

# Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group

Monthly Newsletter

Issue 23  
June 2009

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## STOP PRESS!!

### We're in!!!

The big move over to the new St Mary's has finally happened! See page one for photos of the celebratory lunch!



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**Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group**

*part of the*  
Research School of Clinical and Laboratory Sciences *in the*  
School of Medicine *within the*  
Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences.

[www.medicine.manchester.ac.uk/research/groups/maternalfetalhealth](http://www.medicine.manchester.ac.uk/research/groups/maternalfetalhealth)

## Page 1 We're in!

Maternal and Fetal Health Research Centre moved to the new St Mary's in the week beginning Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June. Located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the new building, the move went smoothly with everything arriving in one piece and nothing getting lost!



On Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June we celebrated in style with a buffet lunch and Colin delivering a speech on our successes in the old hospital and our aims for the future. All staff were then presented with a celebration mug, inscribed with the words, 'I was there- did the move- got the mug'!



## Page 2: New Staff

Please join me in welcoming **Debbie Smith** to our group. Debbie is currently working on a study with Tina Lavender and Colin Sibley concerning obese pregnant mothers (see feature on page 4).

Debbie is a Chartered Health Psychologist and has a PhD in Psychology. Debbie's main interests are sexual and reproductive health, the impact of socio-economic environment on peoples' health decisions and behaviours and the relationship between use of health care and health inequalities. Debbie's PhD research used mixed-methods to investigate the influence of deprivation on young peoples' sexual health and pregnancy decisions.

Since completing her Ph.D, Debbie has worked on a multi-disciplinary study at University College London investigating the heightened incidence of stillbirth in ethnic minority and socially disadvantaged women. She has recently completed a Department of Health commissioned project, evaluating and offering psychological support to the Health Trainer Service. Debbie contributes to Health Psychology teaching at several Universities including The University of Southampton.

Debbie is also the National Coordinator of the Postgraduates who Teach (PGwT) network for the Higher Education Academy Psychology Network (HEAPN) ([http://www.psychology.heacademy.ac.uk/html/postgrads\\_who\\_teach.asp](http://www.psychology.heacademy.ac.uk/html/postgrads_who_teach.asp)).



## Page 3: Hello and Goodbye

**Lauren Moss** joins us from Translational Medicine and will be our new Research Administrator. After studying English at Sheffield University, Lauren moved to Manchester in summer 2008, and will now be based on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the new St Mary's to be the first point of call for Maternal and Fetal Health.



### Welcome New Students

Welcome to two new postdoctoral research associates who have started work with Daniel Brison and Sue Kimber in the NorthWest Embryonic Stem Cell Centre. They will be working on a project funded by MRC to derive and characterise human embryonic stem cell lines for clinical therapeutic use. **Dr Jinpei Ye** joins us from Newcastle where he worked with Lyle Armstrong on nuclear reprogramming in hybrid embryos, and previously with Keith Campbell at University of Nottingham. **Dr Maria Keramari** joins us from Chris Ward's group in FHMS where she worked on the regulation of pluripotency in human ES cells, and previously as a PhD student in Sue Kimber's lab. Welcome both!



### Goodbye Becky

Please join me in wishing **Becky** good luck with her travels to South America, her wedding in August and her training to be a Clinical Audiologist in September at the University of Manchester!

### Funding awarded for two new projects

#### **Two community based feasibility studies to improve the well-being of pregnant women with a BMI of 30 or more and the life chances of their children: : A pilot study in Oldham and Bolton**

The University of Manchester and Tommy's have just received £321,612 funding for two new collaborative projects, titled, 'Lifestyle programmes for obese pregnant women: A pilot study in Oldham and Bolton.' Both projects aim to increase the physical, emotional and social well-being of pregnant women with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or more (obesity being a significant risk factor of maternal and fetal morbidity). **Tina Lavendar** (PI), **Colin Sibley** and **Debbie Smith**, as well as two research midwives will be recruiting patients from Bolton and Oldham.

The project's aim is to increase our understanding of what types of lifestyle programmes are suitable and acceptable for obese pregnant women. The first project is funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. This is a feasibility study of a community physical activity programme to improve the well-being of pregnant women with a BMI of 30 or more and the life chances of their children. The second project is funded by The Department of Health Innovation scheme and is a feasibility study of a community lifestyle programme to improve the well-being of pregnant women with a BMI of 30 or more.

For more information about the projects, please contact Dr Debbie Smith, [Debbie.smith-2@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Debbie.smith-2@manchester.ac.uk) or 0161 3067783.



## Page 5: Funding Successes (continued)

### Travel Grants

Well done to **Tracey Mills**, **Deirdre Thajam** and **Mark Wareing** who have been awarded Travel Grants from The Physiological Society to attend the Dublin Meeting in July.



### Industry Research Award

**Paul Brownbill**, working with **Colin Sibley**, **Susan Greenwood** and **Michelle Desforges**, has been awarded £103K for a 12 month project to investigate the potential placental toxicology of a VEGF adenoviral gene therapy, aimed at enhancing uterine blood flow to the placenta in early-onset FGR pregnancies. This project is a collaborative development with Dr Anna David, Senior Clinical Lecturer in Maternal and Fetal Medicine at UCL, funded by Ark Therapeutics Ltd.

### British Medical Association Research Grants

**Claire Tower** and **Melissa Whitworth** (with help from **Rebecca Lee Jones**, **Diane Atkinson** and **Sue Greenwood**) have been awarded £44899 for their research into 'The effects of Binge Drinking on early placental development'



## Page 6: Publication Success



Tower C, Ong SSC, Khan KS, Kilby MDd (2008) Prognosis in isolated gastroschisis with bowel dilatation : a systematic review. Archives of Diseases in Childhood Fetal Neonatal Ed Nov 10 epub ahead of print  
[Journal Impact Factor: 2.786](#)

Tower C, Nallapetta S, Vause S (2008) Prophylaxis against infective endocarditis in obstetrics: new NICE guidance: a commentary. BJOG. Dec; 115(13):1601-4.  
[Journal Impact Factor: 2.666](#)

Mills, T A, Wareing, M, Shennan, A H, Poston, L, Baker, P N, Greenwood, S L, 'Acute and chronic modulation of placental chorionic plate artery reactivity by reactive oxygen species.' Free Radical Biology and Medicine. 2009  
[Journal Impact Factor: 4.81](#)

Withers, S B., Taggart M J, Baker P, Austin C "Responses of Isolated Pressurised Rat Uterine Arteries to Changes in Pressure: Effects of Pre-constriction, Endothelium and Pregnancy" Placenta. 2009 June; 30 (6): 529-535  
[Journal Impact Factor: 3.238](#)

Sibley, C P, "Symposium Report: Understanding Placental Nutrient transfer- Why Bother? New Biomarkers of Fetal Growth." Journal of Physiology. In press. 2009  
[Journal Impact Factor: 4.580](#)

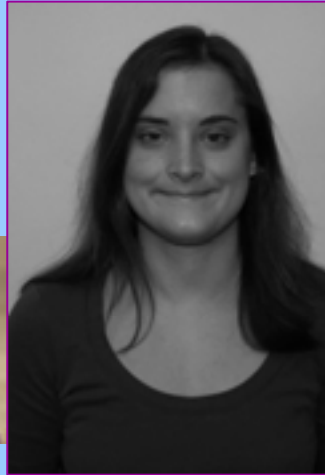
Hutchinson, E S, Brownbill, P, Jones, N W, Abrahams, V M, Baker, P N, Sibley, C P, Crocker, I, "Utero-Placental Haemodynamics in the Pathogenesis of Pre-Eclampsia." Placenta. 2009 Jun 2.  
[Epub ahead of print]  
[Journal Impact Factor: 3.238](#)

Wright, C, Sibley, C, Baker, P, "The role of Fetal Magnetic Resonance Imaging." Arch Dis Child Fetal Neonatal Ed. 2009 Feb 10 [Epub ahead of print]  
[Journal Impact Factor: 2.342](#)

If you have an abstract accepted for publication please email [lauren.moss@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:lauren.moss@manchester.ac.uk) a copy of the publication for the **newsletter**, but also so that the information can be passed on to the **Press Officer** Aeron Howarth who will contact local/national press.

## Page 7: Our Successes

Congratulations to **Lizzie Hutchinson** who was awarded her PhD last month! Lizzie plans to stay in the North West and wishes to become a Medical Writer.



**Alex Heazell** has passed his part II of MRCOG! His gain is also ours as he will be back on research in August!

Congratulations to **Karen Forbes** who won The Endocrine Society presidential poster prize for her poster entitled 'Quantum dot labelled IGF-I: a novel mechanism to study IGF-signal transduction in the human placenta' at ENDO 2009.



Congratulations go to **Clare Tower** who has been awarded the William Blair Bell lectureship 2010 by RCOG!



Congratulations to **Andy Sharp** who won the best poster in maternal medicine prize at the BMFMS for his poster entitled, "trophoblast apoptosis is p53 dependent and susceptible to modulation" kindly presented by **Alex Heazell** in Andy's absence!

## A Personal Success

Congratulations and many thanks go to **Caroline Wright** who ran the London Marathon on 26<sup>th</sup> April in a very respectable 4hrs and 1min despite falling over midway! She raised £1000 in sponsorship- Well done Caroline!

### Acknowledging UoM and MAHSC in all publications



MANCHESTER  
1824

The University  
of Manchester

If you have a substantive or honorary contract with the University of Manchester, the University must be the primary name and address cited in all papers and articles.

An appropriate address is critical to ensure that our achievements and impact are identified without ambiguity: the disbursement of funds and our position in various rankings are increasingly influenced by measurements of citations.

Therefore, the name and address in all publications should be presented in the following way.

**The University of Manchester, Manchester Academic Health Science Centre, Street address.**

It is also important to give the correct and comprehensive attribution of funding sources in the acknowledgement section of your publications.

For Example:

This project was funded by (eg. MRC, Diabetes UK) and the Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group are supported by the NIHR Biomedical Research Centre and the Greater Manchester Comprehensive Research Network.

## Genetics of Clefting Disorders

Wednesday      Lunch 12pm. Lecture  
8<sup>th</sup> July            12.45- 1.45

Lecture Theatre, Postgraduate Centre, MRI

The Academic Grand Rounds, run by The Biomedical Research Centre, commences with Genetics of Clefting Disorders.

All welcome

[Caroline.boston@cmft@nhs.uk](mailto:Caroline.boston@cmft@nhs.uk)

Professor Graeme Black, Professor Jill Clayton-Smith, Professor Mike Dixon, Dr Jill Urquhart

Future Dates:

Developmental Medicine- Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October

*Topic to be confirmed-* Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December

## Page 10: Lab Meetings

Reminder- Wednesday morning meetings will start again in September, together with Grand Rounds on Wednesday lunchtimes- more detail in next Newsletter

### 'Work In Progress' Meetings Schedule

Tuesday mornings **8:45-9:45am** in our new **Multifunction Meeting Room**.

Speakers must prepare a 20 minute presentation allowing 10 minutes for discussion.

Date	Speakers	Chairs
07/07/2009	Matthew Stubbs, Lynda Harris	Michelle Desforbes, Karen Forbes
14/07/2009	Zoe Darwin, James Newham	Louise Taylor, Deirdre Thajam
21/07/2009	Deborah Chirico, Melissa Brereton	Peter Sipos, Paul Brownbill
28/07/2009	Sitara Kuruvilla, Nita Solanky	Karen Forbes, Alexandra Solomon
01/09/2009	Laura Kusinski, Christine Hayward	Michelle Desforbes, Andrea Ditchfield
08/09/2009	Sue Woods, Catherine Chmiel, Nicky Sapsford, Alison Cooke	Suzanne Moody, Sarah Lawson, Helen Miller
15/09/2009	Justine Nugent, Sarah Hamilton	Tracey Mills, Debbie Smith
22/09/2009	Samantha Smith Russal Mohammad	Jayne Fitzsimmons, Yu Zhang
29/09/2009	Christal Fisher, Richard Blankley	Stephania C, Caroline Wright
13/10/2009	Louise Taylor, Deirdre Thajam	Zoe Darwin, James Newham
20/10/2009	Peter Sipos, Paul Brownbill	Deborah Chirico, Melissa Brereton
27/10/2009	Michelle Desforbes, Andrea Ditchfield	Laura Kusinski, Christina Hayward
03/11/2009	New PhD students	Michelle Desforbes, Karen Forbes
10/11/2009	Karen Forbes, Alexandra Solomon	Lynda Harris, Nita Solanky
17/11/2009	Suzanne Moody, Sarah Lawson, Helen Miller	Sue Woods, Catherine Chmiel, Nicky Sapsford, Alison Cooke
24/11/2009	Jayne Fitzsimmons, Yu Zhang	Samantha Smith, Russal Mohammad
01/12/2009	Tracey Mills, Debbie Smith	Justine Nugent, Sarah Hamilton
08/12/2009	Stephania C, Caroline Wright	Christal Fisher, Richard Blankley
15/12/2009	Andy Sharp, <i>Spare slot</i>	Michelle Desforbes, Karen Forbes