-operative (DEC) Leeds across several different projects.

If he has any spare time, Gurdeep will look to indulge his passion for both cricket and cycling as well as enjoying the county of Yorkshire with his young family.

AUHE Seminars Series

26th July
John Buckell
Yale University
Own and cross price elasticity for e-cigarettes among U.S. adult smokers

20th September
Alison Smith
University of Leeds
Details TBC

4th October
Jacco Thijsen
University of York
Decision making in HTA

18th October
Daniel Andres Herrera Araujo
Paris School of Economics
QALY-fying VSL

1st November
Mike Messenger
NIHR, Leeds
The future of in vitro diagnostics

29th November
Sylwia Bukiewicz
University of Leicester
Details TBC

13th December
Alastair Canaway
University of Warwick
Economic evaluation of a complex obesity prevention intervention in children

AUHE Seminars are open to all and take place on Tuesdays from 1 - 2 pm.

For updates about the seminars, visit our webpage.

The AUHE welcomes
Gurdeep Sagoo who joined as a Lecturer in April 2016
Rocio Rodriguez Lopez who joined as an Information Specialist in April 2016
Naila Dracup who joined as an Information Specialist in June 2016

Decision Modelling Group

The Decision Modelling Group (DMG) is a methodological group organised by the Academic Unit of Health Economics to provide a forum for methods development and peer support focused on the area of health economic decision modelling and simulation.

The group is led by Amando Vargas-Palacios and Alison Smith, and meets at least once a month.

If you are interested in becoming a member or presenting in the modelling group please contact us or visit our webpage.
AUHE Information Specialists: supporting Health Economics and beyond.....

Following two recent appointments, AUHE now have a team of four Information Specialists. This expansion will help/enable us provide high quality services to the growing AUHE portfolio and work with more colleagues across the University and local NHS trusts.

Information Specialists are qualified librarians who develop expert literature searches to identify evidence for economic evaluations, economic models, systematic reviews and other types of evidence synthesis. Most projects are funded by the NIHR, and cover a wide range of health-related areas. Our work is always different and interesting, as we apply our information skills to new topics. For example, our current searches include leg ulcers, diabetes, dental services and self-harm. As members of the NIHR Research Design Service we play a valued role in research proposal development. By checking the literature for existing evidence we help focus the researcher’s efforts on developing fundable, robust research proposals.

It’s not just literature searches though, we like to make life easier for our researchers by creating de-duplicated EndNote libraries and search documents tailored for efficient screening. We also share our expertise through staff training, teaching postgraduate students and holding one-to-one advice clinics.

Introducing the team:
Naila Dracup, our newest member, is already using her social science background to support multi-disciplinary work spanning health and social care. Naila has previously worked at SCoHAR, SCIE and Bazian. We welcome her expertise in literature searching and information resources across the disciplines.

Rocio Rodriguez-Lopez joined us in April and brings a wealth of experience and expertise in systematic review searching from previous roles at York Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD), Cochrane Wounds Group and The Andalusian Agency for Health Technology Assessment (AETSA). Rocio has experience of searches in many health topics but has a particular interest in public health.

Natalie King’s previous roles as a NHS Clinical Librarian and a biomedical researcher brings valued experience and knowledge of the information needs of NHS and research staff. Natalie is not fazed by the most impenetrable medical terminology and is taking forward our growing area of support for reviews and economic models of diagnostic tests.

Judy Wright is one of the original members of AUHE and leads the IS team. Judy supported systematic reviews at the Cochrane Schizophrenia Group (2002-2007) before developing expertise in searches for economic evaluations, models and other review types. Judy has published and presented at conferences on search methods for systematic reviews, qualitative synthesis and decision-analytic models.

For further information please see http://medhealth.leeds.ac.uk/info/639/information_specialists

MSc in Health Economics

During July and August the MSc Health Economics students will be starting their placements in the Department working alongside our researchers.

Dr Sandy Tubeuf is supervising two student projects: Davide Tebaldi will be looking at Cross-country comparison on responsibility and efforts in health and Sophie Cole will examine Education and birth cohort effects in reasons to quit smoking

Dr Silviya Nikolova is supervising the project chosen by Alessandra Bele on The Impact of NHS Dental Examination Fees on Use

Dr David Meads is supervising the project on Economic evaluation comparing in-house with external service when providing pharmacy services in prisons chosen by Adrian Byrne

The MSc in Health Economics aims to provide students with the theoretical and analytical tools to appraise and produce economic evidence in health and health care.

A special feature of the programme is the opportunity for the students to complete the dissertation as part of a summer work placement.

See the course details and entry requirements. Please contact Sandy Tubeuf or Roberta Longo for further details.

AUHE PhD students

PhD students from AUHE presented their work at the White Rose Economics PhD conference on March 18th at the University of York.

Paolo Candio presented a poster entitled “Economic evaluation of a city-wide free physical activity programme: Leeds Let’s Get Active”.

Dami Adeyanju gave a presentation on “Evaluating the impact of a family planning programme on women’s outcomes in Nigeria”.

Ed Francmanis had a poster on “Community weight loss programmes: Applying traditional and behavioural-economic approaches to help understand when they are cost-effective”.

They also all gave oral presentations at the Leeds Institute of Health Sciences Postgraduate Symposium on Thursday 30th June.

Charlotte Kelly presented her PhD work on Big health data and transport accessibility to hospital appointments at the workshop of the IGU Applied Geography workshop in Rhodes on 8-10th May 2016.

Spotlight on: Rocio Rodríguez-López

Rocio joined the Unit in April. She is a Master in Library Sciences Graduate in Librarianship and Information Science. She completed a Master in Scientific Documentation and Communication in 2013.

Her areas of interest include systematic review searches, internet searches and Public Health. Rocio will work on several projects of the Unit and will give methodological advice and support to the researchers.

Spotlight on: Naila Dracup

Naila joined the unit in June 2016. Her research interests are systematic literature searching and retrieval methods, knowledge transfer and information skills training.

Prior to joining the unit she worked as an Information Specialist at the School of Health and Related Research at the University of Sheffield, the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) and Bazian ltd (the Economist Intelligence Unit).

Naila holds an MSc in Information Studies from Leeds Beckett University and a BA in Sociology from the University of Leeds.

From her prior research projects, she maintains an interest in health and social care research, research aimed at reducing inequalities and the methods for retrieving evidence for complex and interventions.

Dr. Paolo Candio, Dr. Davide Tebaldi and Sophie Cole will examine the impact of NHS dental examination fees on the use of dental services in England.


Hulme C, Robinson P et al. INCENTIVE: Improving the organisation and delivery of dental care to patients – innovation in commissioning and delivery of primary dental care service delivery and organisation. NIHR HS&DR 4 (18) May 2016 DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3310/hsg04180


