

Centre for Research in Health and Society Annual Report

CRiHS was launched in October 2019 as a research centre within the Institute of Health. This report covers the research centres activities between October 2019 and July 2020.

The centre aims for the positive transformation of health and social outcomes through applied scholarship, research and knowledge exchange, leading to excellence in health and social care practice locally, nationally and internationally.

Our aims are:

- Achieving a thriving culture of research
- Sustaining a strong research capability
- Purposeful, outcome-oriented partnerships
- Positioned as a 'go to' research centre, a trusted partner
- Well-funded for applied research that transforms outcomes
- Appropriately influencing and responsive to change.

Structure

Our aims will be achieved through three research themes within the centre:

Applied Health Research (AHR)

Applied Social Science Research (ASSR)

Health and Society Knowledge Exchange (HASKE)

The leadership team of CRiHS is:

Professor Kaz Stuart (Director)

Associate Professor Tom Grimwood (HASKE Theme lead and Applied Social Science Theme Lead)

Victoria Goodwin (HASKE Theme Lead)

Associate Professor Paul Miller (Applied Health Theme Lead)

Ian Corrie (Applied Health Theme Lead)

Dr Elaine Bidmead (NIHR NENC ARC Senior Research Fellow)

In addition, joining us on our steering group are:

Professor Dave Dagnan (NCIC)

Dr Asan Akpan (NIHR NWC)

Gary Hind (Cumbria Community Foundation)
Dr Louise Hayes (NIHR RDS).

Research projects

The following research projects have been undertaken by HASKE this year:

Stroke and Dance Evaluation (internal commission): the delivery of research concerning the About Being, Dance group. This group is an example of inter-disciplinary working and provides innovative provision for stroke survivors who are living in the community.

Northern Cancer Alliance, Vague Symptoms: Evaluating the piloting of a new pathway for people presenting with vague symptoms which could be cancer. We worked across Northumberland, Newcastle and Cumbria.

NIHR Clinical Research Network North West Coast (CRN NWC): Scoping Review of 'the social health space' across the NWC CRN footprint.

Northern Cancer Alliance Early Diagnosis Pathway: evaluating the partnership's work to improve cancer survival across nine localities.

Kendal Brewery Arts Centre: Input to an evaluation of the emotional warrior programme to build greater resilience in students.

North West Ambulance Service, literature review on ways in which technology enhances medical education.

Getting Cumbria to Work Evaluation, Cumbria CVS. The Building Better Opportunities: Getting Cumbria to Work, Barrow and South Lakeland (BBO-GCtW) project is funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund. It aims to support and work with individuals who are facing multiple and complex barriers to employment and who are furthest removed from the labour market.

Research concerning Capital and Widening Participation (WP) Hello Futures / CCOP. The research aims to: Identify the critical facets of an asset-based approach to Widening Participation for young people from Cumbria. And, create an asset-based approach (to WP) for young people from Cumbria.

AHP Support Workforce, Health Education England: understanding the current support workforce and development of an Implementation Tool kit. This involves a review across all 14 AHP roles' (in NHS/Local Authority service) use of support workforce.

Heritage Lottery Foundation, Boom Project: Internal commission to provide some research input to the species restoration project.

National Institute for Health Research, North East and North Cumbria, Applied Research Collaboration

CRiHS is a member of the NIHR research collaboration that launched in October 2019. The aim of the project is to improve outcomes in health and social care for everyone in the NENC region through applied research and we are now collaborating with more universities and organisations across the NENC region.

In April 2020 Dr Elaine Bidmead commenced a role as an NIHR NENC ARC Senior Research Fellow. Her first year in post will involve scoping social and health inequalities across North Cumbria.

In October 2020 we will welcome two new PhD students funded under this scheme, one studying trauma informed practice with children and families and the other exploring the role of non-representational theory in evaluation.

Research Development and Dissemination Events

We have supported internal research activity through PhD supervisions, public lectures, a seminar series, Work in Progress meetings, thematic discussions and training sessions. CRiHS also contribute to the University wide Research School Development Programme and Summer School. We also ran a two day online conference on educational inequity.

Research Outputs

In the last academic year, August 2019to July 2020 Intitute of Health staff have completed:

- 34 published papers
- 17 published books or chapters in books
- 72 presentations at conferences
- 11 keynote presentations
- 15 positions of office in learned subject associations e.g. secretary, chair, board member.

PhD Studies

CRiHS has a thriving postgraduate environment covering a wide range of diverse subjects reflective of the breadth of the IoH. There are currently 34 PhD students exploring topics from anatomy education and adolescent safeguarding, across the disciplines of allied health, nursing, policing, social work and youth work.

Impact

In its inaugural year, CRiHS has established a range of key relationships and partnerships locally and nationally and is achieving influence and impact through these. Since the launch different individuals and agencies have been contacting CRiHS to seek support or collaboration.

Some highlights of this work include:

The start of the **NIHR NENC ARC** further enhanced our footing locally and has significantly increased our collaboration with HEI's in the North East. We are a provider of services to the NIHR Clinical Research Network on the North West Coast, and host the **NENC Research Design Service** at our Fusehill Street campus.

We are closely aligned to the **Public Health** agenda in Cumbria and in regular contact with the Director of Public Health, with whom we developed many of our NIHR NENC grants.

Carlisle Healthy City are drawing on our expertise in their tender to the World Health Organisation for **Healthy City Status**, and we will be the evaluator of this project should it be a successful application.

HASKE's work funded by **Uni Connect** has continued to inform the development of **Outreach and Widening Participation** strategies, in particular creating and refining an "asset-based" approach, which has directly influenced aspects of CCOP's direction and framing of activities.

Our applied narrative research on the support needs arising from **Covid-19** has secured us as an important and influential player locally, nationally and internationally. We are working with a partner with **Healthwatch Cumbria** and have been sharing data (with appropriate protocols in place) to enable us all to better support the health needs of people across Cumbria in recovery from Covid-19. The **University of Geneva** are seeking to collaborate on further stages of the research to compare findings across European countries.

We are working with the **Defence Medical Services Medical Leadership academy**, based on the outcome of existing research and papers to support the development of the academy.

The **National Youth Agency** are a key link for us and we are co-developing a national accreditation for young researchers.

Working with **Queensland University** we are part of a grant to the Australian Research Council to support evidence of the efficacy of flexi schools. They have sought us out for our expertise on evidencing youth outcomes.

HASKE's national **Maternity Safety Training Fund** evaluation concluded with a constructive dialogue with representatives of the Department of Health in Whitehall, where the findings were used to inform future funding policies around maternity services.

HASKE's research has also informed the development and implementation of key transformations in the health sector. This includes work on new cancer pathways for patients with vague symptoms across Cumbria and the North-East, which informed the national **Accelerate, Coordinate, Evaluate (ACE)** programme run by **Cancer Research UK**. In particular, the identification that the pathway was weighted towards clinicians rather than non-clinical stakeholders. This led to the pathway developing its inclusivity in decision-making structures.

We continue to work with our geographically closest neighbour, **Lancaster University**, with whom we are developing tenders for UKRI the NIHR.