

Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group

Monthly Newsletter

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STOP THE PRESS!!!



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**Christmas closure dates****Wednesday 24th – normal day**

Thursday 25 December - CLOSED
 Friday 26 December - CLOSED
 Monday 29 December - CLOSED
 Tuesday 30 January - CLOSED
 Wednesday 31 December - CLOSED
 Thursday 1 January - CLOSED
 Friday 2 January - CLOSED

**University open as normal from
 Saturday 3 January, return to work
 Monday 05th January**

MERRY & SEASONS
 CHRISTMAS & GREATINGS

Produced by Martyn JohnsonMartyn.johnson@manchester.ac.ukwww.medicine.manchester.ac.uk/maternalfetal/aboutus/newsbulletins/**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

Page 2: New Starters



Ed Johnstone

Senior Clinical Lecturer

Ed took up his appointment as Senior Clinical Lecturer (with Honorary Consultant status) in the Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group on 08th December. He joins us from his Sub-speciality trainee post in Feto-maternal Medicine at Leeds University Teaching Hospitals. However, he is no stranger to the Group as he completed his PhD studies in 2005 with **Colin Sibley** in collaboration with Prof. Larry Guilbert at the University of Alberta, Canada.

During Ed's first couple of months in Manchester he will be working with **Clare Tower, Tracey Mills** and Colin to set up a specialist antenatal research clinic (the "Placenta Clinic") in St Mary's. The aim of this clinic is to improve the care of pregnant women at high risk of placental disease by providing integrated clinical assessment of placental function to screen for placental disease. They will also provide a focus for research strategies to improve the diagnosis and management of placental disease and pregnancy outcome. We hope that Ed enjoys working back in Manchester and wish him and the team well with the Clinic which launches in January 2009.



Yu Zhang

Visiting Research Associate

Yu will be visiting the Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group for 12 months as a Postdoctoral Research Associate. She has a PhD in Obstetrics and Gynaecology from Shanghai Jiao Yong University, China and has been awarded a scholarship under the UK/China Scholarships for Excellence programme to work with **Phil Baker** to establish collaborative links between the Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group and the pregnancy research team in Shanghai Jiao Tong University. We extend a warm welcome to Yu and hope that she enjoys her time in Manchester and in the UK.



Page 3: People leaving us



Soumya Jabur
Research Technician

Soumya has decided to return to education and will be leaving the Research Centre to begin a PhD in Analytical Chemistry. Soumya will be working in the MIB with Prof. Peter Fielden, Prof Nick Goddard and Dr. Anne-Marie Buckle in the University of Manchester's School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science. We wish Soumya well in her studies and hope that as she's not far away, she will come back to visit us and let us know how she's getting on.



Eleni Tsitsiou
3rd Year PhD Student

Congratulations go to Eleni who was awarded her PhD in November. She has now taken up a Research Associate post in Dr Mark Lindsay's group (School of Translational Medicine) to develop microRNA-based therapeutics for the treatment of inflammation associated with respiratory diseases.



Nicola Charlesworth
Research Technician

Nicola has finished her work with our Group and has been successful in obtaining a technicians post with Medical Genetics.



Fatimah Soydemir
MD Student

Well done to Fatimah, who passed her MD viva in November. Fatimah continues her Obs & Gynae career at the Preston Royal Hospital.



Joanna Williams
3rd Year PhD Student

Congratulations to Joanna who was awarded her PhD earlier this month. Joanna will be working as a Bioscientist at AstraZeneca and we wish her all the best with her future career

Page 4: Publication Success



Please include: **Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group, University of Manchester** when papers are submitted.

Desforges M, Mynett KJ, Jones RL, Greenwood SL, Westwood M, Sibley CP, Glazier JD (2008). The SNAT4 isoform of the system A amino acid transporter is functional in human placental microvillous plasma membrane.

J Physiol: In Press.

Journal Impact Factor: 4.580

Carolyn J. P. Jones, Luciano G. Nardo, Pietro Litta, and Asgerally T. Fazleabas, Ultrastructure of Ectopic Peritoneal Lesions From Women With Endometriosis, Including Observations on the Contribution of Coelomic Mesothelium. 2008 November 14, *Reproductive Sciences OnlineFirst*, Journal Impact Factor: 2.264

Heazell AEP, Buttle HR, Baker PN, Crocker IP. Altered Expression of Regulators of Caspase Activity within Trophoblast of Normal and Pre-eclamptic Pregnancies.

Reproductive Sciences (In Press)

Journal Impact Factor: 2.264

N.W. Jones, **E.S. Hutchinson, P. Brownbill, I.P. Crocker**, D. Eccles, G.J. Bugg, N.J. Raine-Fenning., In Vitro Dual Perfusion of Human Placental Lobules as a Flow Phantom to Investigate the Relationship between Fetoplacental Flow and Quantitative 3D Power Doppler Angiography, *Placenta* (in press).

Journal Impact Factor: 3.238

Jones C and Aplin JD Reproductive Glycogenetics - a Critical Factor in Pregnancy. Success and Species Hybridisation. *Placenta*

Journal Impact Factor: 3.238

Heazell AEP, Taylor NNJ, Baker PN, Crocker IP. Hypoxia and Reactive Oxygen Species Alter Cell Turnover of BeWo Choriocarcinoma Cells *Repro Biomed Online*

www.rbmonline.com/article/3394

Journal Impact Factor: 2.840

If you have an abstract accepted for publication please email martyn.johnson@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.

Wellcome Trust Clinical Training Fellowship

Phil Baker and Louise Kenny (Cork) have been awarded a grant of £538,563.00 from the Wellcome Trust Translation Award Scheme to develop a screening test for pre-eclampsia based on circulating metabolites that are identified early in pregnancy, prior to onset of disease.

The grant will permit the continuation of the successful metabolomics collaboration with colleagues in the groups here and in the MIB and Cork, and will result in the employment of two postdoctoral research associates, a research technician and the continued support of David Broadhurst.



Wellcome Trust Clinical Training Fellowship

Congratulations goes to **Andy Sharp** who has secured a Wellcome Trust Clinical Training fellowship. This is a flagship scheme aimed at supporting the most promising medically qualified clinicians who wish to undertake rigorous research training and are really tough to get so Andy deserves our warmest congratulations.

His fellowship will fund his research in the Manchester Research Centre on "The modulation of p53 in correcting aberrant placental apoptosis in pre-eclampsia" as well as his time visiting Dr Gil Mor, at the University of Yale.



Biochemical Society Guildford Bench Methodology Fund

Karen Forbes has been awarded a grant from The Biochemical Society Guildford Bench Methodology Fund for £1,003.40. This is to fund consumables for a project entitled: "Using siRNA to examine the role of DICER-dependant microRNAs in regulating IGF-mediated events in the human placenta."



MRC Travel Award

Beth Holder has been successful with her application for funding for her time with Vikki Abrahams in Yale next year. The MRC have awarded Beth £11,300.00 to help continue research on her project on "The role of human endogenous retroviruses (HERV) and shed particles in pre-eclampsia".

Page 6: MFHRG Wins Prizes!



RCOG Medical Student Project Prize

Stephanie Worton who was an MRes student in the Research Centre last term, has been awarded the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists Medical Student Project Prize 2008 for her project investigating the metabolomic footprint of placental explants from pregnancies complicated by pre-eclampsia. Stephanie is the second student from our group to win this prestigious prize (previous winners include Sarah Moll in 2006) and she is an outstanding student; and we wish her the very best for the future.

R&I Exhibition

The Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group represented the St Mary's Hospital Research Division at the CMMC NHS Trust Research and Innovation Exhibition on 17th November.

Jemma Corcoran and **Christina Hayward** delivered oral presentations and we had a number of posters in the poster symposium. **Lizzie Hutchinson** was awarded 2nd prize for her poster on Irregular Placental Haemodynamics in the Pathogenesis of Pre-eclampsia.



Blair Bell Research Competition

Congratulations go to **Sam Smith** who won first prize for her oral presentation on "Leukocyte involvement in uterine spiral artery remodelling: the role of vascular-derived chemokines " and to **Andy Sharp** who won second prize for his poster on "The modulation of p53-induced apoptosis in BeWo cells and cultured primary trophoblast cells" in this year's Annual Society Meeting, held in December at Chancellors.



Wyeth SGI Young Investigator Awards

Sam Smith and **Jo Stanley** have been selected by the 2009 Scientific Program Committee to be awarded the Wyeth SGI Young Investigator awards. There are only 25 of these awarded, and as the SGI has had more abstracts submitted than ever before, this is another fantastic achievement.



Biomedical Imaging Symposium Series

Suzanne Moody gave a talk on the Role of Ultrasound in Early Stage Pregnancy at the Imaging Modalities at the Wellcome Clinical Research Facility on 08th December. The purpose of the talk was to raise awareness of the facilities that the Wellcome Trust offer to support our research, and specifically the techniques used in the MAPS Study.



Research Travel Fund



Postgraduate Research Travel Fund

The University is offering doctoral students in Years II & III of their training financial support to facilitate attendance and presentation at prestigious conferences.

Only students presenting a paper or poster at a conference will be eligible for support which is limited to **£250** for a UK/ROI conference and **£400** for a visit outside of the UK/ROI.

There are four points at which students can apply for funding support:

- 19 December '08
- 13 March '09
- 19 June '09

The conference in question must take place between the 18th October 2008 and 17th October 2009.

Full application criteria can be found on the following website:

<http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/researchoffice/graduate/skills/travel%20fund>

Page 8: Policy Update

Payroll Forms (Fees and Expenses)

The University's internal auditors have required us to introduce a new procedure on authorised signatories for payroll forms such as fees and expenses. From now on, all documentation that is received into the Central Finance Directorate with an authorised signature must be approved by **Melissa Westwood** in addition to the budget holder. The process is generally the same as we have been doing, with a few changes...

Which forms?



The new procedure covers any form that is processed by the payroll department such as fees and expenses, time sheets,

Click www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/finance/Pay/Payrollforms.shtml

This does not affect the IProc authorisations currently in place.

Filling Out the Form



If you are filling out the form, please make sure that you have approval from the budget holder and that you know the correct finance code to charge the claim to. Make sure that you have filled the form out correctly and that all original receipts are stapled to the form. You will need to keep a photocopy of everything yourself until you are happy that you have received your reimbursement (*no other copies will be taken by the Research Group, but details will be recorded by Martyn Johnson*) then pass your form and receipts to the budget holder for approval.

Approving the Claim



The budget holder will check that the claim is genuine and necessary and that there is an adequate budget to cover what was agreed. The budget holder will add the finance codes – Martyn, Caroline, Inez and Jean can help with this and sign against the accounts table. The form will then be passed on to Martyn who will record the detail and ask Melissa to authorise it.

Processing your Claim



Once Melissa has authorised your claim, the form will be sent for final checking by our Finance Team. If the claim is complete they will send it to the Central Finance Directorate. To receive your expenses with your salary at the end of the month, your form has to be in the Central Directorate by 10th of the month.

Please leave your completed (signed and approved) forms with Martyn Johnson, (Maternal and Fetal Health Research Centre, St Mary's Hospital) who will make sure that Melissa Westwood authorises your claim... **please do not send any forms directly to fees and expenses as we have done in the past.**

Page 9: Christmas Parties!



Manchester Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group

Everyone in the Group is invited to celebrate the Christmas season on **Friday 19th December** with a Christmas Quiz in the Research Floor Seminar Room! Mark Wareing will be hosting the quiz which will start at 10:30.

Clinical and Laboratory Sciences Research School

Head of our Research School, Tony Freemont, would be delighted if all members of staff in the School, could join him for a pre-Christmas drink (or 2!) on **Wednesday 17th December** at **1pm** in the Tissue Injury & Repair coffee area & seminar room (room 1.443 & 1.446) on the first floor of the Stopford Building. He hopes that you can come. For catering purposes it would be helpful if you could let Kellie.Parnell@manchester.ac.uk know if you wish to attend.

Other Parties...

MFH Research Centre & NWPSU

Following on from the Christmas Quiz, members of the Research Centre will be heading to Didsbury for a Christmas Dinner in Jem&I.

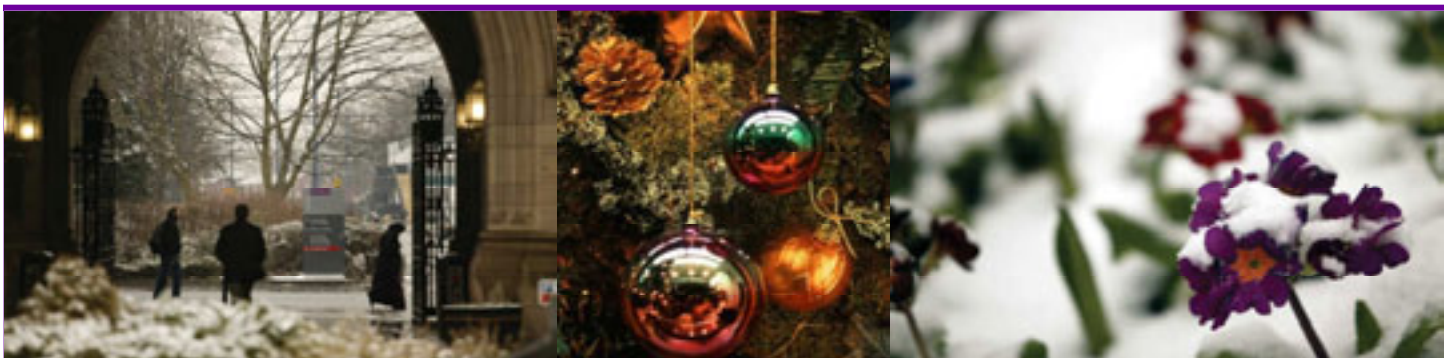
CEMACH

Julie Maddocks and her team are planning a Christmas dinner with other members of the Regional CEMACH team.

Reproductive Medicine

Daniel Brison and his team have an away day at Chancellors planned for **22nd December**. Entertainment such as dressing up, mock carolling, quizzes and games have been organised.

MERRY
CHRISTMAS



Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences

Introduction to Research 'Speed PhD'

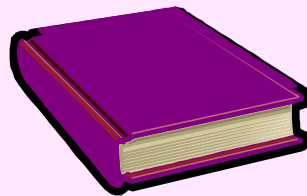
20th January 9.30 – 5pm &
21st January 9.30 – 12pm
Room 2.219, Simon Building

Open to all new MPhil, MD, ChM and PhD students.

This two-day event provides all the information and training necessary for students to begin their research degree.

The aim is for students to:

- Understand the key stages of a research degree
- Develop project planning and time management techniques
- Improve literature searching and IT skills
- Understand the importance of research ethics, fraud and plagiarism
- Adopt a reflective learning approach to training through self assessment of personal skills



For further information and to book onto the course please email the training team at mhspg-training@manchester.ac.uk