



SUMMER 2019

Welcome to the Summer 2019 newsletter of the Centre for Health Economics and Medicines Evaluation (CHEME)

In this issue, we focus on recent achievements and events, which include:

- Focussing on the economics of prevention and public health, Rhiannon and colleagues at CHEME have just published an Oxford University Press textbook on [Applied Health Economics for Public Health Practice and Research](#)
- Professors Dyfrig Hughes and Rhiannon Tudor Edwards named Health and Care Research Wales Senior Research Leaders
- Launch of Social Value Hub
- Latest research in the economics of cancer, neurological disease and breastfeeding

Further information on research, teaching (including short courses) and NHS support activities is available on our website: cheme.bangor.ac.uk or e-mail: cheme@bangor.ac.uk

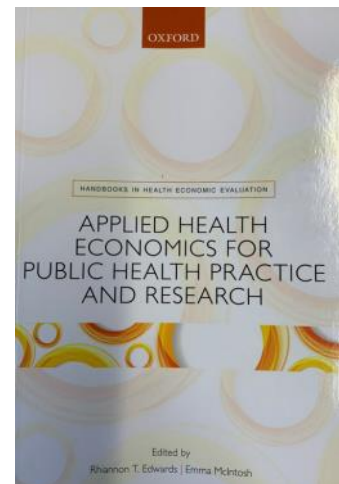
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Professor Dyfrig Hughes and Professor Rhiannon Tudor Edwards

CHEME Co-directors

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Rhiannon's book, published by Oxford University Press

SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH

Economics of treatments in neurology

Professor Dyfrig Hughes, Dr Catrin Plumpton and Giovanna Culeddu are involved in a number of NIHR-HTA funded studies in neurology. These include:

The **BASICS** trial: Insertion of a ventriculoperitoneal shunt for hydrocephalus is one of the commonest neurosurgical procedures worldwide. However, shunt infection affects up to 15% of patients, resulting in long hospital admission, multiple surgeries, reduced cognition and quality of life. The BASICS trial, led by investigators at the Alder Hey Children's Hospital, randomised 1605 patients to determine the clinical and cost-effectiveness of antibiotic (rifampicin and clindamycin) or silver shunts compared to standard shunts. Results are awaited.

The **ROAM** trial is a multi-centre study randomising patients who have undergone gross total surgical resection of atypical (grade II) meningioma to receive either early adjuvant fractionated radiotherapy for 6 weeks (intervention) or active monitoring (comparator). Recruitment is ongoing.

The **CASTLE** trial, which is one of the largest ever clinical trials in children with epilepsy, has just been launched with the aim of recruiting 300 children with rolandic epilepsy to compare the clinical and cost-effectiveness of carbamazepine and levetiracetam, and also test whether improving sleep can reduce seizures. Rolandic epilepsy is the most common form of childhood epilepsy, affecting around 10,000 young people in the UK. However, as children 'grow out' of their seizures, doctors and parents often do not know whether to treat children or not, and many families choose no medication.

The **SANAD2** trial is designed to identify the most effective and cost-effective treatment for patients (adults and children over 5 years) with newly-diagnosed epilepsy. It recruited 1,510 participants from 94 sites. Arm A compared lamotrigine, levetiracetam and zonisamide in patients with untreated focal onset seizures; arm B compared levetiracetam and valproate in patients with untreated generalised onset seizures or untreated seizures that are difficult to classify. Results are awaited.

Preferences for cancer treatment

Emily Holmes is leading a North West Cancer Research (NWCR) funded project, in partnership with the Liverpool Hepatobiliary Centre and the North Wales Cancer Treatment Centre which aims to elicit patient and healthcare professional preferences for benefits and risks of treatments for colorectal liver. Systemic anti-cancer therapy can prolong life, but is also associated with treatment-related toxicity, affecting quality-of-life. Surgery offers a significantly higher 5-year survival rate than systemic treatment but has inherent risks. The study will identify treatment options and outcomes; explore the relevance and understanding of treatment outcomes in interviews with patients; value patients' and healthcare professionals' benefit-risk

preferences for outcomes of treatment using a discrete choice experiment; and determine preferred treatment options by weighting clinical evidence by patients' stated preferences.

In support of North West Cancer Research, Emily and her young family recently completed the "Menai Bridge 5k Your Way". Ifor (aged 4) set the pace, and Mabli (aged 3) deserved 3 cheers for keeping up! Emily wishes to thank everyone for their donations and support, "we had a fantastic day and raised £535 for NWCR."



The economic case for breastfeeding support in Wales

Current low breastfeeding rates in Wales (less than 10% of babies) are a substantial public health concern, which result in preventable health care spending and avoidable infant deaths. If breastfeeding rates were increased at 4 months to the rates observed at birth, this could save the NHS in Wales up to £1.5 million per year. Wales currently invests in the 'Baby Friendly Initiative' (BFI) which, at £110,000 annually, is considered a model for assessing the quality assurance of breastfeeding support in Wales.

Public Health Wales has recently undertaken a review of the evidence and options for assessing the quality of breastfeeding support in Wales including, continuing investment in BFI; amending the BFI approach with emphasis on moving from a local focus to a Wales wide approach; or developing a new approach with a view to disinvesting in BFI quality assurance approach in the long-term. As part of this review Lucy Bryning was able to provide health economics expertise to help inform an independent panel of stakeholders to appraise the options. The launch of the local Health Board infant feeding strategic plan saw service users, public sector professionals and academics come together to discuss how co-production was essential to support families and children in North Wales achieve the best start in life.



LATEST NEWS

Senior Research Leaders

Professors Rhiannon Tudor Edwards and Dyfrig Hughes have been named as two of the 15 Senior Research Leaders announced by Health and Care Research Wales in their open 2019 competition. Research leaders were selected on the basis of quality and volume of internationally excellent research, relevance of research to patients, service users and the public, and evidence of personal contribution to Health and Care Research Wales.

Of the Senior Research Leaders' award, Dyfrig said "In recognising excellence in health-related research it offers a unique opportunity to support important areas of our research, as well as providing some security to research staff in between contracts." Rhiannon added "These awards represent and reflect, our national and international collaborations, and the hard work of our research colleagues at Bangor University."



Professors Rhiannon Tudor Edwards and Dyfrig Hughes



Dr Ned Hartfiel and Dr Mary Lynch from the Social Value Hub

SOCIAL VALUE HUB

An organisational member of Social Value UK, the Social Value Hub at CHEME offers support, advice, training and consultancy to help organisations measure and communicate the positive changes they are creating for people and the environment.

The Social Value Hub provides organisations with a framework for measuring change in ways that are relevant to their stakeholders. Using qualitative, quantitative and financial methods, the Social Value Hub will produce robust social value analysis that tells the story of how change is created for the people who experience various activities and programmes.

By measuring and monetising the social, environmental and economic outcomes, the Social Value Hub can calculate a social value ratio comparing benefits and costs. A benefit-cost ratio of 3:1, for example, indicates that an investment of £1 creates £3 of social value.

The Social Value Hub will be officially launched on 11th June 2019 at Bangor University.

EVENTS

Welsh Medicines Research Symposium

The 2019 Welsh Medicines Research Symposium will be held in St Asaph on the 8th July. Funded by Health and Care Research Wales, the event is hosted by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and organised by Dyfrig Hughes.

This year's keynote speaker is Professor Matthew Peak, Director of Research at Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust. Book your free place here: <http://bit.ly/Symposium19>

STAFF & STUDENTS

Yankier Pijeira Perez has been appointed recently to conduct research into the costs of medicines. Yankier is a pharmacy technician and recently completed his MSc in HTA from the University of Glasgow.

Angela Jones returns to CHEME having previously worked with us while on placement from the University of Sheffield (MSc). She is conducting a cost of illness study of neuromyelitis optica.

Jessica Harland passed her MSc (by research) in health economics, having defended her thesis on "Estimating the cost-utility associated with multi-gene panel testing to avoid adverse drug reactions".

SHORT COURSE

Pharmacoeconomics

Registration is open for the upcoming short course in Pharmacoeconomics, 12th – 13th September, 2019

<https://cheme.bangor.ac.uk/events/pharmacoeconomics-short-course-34917>

PUBLICATIONS

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