



CHIEF
SCIENTIST
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S D C R N



Newsletter

Scottish Dementia
Clinical Research
Network

Summer 2011

Patient & Public Involvement Survey Launched

It is important to us that people with dementia and their carers are given the opportunity to get involved in the network. This not only means the chance to be involved in research studies, but also to help shape the direction of the network.

Survey forms have been sent to carers and patients and an electronic version is also available at:
www.sdcrn.org.uk/patient-and-public-involvement



When the responses are gathered together we plan to set up Focus groups to find out what you think about clinical research in dementia in Scotland.

Some research studies would also benefit from input from patients and carers as their proposals are being developed. There is also the possibility of having advisory groups to oversee the direction of research studies.

There are a variety of others ways in which patients and the public can get involved.

Networking Dementia Research Conference Report

The SDCRN had its first conference in March at Stirling Management Centre. It was attended by researchers, charities, nurses and pharmacists.

Karen Horsburgh (University of Edinburgh) spoke about the current scientific research in the field of dementia, Professor Alison Bowes (University of Stirling) updated delegates on current social research and Cameron Stark (NHS Highland) spoke about the public health side of dementia.

Dr Peter Connelly (Co-director of SDCRN) spoke about clinical research, and Dr Alan McNair (Chief Scientist Office) spoke about research funding for dementia projects. Emma Law (Manager, SDCRN) stressed the importance of involving patients and carers in dementia research and Tom Denning (University of Cambridge) told delegates about how to turn research results into better practice.

Recently Approved Research Projects

Dr Sarah MacPherson, University of Edinburgh, has a project looking into changes in behaviour of people with Early Onset Alzheimers and Frontotemporal Dementia. She will be recruiting people throughout Scotland from our research interest register from June 2011.

Yvonne Morrison and Dr Fiona Kelly, Dementia Services Development Centre, University of Stirling are developing a new rating scale for Alzheimer's disease. They will be sending questionnaires to 100 people with Alzheimer's from across Scotland.

Dr Robert McIntosh and Elisabetta Ambron, University of Edinburgh, will be looking into the mental abilities of people with Alzheimer's, Vascular Dementia and Frontotemporal Dementia. They will be recruiting people from the research interest register from June 2011.

Dr Sharon Abrahams, University of Edinburgh, will be looking into the language and social understanding of people with Frontotemporal Dementia and Motor Neurone Disease. She started recruiting in May 2011.

Professor Alasdair MacLulich and Dr Zoe Tiegas are developing a new instrument for monitoring delirium. They will be recruiting 20 people with dementia in Lothian.

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Spotlight on Dr Mario Parra

Dr Mario Parra qualified as a doctor at the Holguín Superior Medical Institute in Cuba in 1993. He then studied Normal and Abnormal Physiology as well as Clinical Neurophysiology. He started to lecture in Neuroscience at a State University of Colombia, after which he moved to Edinburgh where he took a PHD Human Cognitive and Behavioural Neuroscience.

He has carried out research work on Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia for more than 15 years.

Mario joined the SDCRN in 2009 as a Clinical Studies Officer, where he has been involved in recruiting people with dementia and their carers onto the research interest register, as well as developing research studies himself. He combines his current role as a CSO with that of Research Fellow in Human Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of Edinburgh.



Mario has recently been awarded a travelling fellowship so he can speak about his current study "Working memory binding: a cognitive marker for Alzheimer's disease" at the Alzheimer's Association's International Conference on Alzheimer's disease in Paris in the summer. It is one of the premier academic and scientific conferences on dementia in the world.

Promoting Clinical Research in Dementia across Scotland