Welcome to our first newsletter of 2017,

January has been pretty hectic as we moved to our new offices. Together with all of the staff and students in Leeds Institute of Health Sciences, we have moved to the Worsley Building which has recently been refurbished as part of a £40 million investment by the University. The Worsley Building, constructed in 1975, is an example of Brutalist architecture (the name comes from the French ‘béton brut’ meaning raw concrete) and was even the subject of a Damien Hirst, BBC documentary in 1996. The move means we are now ‘under the same roof’ as many of our colleagues in the School of Medicine including the Leeds Institute of Clinical Trials Research.

As you’ll see in the newsletter, apart from the move, there’s been quite a lot going on over the last six months (in addition to minor things like Brexit and the election of Trump!). Just to pick a couple out, it was brilliant to see our first cohort of MSc students graduate and we wish them every success in their careers. A big thanks to all staff who were involved in development of the programme and teaching or supervising our MSc students. Our new cohort have already taken their semester one exams and we extend them a warm welcome and wish them well with their studies. The unit has also welcomed new staff and PhD students Chris Bojke, Ed Webb, Fadi Chehadah, Dominic Trepel, Adam Martin, Florien Boele, Katie Spencer, Davide Tebaldi and Zhuxin Mao. It is great to see the high quality of work that is going on in the unit across disease areas and methods - the skills and experience our new unit members bring can only enhance this.

Later this year the AUHE celebrate its 10th Birthday – it is hard to believe 10 years have gone by (although the mirror tells a different story!). We plan to celebrate this achievement and details will be circulated in our next newsletter.

Best wishes

Claire
Yorkshire cancer research

Dr David Meads is part of a collaboration that was successful in securing funding (£300,000) from Yorkshire Cancer Research for a project aiming to improve access to palliative care. The Cancer Patient Needs Assessment in Primary Care (CANAassess PC) project is led by Professor Miriam Johnson at Hull York Medical School and brings together researchers from the Universities of Hull, Leeds and Northumbria and Flinders University, Adelaide. There are many needs assessments tools available to help clinicians determine whether people with cancer would benefit form palliative care. However, these tend to be too detailed and long for daily clinical use. This research will trial the utility of a new assessment tool and determine the clinical and cost-effectiveness of the tool. The project will test an enhanced GP system developed to improve access to care in a randomised, controlled trial, starting with a feasibility study. Should the trial prove feasible, the research will move to a full trial. David will lead the economic evaluation of the new assessment system. Recruitment to the feasibility trial will start in Spring 2017.

This project adds to the portfolio of research AUHE has in the field of palliative medicine, following the NIHR-funded IMPACCT programme grant and SMART HTA studies. Links: http://yorkshirecancerresearch.org.uk/research/palliativecare/

INTACT
INTra-operative fluorescence Angiography to prevent Colorectal anasTomotic leak

Colorectal cancer is one of the biggest cancer killers in the world. Surgery offers the only hope of a cure, but is associated with complications and even death. One of the most serious complications is anastomotic leak which patients to become very unwell and 1 in 5 do not survive. Those who do survive can go on to experience difficulties with wound healing, longer stays in hospital, the need for a stoma, and increased risk of cancer coming back. One way to reduce the risk of anastomotic leak is to ensure that the bowel being ported outcomes across hospitals and their relationship to cost. Chris joins AUHE after five years as a senior research fellow at the Centre for Health Economics, University of York. He is also part of the NICE scientific advice panel of experts and, until then, he was a standing member of the NICE safe staffing committee. Prior to that Chris was director of a private health-economics consultancy company and was senior economist for the National Foundation for Educational Research. He has a PhD in Economics from the University of Groningen, Netherlands and an MSc in Statistics from the University of Newcastle. Outside health economics, Chris maintains an interest in sports and education economics.

Spotlight on: Chris Bojke

Chris joined the Unit in September 2016 as the new chair in health economics specialising in HTA. Chris is an empirical health economist/econometrician with specific expertise in the analysis of large and complex observational datasets for the purpose of informing policy decisions or cost-effectiveness models. Recent research includes quality-adjusted measurement of NHS productivity over time; estimation of top-up payments for reimbursement of highly specialised treatment, the impact of NHS medical revalidation on the quality and quantity of consultant output and variation in patient-reported outcomes across hospitals and their relationship to cost. Chris joins AUHE after five years as a senior research fellow at the Centre for Health Economics, University of York. He is also part of the NICE scientific advice panel of experts and, until then, he was a standing member of the NICE safe staffing committee. Prior to that Chris was director of a private health-economics consultancy company and was senior economist for the National Foundation for Educational Research. He has a PhD in Economics from the University of Groningen, Netherlands and an MSc in Statistics from the University of Newcastle. Outside health economics, Chris maintains an interest in sports and education economics.

Our new doctoral and postdoctorals

Florien Boele holds a YCR University Academic Fellowship, she aims to continue and expand research in the area of family caregiving in oncology in general and in neuro-oncology in particular. Katie Spencer is completing a MRC PhD fellowship investigating the cost-effective of palliative radiotherapy treatments delivered for bone metastases in the English NHS.

Davide Tebaldi started a PhD after completing our MSc Health Economics. His PhD project aims to explore the impact of adherence to guidelines, individual behaviour, and personality traits on the management of type 2 diabetes.

Zhuxin Mao’s PhD, funded by a University of Leeds China Scholarship award, aims to test the validity of EQ-5D in assessing health status of patients with mental diseases in China.

AUHE Seminars Series

7th of February
Dr Stephen Clark
University of Leeds
A spatial microsimulation using England and Wales Census and English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) data to estimate sub-regional morbidities for the over 50 year olds

21st of February
Dina Jankovic
University of York
The role of expert elicitation in cost-effectiveness modelling: can variation between elicited priors be explained by experts’ characteristics

28th of February
Fabrice Etlié
Paris School of Economics
Price measurement and the tax incidence of behavioural taxes: empirical evidence using scanner data

7th of March
Jennifer Whitty
University of East Anglia
Title TBC

4th of April
Richard Cookson
University of York
Unequal lives: re-designing the NHS to bridge the health divide

25th April
Suzy Paisley
University of Sheffield
Methods to identify evidence for populat-ing CE decision-analytic models

16th May
Katherine Payne
University of Manchester
Evaluation of stratified medicine

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

For updates about the seminars, visit our webpage.

The AUHE welcomes

Chris Bojke who joined as Professor in Health Economics in September 2016
Dominic Trepel who joined as a Senior Research Fellow in December 2016
Edward Webb who joined as a Research Fellow in October 2016
Fadi Chehadah who joined as a Research Assistant in December 2016
Adam Martin who joined as a Research Fellow in January 2017
Early Economic Modelling Case Studies

The Test Evaluation Group (TEG) has adopted a philosophy of decision modelling early in the development pathway for medical tests to enable optimisation of resource use in the research pathway itself. In collaboration with the NIHR Leeds Diagnostic Evidence Co-operative and industry partners, the TEG secured Innovate UK funding via the Stratified Medicine SBRI competition to apply early modelling methods to support the evidence base for novel diagnostics. Edinburgh Molecular Imaging (EM Imaging) has developed a novel optical imaging agent, EMI-137, which combines targeted molecular probes and advanced imaging technology to improve polyp detection. Randox have developed a diagnostic test to stratify patients with haematuria, who are at high risk of bladder cancer and prevent unnecessary cystoscopies. We applied a linked evidence approach using existing literature and data from early clinical studies to build early economic models to evaluate the potential cost-effectiveness of these tests. Both projects were successfully completed and delivered to Innovate UK on time, and we are now preparing applications for the second phase of this funding call. Bethany Shinkins and Alison Smith worked on the EMI study, and Andrew Sutton and Gurdeep Sagoo worked on the Randox study.

SPOTLIGHT ON: EDWARD WEBB

Ed was born in York and studied theoretical physics at Durham University before switching fields and studying at Warwick for a postgraduate diploma followed by an MSc in economics. For the last four and a half years he has been based at the University of Copenhagen, where he graduated with a PhD in economics. During his PhD, Ed pursued his interest in behavioural and experimental economics with a particular focus on the influence of attention and perception on decision-making. Ed has now returned to his native Yorkshire to take up the post of Research Fellow in Health Economics. His main speciality, building on experience gained during his PhD is in stated preference experiments. Currently he is helping to design discrete choice experiments for two projects, CRIMSON, which examines treatment preferences of people with multiple sclerosis, and I-ASC, which looks at the prescribing of augmented communication devices for children.

Rehabilitation of older people following discharge from hospital

Researchers from the Academic Unit of Elderly Care and Rehabilitation (AUECR), University of Leeds, based at the Bradford Institute for Health Research, have received £2 million of funding from the National Institute for Health Research Health Technology Assessment (NIHR HTA) programme to conduct a five year national study looking at how rehabilitation can be improved for older people with frailty following discharge from hospital after an acute illness or injury. Led by Dr Andrew Clegg, the research team comprises of Professor John Young, Professor Anne Forster, and Dr David Clarke from the AUECR, Dr Victoria Goodwin from the University of Exeter, and Professor Amanda Farrin, Professor Claire Hulme, Ms Bonnie Cundhill, and Ms Suzanne Hartley from the University of Leeds, and Mr Phil Wright from Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

The study, will involve 718 older people with frailty admitted to hospital following acute illness or injury. Participants will be recruited across 10 hospitals within Yorkshire and the South West of England over 23 months in total, with recruitment staggered to accommodate an internal pilot. The overall aim is to investigate whether an extended rehabilitation programme using a home-based exercise intervention developed for older people with frailty improves health-related quality of life.

SPOTLIGHT ON: FADI CHEHADAH

Fadi joined the AUHE as a Research Assistant in December 2016. He holds a BSc in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Chemistry as well as an MSc in Health Economics and Decision Modelling awarded by the School of Health And Related Research (SCHARR), University of Sheffield. His research interests centre on economic evaluation of health technologies; cost-effectiveness analysis; decision-analytic modelling. Prior to joining AUHE, he worked as a researcher in the Team for Economic Evaluation and Health Technology Assessments, (TEEHTA) at the University of York. His work was on cost-effectiveness modelling of arthritis and musculoskeletal diseases, in particular psoriatic arthritis. Fadi is working on PERSEPHONE project, which aims at modelling the cost-effectiveness of trastuzumab as an early breast cancer treatment for 6 months compared to 12 months. He is involved also in the project MAMMO-50 analysing the cost effectiveness of different types of follow-up for breast cancer patients.

MSc in Health Economics

In September 2016 we welcomed our second generation of students; this year coming from the UK, Europe, USA and Africa. We wish them success in their studies.

Our first generation of students graduated on the 15th of December 2016. We would like to wish them great success in their careers.

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 Tukeuf or Roberta Longo for further details. Applications are open now (closing date August 2017).

APPLIED HEALTH ECONOMETRICS GROUP

The Applied Health Econometrics Group (AHEG) is a collaborative initiative at the University of Leeds between the Academic Unit of Health Economics (AUHE) and the Leeds Institute for Health Sciences (LIHS). It was founded in 2011 and is now led by Prof. Chris Bojke.

If you are interested in becoming a member or presenting in the modelling group please contact us or visit our webpage.

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 Armando Vargas-Palacios and Alison Smith, and meets at least once a month.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the group, attending presentations or meetings, or presenting your work please contact us or visit our webpage.
Dr Bethany Shinkins discussed the NIHR Leeds DEC approach to diagnostic test evaluation at the In Vitro Diagnostics in Oncology and Infectious diseases conference in London in November 2016.

Armando Vargas-Palacios delivered a workshop at the PHE/NHS event in Taunton on Antimicrobial resistance in November 2016 entitled “Can we use simulation to inform decision making and service design?”

Claire Hulme gave a presentation at the Public Policy Exchange in Westminster in November 2016. The presentation title was “Innovation in commissioning of primary dental care a mixed methods study”.

Alison Smith delivered an oral presentation at the Leeds Children’s Hospital 2nd Annual Conference on October 14th, discussing the work of the NIHR Leeds Diagnostic Evidence Cooperative (DEC)

Sandy Tubeuf gave a seminar at the Leeds Institute for Data Analytics (LIDA) on 6th October and presented her work undertaken during her Leverhulme research fellowship on “Evaluating neighbourhood based policies using Secondary Data: the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme”

Laetitia Schmitt presented her work “Time to clear the air” at the Annual UK Review Meeting on Outdoor and Indoor Air Pollution Research in September 2016 in Solihull.

Chris Boke delivered a keynote presentation at the ESEA European Conference on Sport, Economics, entitled ‘Fat Chance – A marriage of health and sports economics’ in September 2016.