

News

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Government Investment in Lung Research in Leicester

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Leicester Respiratory Biomedical Research Unit (BRU) is a partnership between University of Leicester and University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust. In 2012 the respiratory research department became part of a multi million pound government investment by the NIHR, to become one of only twenty BRU's within England.



The Unit will focus on promoting the development of new and effective therapies for the treatment of respiratory diseases including severe asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). The funding has allowed the

development of a specially designed unit including clinical space and specialist team allowing first class investigations into lung disease.

The newly built Unit is located at Glenfield Hospital, Leicester. The BRU encompasses a variety of friendly and passionate staff including dedicated research nurses, researchers, doctors, scientists, administration and students. The Unit was built with patients in mind even down to the beach theme clinic rooms!

During May this year the Respiratory Research Team moved to the newly built BRU. The Unit was open to patients a few days later. The Unit has been completed over the past year with much dedication and hard work. The first floor has a welcoming reception area that leads on to a number of clinical rooms, testing rooms and a small ward. The second floor holds offices and the third floor holds our laboratories. Please visit our website for a virtual tour of our new unit www.leicsrespiratorybru.nihr.ac.uk



Meet the Team – Bev Hargadon



Hi, I'm Bev Hargadon and my job title now is Clinical Assessments Manager for the Respiratory Biomedical Research Unit. I have worked in

respiratory research for approximately 17 years; initially working on commercially funded research studies and then in 1999, along with Sue McKenna, I became one of the first research nurses to work on respiratory projects that were academically funded at Leicester. This is a little bit about me and my time in respiratory research, where I started and where we are now.

I initially started work with Sue on two projects led by Dr Ruth Green on asthma management and Dr Chris Brightling in COPD (they were both registrar's at this time). The difference I found working on academically funded projects was that we needed to recruit a much larger number of volunteers to the studies compared to the commercial work, but both projects finished achieving our target recruitment and were highly successful. We have also been able to take what we found in the results from Dr Ruth Green's project and use this in practice and for those patients who attend our difficult asthma service this is how their asthma is now managed using the results of sputum eosinophil counts and other measurements to tailor treatment.

In 2003 the team expanded and we were joined by Maria Shelley and Nicola Goodman to work on commercially funded studies. This also meant the space we were working in, in outpatients became very cramped. Maria actually counted the space we had to work in one day and it was 16 floor tiles approximately. This definitely meant we were a close team and things were very cosy. Around this time I was appointed as the team leader for respiratory research and I was completing a Bsc Honours degree in Respiratory Care. This was hard work, as I was working 30 hours a week

and had 2 small daughters at home. So when I was awarded a 2:1, I was extremely proud of myself.

As we had actually outgrown the space in outpatients, we were moved to ward 23, where the team continued to grow and we were joined by Michelle Bourne, Amisha Singapuri and Amanda Charalambou and we were starting to take on more research projects and in the last few years have been joined by Sarah Parker, Kate Hadley, Jo Finch, Karen Edward and Sarah Terry (nee Pickering). As well as the clinical team growing, the team also now included our very supportive administration and data manager team of Linda Graham, Selina Finney and Jane Middleton.

In 2012 the respiratory research department at Glenfield received the very prestigious award from the National Institute of Health Research to become a biomedical research unit. This was a real achievement which recognised all the hard work and outstanding research that had been produced here at Glenfield and I felt that the team of research nurses, physiologists and support staff had played some part in achieving this award. It did however; also start me having palpitations, as this would also bring more staff to an area we had yet again out grown. We did however achieve even further funding to support the fantastic Respiratory Biomedical Research building, which bought with it incredible clinical facilities and actual separate office space for the research team. I even got my own office which ironically is the same size as the space we started in, back in 1999.

I have always enjoyed working in respiratory research. I have had the opportunity to work on some interesting and ground breaking research projects. I have met some lovely people who have volunteered to be part of studies and who have attended for clinic visits over the years, many of whom I feel now they come to clinic it's for a catch up and a cup of tea and at some point we will do some research tests. I've even had the chance to see a bit of the world

attending conferences and training people how to cough up sputum which all our research volunteers know how much the research team love sputum. Finally, I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to work with an exceptional team across the board, which are hard working and dedicated to trying to improve and advance the care and treatments of respiratory patients.

Exciting New Research Happening at Leicester Respiratory BRU



Professor Martin Tobin is starting a large scale research project called the Extended Cohort for E-health, Environment and DNA (EXCEED)

study. With funding support from the Medical Research Council, the EXCEED study aims to identify genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors associated with health and disease, with a focus on lung disease. The study is hoping to recruit just over 5000 participants. Of these 4200 will be recruited through their GP surgery and 1000 through NHS stop smoking services. People who decide to take part will be asked to complete a questionnaire about their health and their lifestyle, to give a saliva sample (to allow for DNA testing) and to have a simple breath test done that measures their lung function. They will also give consent for this information to be linked with their NHS health care record. The study aims to then use the information collected to meet its long term aim of improving patient care through better prevention, diagnosis and treatment of a wide range of illnesses.

EXCEED Study Contact Details:

t: 0116 2525997

e: exceed@le.ac.uk

Get Involved

You may be interested in becoming a research volunteer. We have many research studies that you may be interested in taking part in, whether you are a patient with lung disease or a volunteer that does not have lung disease. We may not have something suitable for you immediately, but with your permission we will keep your contact details on our recruitment database so that we can contact you about future research studies. If you are eligible for a research study we will write to you and send you a detailed participant information sheet and freepost reply slip. If you are interested in taking part all you need to do is return the reply slip in the freepost envelope and one of our team will then contact you to arrange a visit to the Unit. If you are interested in becoming a research volunteer then please contact us directly or go to our website and submit our online submission form.

There are lots of other ways you can get involved in the Leicester Respiratory



BRU and its work. To join our mailing list and receive this newsletter, information on upcoming events and other announcements please contact us on the details below or submit our online submission form on our website.

You can also like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to find out about news and upcoming events.

Come and meet us at local roadshows, events and health fairs. Here you will

be able to meet the research team and find out more about the BRU, the work undertaken at the BRU and respiratory health. Details of pending events will be posted on the BRU news and events webpages, Facebook page and calendar, and sent to members of the mailing list.

w: www.leicsrespiratorybru.nihr.ac.uk

e: leics.respiratorybru@nhs.net

t: 0116 2583370

Twitter: @NIHR_LRBRU

Facebook: NIHR Leicester Respiratory BRU

Have your say and help shape Respiratory Research

Researchers at the Leicester Respiratory BRU believe it is important for patients and members of the public to be involved in research and are keen to hear what you think about our research.

Here at the BRU we invite patients, members of the public, friends, carers and family to take part in our public and patient involvement group (PPI group). We invite our PPI group to help

shape our research and provide their views and opinions on our research. This may be to help researchers with a grant application (when researchers apply for funding), before researchers send their studies for approvals, right through to helping once the results of the research has come out. This may involve giving their opinions on the design of the study to being on an advisory group through to checking patient leaflets to make sure they are reader friendly. We also encourage our members to participate in our newsletters and website content. Members of the PPI group can commit as much or as little time as they want and they are reimbursed for their time and travel expenses.

If you are interested in getting involved in public and patient involvement or would like more information please contact Sarah Terry the PPI lead on

t: 0116 2502670

e: sarah.terry@uhl-tr.nhs.uk



Other BRU's within Leicester....

Lifestyle BRU

The NIHR Leicester – Loughborough Diet, Lifestyle and Physical Activity BRU was awarded £4.5 million NIHR funding over five years from April 2012 plus £1.38 million capital funding by the Department of Health.



The NIHR Leicester – Loughborough Diet, Lifestyle and Physical Activity BRU will focus on improving health for patients with long term conditions such as diabetes by using and improving upon therapeutic lifestyle interventions.

For example, these interventions could increase the amount of movement and physical activity people take part in, reduce time in sedentary behaviours, and use other approaches such as the interplay of exercise and appetite control, and minimising weight re-gain after bariatric (such as gastric band) surgery.

Professor Melanie Davies, Professor of Diabetes and BRU Director said:

"Physical inactivity is estimated to be the fourth leading cause of death globally and our research will particularly include subjects from black and minority ethnic groups and young people at the highest risk of chronic diseases. The award of this BRU will allow us to become an International Centre of Research Excellence undertaking the full spectrum of lifestyle research which we believe will make a real difference, not only to people in the East Midlands but nationally and internationally. The award was made after an interview involving international experts from across the world including Australia, Canada, the US and Europe and was a highly competitive process. The award will mean that we will be able to attract and retain some of the leading researchers, nationally and internationally, in this area."

Want to receive the newsletter and information on events regularly?

Join our mailing list by emailing leics.respiratorybru@nhs.net or visit our website for all up to date information.

NIHR Leicester Respiratory Biomedical Research Unit, Glenfield Hospital
Groby Road, Leicester LE3 9QP

t: 0116 2583370 e: leics.respiratorybru@nhs.net w: www.leicsrespiratorybru.nihr.ac.uk



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University of
Leicester



University Hospitals of Leicester
NHS Trust



Research Road Show

Earlier this year research teams from within Leicestershire got together at the BRITE Centre in Leicester to present their research and showcase potential opportunities for members of the public to get involved in research studies.



Patient and public involvement is valuable in research and is recognised as a way of producing more effective healthcare delivery and outcomes for patients. The key to this is developing a dialogue between researchers and service users, with the common goal of improved outcomes and quality of care. This event provided the opportunity for stakeholders to meet research teams, from Leicestershire's Biomedical Research Units (BRUs); Leicestershire, Northampton and Rutland (LNR) Collaborative Leadership for Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC); and the Diabetes Research Network, to gain an overview of a selection of recent or on-going projects. The event also showcased potential opportunities for members of the public to get involved in research studies.

The morning session ended with a question and answer session with the researchers followed by an afternoon of interactive exhibitions from researchers and collaborators.

Please visit our website to view the full video of the days event. We hope to hold another event very soon.

