

NORTHERN IRELAND
PUBLIC HEALTH
RESEARCH NETWORK



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 **Public Health
Agency**
Research and Development

NIPHRN Monthly Newsletter

Network now has 467 members!

Welcome to the Autumn 2022 edition of the NIPHRN newsletter. We plan to present regular newsletters in addition to our email bulletins. Our membership is continuing to increase - we now have over 450 members registered. We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members and thank our existing members for their continued participation. For those new to the network, NIPHRN aims to increase the quantity and quality of public

health research in Northern Ireland, improve policy and practice and contribute to better public health outcomes. It works to bring together stakeholders in public health research from sectors that include academia, health services, local authorities, voluntary and community sector and user members, to help form high quality research teams and grants. The network works with stakeholders to encourage the use of research evidence and help develop shared priorities, build capacity and generate practice relevant research.

1. Diary Dates

NIPHRN Events

Online seminar, 7th December, 1.00 to 2.00 pm

"Living Evidence during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons Learnt from a Living Systematic Review" Dr Leonie Heron, Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Bern, Switzerland. Registration open: [Click here](#)

Online seminar, 18 January 2023, 3.00 to 4.00 pm

"How we think about time, and feel about time, influences what we do. The role of time perspective in public health discourse", Professor Frank C. Worrell, Professor in the School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley and the president of President of the American Psychological Association in 2022.

Online seminar, 8th February 2023, 1.00 to 2.00 pm

"PPI in action - The PPI Ignite Network" Prof Thilo Kroll, University College Dublin, <https://ppinetwork.ie/about-us/lead-sites/ucd/>.

Seminar, 8th March 2023, 1.00 to 2.00 pm, Belfast Campus, Ulster University
"MRC Process Evaluation", Dr Wendy Hardemann.

2022 Joint Public Health Conference

30 November 2022, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

[Joint Public Health online Conference on "Healthy Planet, Healthy People"](#)

This virtual conference will bring together global experts to discuss the challenges posed by the climate crisis, but also the substantial co-benefits for health that accompany action on climate change. Opening address: Sir Patrick Vallance, Chief Scientific Adviser to the UK Government. . [Registration link](#)

2. Update on NIPHRN



Prof Mark Tully
Director NIPHRN



Dr Anita Yakkundi
Network Coordinator



Dr Michael McKay,
Knowledge Broker



Dr Helen
McAneney, Re-
search Support
Officer

We are pleased to announce the renewal of funding for NIPHRN phase 2 and extension of network activities to enhance our work in the supporting public health research. We are delighted to welcome and introduce our new team members Michael and Helen, who will take on their new roles to support the practitioners, local authorities and community and voluntary sectors in research activities.

Professor Mark Tully continues as the Director of the NIPHRN. Mark is Professor of Public Health, and the Director for Research, in the School of Medicine at Ulster University. Mark's research focuses on addressing population levels of physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour, which are major causes of poor physical and mental wellbeing. His research includes interventions targeting older adults and socio-economically disadvantaged communities. In addition, he is interested in the effects of changes in the built environment on behaviours.

Dr Anita Yakkundi has been with the network since 2019 and continues in her role of network Coordinator for the second phase. She is based in Ulster University, Belfast campus. She has worked

extensively in cancer therapeutics, and subsequently in the area of autism and behavioural interventions. She is passionate about applying research to practice for health and social well being.

Dr Michael McKay joins the NIPHRN having worked in a variety of roles across a number of UK and Irish Universities. Most recently he was based at the RCSI in Dublin where his research focussed on the longer-term consequences for psychiatric disorder of child and adolescent adversity. Previously, he managed a Randomised Controlled Trial examining the efficacy of a combined classroom-community intervention on adolescent alcohol use. This involved around 12,000 participants from NI and Scotland. Michael has over 100 peer-reviewed research publications, mostly in the areas of addictions, psychiatry, scale development, and psychometrics.

In his full time role of a Knowledge Broker, Michael seek to foster more meaningful exchanges between public health practitioners, local authorities and academics.

Dr Helen McAneney has been a member of

the NIPHRN since its creation in 2012, joining its core staff in 2022 as a Research Associate. She has conducted research in medical sciences and public health since 2005, and has worked at Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University and University College Dublin.

Helen's interests include research methodology, rare disease, medical statistics, systematic reviews, communication, and collaboration.

In her part time role of research support officer, Helen will provide advice on research design, governance and ethics in addition to liaising with the community and voluntary sector.

Network membership is free and can be registered through the website

<https://www.niphrn.org.uk/join-network/register>.

In the meanwhile if you have membership, registration, discuss research ideas, collaborations, funding information or any queries, suggestions or meeting requests, our team will be happy to help.

Email:

info@niphrn.org.uk

3. NIPHRN Activities

RDG led by Prof Gerard Leavy has received funding for the CHOICE project, to tackle health and social inequalities for people living with mental illness



If healthcare research is to recover, become resilient and grow, we need to find ways to ensure that research doesn't just inform routine practice, but that it is part of routine practice.

NIPHRN worked with Ulster University and ARC Fitness, for knowledge brokerage to produce the Rapid Evidence summary on the "IS THERE A GENDER-SPECIFIC EFFECT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY/EXERCISE ON RECOVERY FROM SUBSTANCE USE?"

For more information:
info@niphrn.org.uk

Since its inception NIPHRN has engaged with 30 multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary Research Development Groups.

Challenging Health Outcomes – Integrating Community Environments (CHOICE)

Professor Gerry Leavey (Ulster University) has led a successful bid to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for funding to build community coalition of agencies and people across Northern Ireland to tackle health and social inequalities for people living with mental illness. Using community-based participatory research approach, this innovative project seeks to empower disadvantaged communities and populations in the co-design and implementation of potential solutions. The NIPHRN is pleased to be part of this important initiative.

Furthermore, NIPHRN has contributed to strategy and implementation groups (e.g. breastfeeding strategy), committees (e.g. Regional Obesity Prevention Implementation Group & COVID-19 BCG), PHA

annual Joint Public Health Conference, HSC R&D Division funding panels and organised regular events. NIPHRN has instated a steering committee which oversees and advises on the functions of the network meeting biannually.

NIPHRN seminars

NIPHRN has organised online seminars in the last year on range of topics covering areas in

Public health research- integrating with and connecting local authorities and government, Research design, Methodologies and impact, grantsmanship, Cancer prevention and population research. The seminars were well received with multisectoral participation with increases from the public health and

health department attendees.

Some highlights:

Prof Mike Clarke, NICTU delivered a seminar in January 2022 on "Accelerating impact: maximising the usefulness of research evidence" attended by 80 people.

Research Focus seminar by Dr Aine Aventin



Climate action and public health by Prof Diarmuid O'Donovan who highlighted the role of Healthcare in climate change and the need for climate action and sustainability. The seminar was attended by public health practitioners and resulted into engaging discussions



This section of our newsletter will highlight an innovative piece of work addressing community/public health aspect.



Prof Joan Condell,
Ulster University



Do you have a research question?
Do you need help with the formation of research team?
Contact us
Info@niphrn.org.uk

4. Innovation Feature

Enhancing CARers WELLbeing (eCareWell) Project

Researchers at Ulster University have launched eCareWell a new research project to understand how digital technology can best meet the needs of carers whilst supporting their health and wellbeing. Led by Prof Joan Condell, and funded through the UK Community Renewal Fund, eCareWell understands the vital role carers have in the lives of those they care for and the impact their caring role has on them and the wider community. eCareWell will introduce various digital technologies to carers in the Derry City & Strabane District council area.

The project uniquely connects carers (and those cared for) in the community directly with local companies who have products/services to digi-

tally upskill/support them. The purpose is to evaluate the extent of health and social care provision being delivered at a community level by family members and volunteers, to investigate what technologies proven in Northern Ireland can support carers needs, identify barriers in context of caregiving.

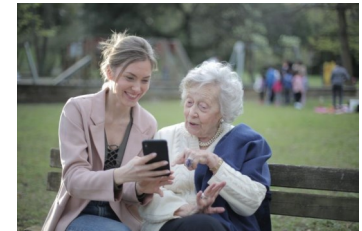
The project will evaluate digital technology among carers and set up a micro-innovation cluster of NI companies by collaborating with a range of technology companies, charities and local community groups.

Partners:

Design Innovation and Assisted Living centre (DIAL) @ North West Regional College,
Health Innovation Research Alliance Northern Ireland (HIRANI), Digital Catapult NI (DCNI)

Community groups:

Northern Ireland Clinical



Research Services, Ltd. (NICRS), Eglington Community Ltd.

Derry Well Woman Centre.

NI Innovation Cluster:

Elemental Software, B-Secur, TakeTen Ltd., Kraydel, Ethel Care, Action-Sense, Wanatok, Neurovalens, Informed minds, Oopla, Maragoo, Civic Dollars, InspiredD, NetworkFit, Incisiv, eXRt, TapSOS, Skinakin, B-Secur, Liopa

[Carers sought to participate in Ulster University digital technology research project - Ulster University](#)

5. Funding Opportunities

December 2022

[Public Health Research Programme Rapid Funding Scheme](#)

Closes: 29 December 2023

January 2023

[22/14 Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Teams \(PHIRST\) - local government initiatives](#)

Closes: 13:00 on 31 January 2023

Do You Have A Research Idea?

Research Ethics questions?

Need help with PPI for a public health research grant?

Are you a practitioner interested in public health research?

We can help you with

-Knowledge brokerage

-Identifying collaborators by circulating your idea across the network and form a Research Development Group (RDG).

For more information, questions, suggestions or for an RDG proposal form contact us

5. Funding Opportunities (Contd)

April 2023

The NIHR Public Health Research (PHR) Programme is accepting Stage 1 applications to their commissioned workstream for the following topics:

All close: 13:00 on 04 April 2023

[22/137 Health and health inequality impacts of electric scooters and electric bikes](#)

[22/138 Health and health inequality impacts of place-based interventions](#)

[22/139 Interventions to increase the health and wellbeing of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK](#)

[22/140 Reducing inequalities in the prevention and diagnosis of sexually transmitted infections](#)

[22/141 Interventions that impact loneliness](#)

[22/144 Workforce health](#)

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NIPHRN Team:

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Dr Helen McAneney Research Support Officer

Dr Anita Yakkundi Network Coordinator,

Prof. Mark Tully, Network Director



NIPHRN is a HSC R&D Division, PHA funded initiative to support Public Health Research

