

Staff News

Welcome!

We're delighted to welcome Kath Wilkinson as a researcher on the PenCRU team. Kath was already working on the Hospital Communications project and will now be with PenCRU full-time also working on the Healthy Parent Carers project. Kath has a degree in Psychology, a Postgraduate Certificate in Inclusive Education, and a Masters in Developmental Psychopathology. She has worked at the University of Exeter Medical School since 2016 and is involved other projects in the Child Health team.



Welcome back!

Welcome back to our Family Involvement Coordinator Katharine Fitzpatrick who returned to work in April after maternity leave.



Farewell

Farewell to Silvia Bortoli who will be leaving PenCRU this month. We wish her the best of luck in her new role at the Living Systems Institute on Streatham Campus of the University of Exeter! Our family involvement work will be continued by Katharine.



Contact the team

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PenCRU Newsletter July 2018, Issue 28



Inside this issue:

- > Hospital Communications project update
- > New and updated evidence summaries
- > New papers published
- > Staff news

New projects funded!

Healthy Parent Carers Programme

Many parents in the PenCRU Family Faculty helped to create the Healthy Parent Carers programme. It's a health promotion package which aims to help parent carers to focus on improving their own health and wellbeing. The next stage has just been funded by the National Institute for Health Research, which is the research arm of the NHS. This research is a trial which will compare receiving online information with attending weekly group sessions.

Improving Continence in Children with Disability

Learning to manage going to the toilet independently is an important milestone in growing up. However, children with special educational needs and disabilities may be slower to learn how to manage going to the toilet, or they may need extra help. Currently it is uncertain what the best ways are to assess and treat children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Starting in autumn 2018 this project is funded by the National Institute for Health Research. The study involves surveys with health professionals working with children with neurological conditions, and families who have direct experience with using NHS services to promote continence. It also involves a systematic review to bring together all the evidence from published research about the effectiveness of interventions to assess and improve continence for children with disabilities. This will enable us to describe clinical practice in the NHS for improving continence of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and summarise evidence for interventions. This will allow us to make recommendations for future research and practice.

Find out more about the all our research on our [website project pages](#).

Communication with children when inpatients

What is the project about?

This project is testing the feasibility of delivering training to staff working on children's wards to improving communication with disabled children when they are inpatients. The training was developed by parents in PenCRU Family Faculty, clinicians and researchers. It has been delivered successfully at the Royal Devon & Exeter hospital. The next stage of this project aims to examine the feasibility of delivering the training in other hospitals.

What is the progress so far?

So far, three hospitals - Portsmouth NHS Foundation Trust, Jenny Lind Children's Hospital in Norwich and Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust - have delivered the training to 50 staff over four sessions, with three more sessions planned. Feedback so far has been very positive, with staff sharing ideas about how to improve communication moving forward and requesting more training in this area.

"I will be more confident when interacting with and caring for children with complex needs and more aware of the importance of developing a partnership of care with parents..."

What are the next steps?

Training will continue to be delivered in participating hospitals between now and September, and we hope to welcome Bristol Children's Hospital and Birmingham Children's Hospital to the project as well. We will collect feedback from facilitators and staff who attend training about how useful it has been as well as how feasible it has been to deliver in each setting. We will also gather information from staff attending training about its impact on their professional practice and the impact on the culture across the ward.



New paper published

Ginny Humphreys, Tanya King, Jo Jex, Morwenna Rogers, Sharon Blake, Jo Thompson Coon, and Christopher Morris (2018) [Sleep positioning systems for children and adults with a neurodisability: A systematic review](#) *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*. DOI: 10.1177/0308022618778254

'It takes two flints to make a fire'

The Evidence Synthesis Team (EST) have written a [blog](#) piece about this collaboration that includes Ginny reflecting on her experience working on the systematic review alongside members of PenCRU and Evidence Synthesis Team.



What's the Evidence? summaries

Our 'What's the Evidence?' summaries are designed to summarise existing research about specific questions relating to childhood disability.

New Summaries

Tools and strategies to support children and young people with dyscalculia
<http://www.pencru.org/evidence/dyscalculia/>

Is Selective Percutaneous Myofascial Lengthening an effective treatment for children with cerebral palsy?
<http://www.pencru.org/evidence/spml/>

Omega-3 and omega-6 supplements to improve speech in children with dyspraxia
<http://www.pencru.org/evidence/verbaldyspraxia/>

Updated summaries

Therapies based on sensory integration in autistic spectrum disorder
<http://www.pencru.org/evidence/sensoryintegrationinasd/>

Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment for children with cerebral palsy
<http://www.pencru.org/evidence/hyperbaricoxygentreatment/>