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Newsletter

CHSS
University of Kent

Centre for Health Services Studies

Issue 40 / Autumn 2021

What next for children's health? CHSS hosts HBSC England study

The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children is a unique cross-national international research project conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe.

Findings spanning more than a decade have impacted UK policy and have important implications for how schools, health practitioners and policymakers respond to young people's health issues. CHSS is hosting the HBSC England study at a particularly relevant time, within the context of Covid-19 and its impact on children.

See centre pages

Photo by Jeremy Bishop on Unsplash

Excellence in health research

CHSS news

CHSS updates

CHSS Director joins HoC Health and Social Care Committee Expert Panel

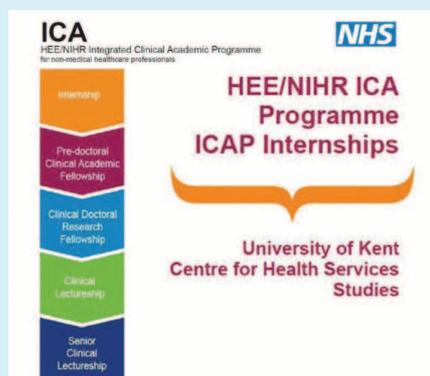
Professor Stephen Peckham joined health and social care colleagues and MPs on the HSC Expert Panel earlier this year. The cross-party House of Commons Committee evaluates government commitments and



according to Stephen is: 'an opportunity to support independent policy scrutiny by holding government to account and helping to improve future health and social care policy'. In July, the Committee published a major report of the Panel's evaluation of maternity services.

[Read more about the Panel.](#)

CHSS funded to deliver 2021-2022 HEKSS/NIHR ICAP Programme



CHSS will again provide the Health Education England Kent Surrey Sussex / National Institute for Health Research Integrated Clinical Academic Programme and Bridging Scheme for nurses, midwives, non-medical applied health professionals and social workers. Contact Dr Julie MacInnes: j.d.macinnes@kent.ac.uk

[Find out more.](#)

CHSS leads prestigious Kent Adult Social Care partnership

CHSS Reader [Ann-Marie Towers](#) has won a multi-centre research award to build research capacity in adult social care. **Kent Research Partnership, jointly led by Ann-Marie and Gina Walton of Kent County Council is one of six national Adult Social Care partnerships funded by the National Institute of Health Research Health Services and Delivery Research Programme (NIHR HS&DR).**



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It involves national and regional partners including the [University of Kent](#) and the [University of Brighton](#), with support from the [Applied Research Collaboration Kent, Surrey and Sussex](#) (ARC KSS), [National Care Forum](#), [UK Home Care Association](#) and [Kent Integrated Care Alliance](#).

The University of Kent team includes Dr Ferhana Hashem, Dr Rasa Mikelyte and Dr Wenjing Zhang (CHSS) with colleagues from the Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) and the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research (SSPSSR).

The project will develop sustainable partnerships to support high quality social care research on topics that matter most in Kent, where social care demand is high. It will invest in and value the social care workforce, to improve care quality and develop a culture of research and evidence-based practice and innovation.

The contract is worth over £1.4m, with £1m for the University of Kent. Some funding has been ring-fenced for three research and training fellowships for social care practitioners to undertake pilot projects on research ideas generated from the 'grass roots'. Communities of Practice will unite people with similar interests and priorities in adult social care. They can access support through online training and access to the latest research evidence.

Involving users and carers

Kent County Council, supported by Dr Amanda Bates (CHSS Patient Experience and Public Involvement Lead) are setting up a Public Involvement and Engagement (PIE) working group. It will involve those using social care and their informal carers in every aspect of the Partnership. Members receive training and support and payment for contributing to the work. The PIE role description is available to [download by clicking this link](#).

View the Partnership's webpage: [Home page | Kent Research Partnership \(pssru.ac.uk\)](#)



NEW! Policy Officer Higher Apprenticeship

The University of Kent partners with NHS organisations in a unique formal qualification for early-career public policy professionals. The Higher Apprenticeship combines on-the-job training with off-the-job learning as an alternative to a university degree. Designed for employees whose role involves:

- Delivering evidence-led advice and recommendations in the interests of local patients, populations and NHS staff

- Managing stakeholder relationships and negotiating in complex political environments
- Drafting high quality briefings and reports, presenting complex information and recommendations clearly to a range of audiences.

Contact: Lavinia Mitton L.Mitton@kent.ac.uk

[Find out more](#)

NIHR Partners' update

NIHR ARC KSS



ARC KSS welcomes Darzi Fellow

Dr Diana Ramsey, Consultant Occupational Therapist/Professional Lead for Learning Disabilities at Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust has been appointed ARC KSS Darzi Fellow in Clinical Leadership 2021/22.



Researchers' Week 2021

ARC KSS Academy hosted their first and highly successful online Researcher's Week in July, with virtual events, presentations and videos from ARC KSS and guest speakers.

Poster competition

Professor Sally Kendall, ARC KSS Academy and Research Capacity Lead, thanks all those researchers who entered the research poster competition. Congratulations to **CHSS Research Associate Dr Rasa Mikelyte** on her winning poster *Optimising the Depression Pathway Enabled by Novel Digital Assessment Technology*. Take a look at all [poster competition entries](#).

'Top Tips' – videos for health and social science researchers

Mixed methods research or Mixed up methods? – **Dr Julie MacInnes**, CHSS, University of Kent
Methodological and statistical detail in your funding applications – **Dr Sabina Hulbert**, CHSS, University of Kent and RDS SE Research Adviser
Searching the literature review – **Dr Melanie Rees-Roberts**, ARC KSS Research Programme Manager.

Watch highlights of other Researchers' Week [presentations and recordings](#).

ARC KSS funds new CHSS research

ARC KSS funded six projects through its 2020 Towards Changing Practice funding call. The new research will help bring positive change to health and social care services, benefiting public, patients, service users and providers.

Closely aligning with [ARC KSS's themes](#), the projects work closely with public and communities.

CHSS takes the lead on two innovative projects; CAVEAT and OPEL Toolkit.

CAVEAT Community and Voluntary organisation Evaluation Toolkit

Dr Julie MacInnes

This project develops and tests a toolkit for voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to use to collect information and data, and show the impact of their activities.



NIHR RDS SE

The 2021 annual [RDS SE newsletter](#) reflects on a year like no other, and features success stories of how RDS SE supported researchers applying for funding for COVID and other research. Their valuable service and comprehensive events programme continued throughout the pandemic, but moved online, allowing for wider access.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in research

April saw a very successful online RDS SE annual stakeholder event focus on EDI. We welcomed Professor Kamlesh Khunti and Esther Mukuka, NIHR Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Video highlights available on the [RDS SE resources webpage](#).

That Co-production Podcast

RDS SE partnered with the NIHR Centre for Engagement and Dissemination to produce 'That Co-production Podcast!', an enjoyable series designed to increase discussion and debate around co-production.

Watch the podcasts on the [RDS SE website](#).

See [p8](#) for more about RDS SE and how to access their free service.

OPEL Toolkit

Dr Rasa Mikelyte

The project will design, then pilot and evaluate an online interactive toolkit. It will allow palliative care service providers to map their hospice at home (or similar) service, and receive guidance on optimising services.



See details of all the [Changing Practice projects](#) on the ARC KSS website.

CHSS hosts HBSC study

Exploring and improving young people's health and wellbeing – HBSC England 2021-24

CHSS jointly leads the World Health Organization (WHO) Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study for England 2021/24. The Department of Health and Social Care, Department for Education funds the £800,000 three-year project.

This unique cross-national international research project is conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe. It will gain new insights into, and increase understanding of young people's health, well-being, health behaviours and their social context.

The HBSC study has been carried out since 1983 in four-year cycles in 51 countries across Europe and North America.

CHSS will host the contract for HBSC England led by Professor Fiona Brooks from the Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand and Dr Ellen Klemra and Professor Sally Kendall from CHSS.

Fiona and Ellen have been leading HBSC England since 2008. They co-lead with support and management from Sally and researchers Tamsyn Eida, Sabina Hulbert and Erica Ferris. Our team have exclusive rights to lead on HBSC England and the PI-s are elected by HBSC International Co-ordinating Committee (HBSC ICC).

The study's overall goal is to make health promotion and health education in schools and among young people generally, more effective. A standard survey questionnaire compares knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of young people aged 11, 13 and 15 years in England with the same age groups in other participating countries.

“The HBSC survey provides a high level of reliable data which can be used in policy development and implementation.”

Mary Grinsted

Senior Analyst, Population Health Analysis, Department of Health and Social Care

The questionnaire will cover behaviour and attitudes around all aspects of health including diet, exercise, smoking, drinking, school, mental health, family, friends and (for 15 year olds) drugs and sex. The 2021-24 study will be especially important in the light of young peoples' experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic.

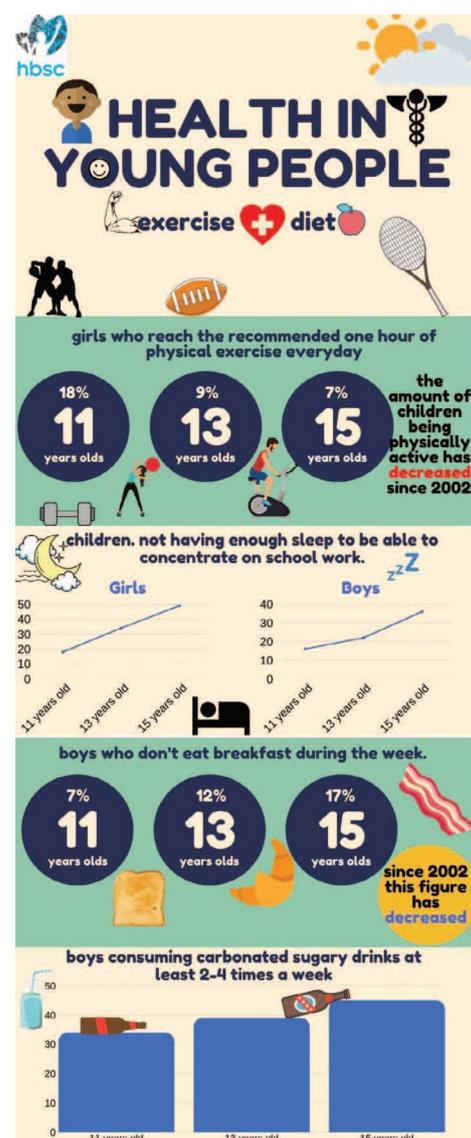
Main aims

- initiate and sustain national and international research on health behaviour and the social context of health in school-aged children
- contribute to theoretical, conceptual and methodological research development in this area
- collect relevant data and help monitor school-aged children's health and health behaviour in England
- share findings with relevant audiences (including researchers, health and education policy makers, health promotion practitioners, teachers, parents and young people) to support health promotion development
- publish blogs and social media commentary on emerging findings from the current HBSC, followed by articles in high impact peer-reviewed journals.

Involving young people as co-researchers

HBSC England is keen to include young people as co-researchers. They can be involved in many ways, such as identifying new research areas, evaluating questions used in the HBSC survey and helping to explain current study findings. Active participation in the research process ensures the study and methodology reflect the experience of being a young person in today's society. The HBSC England team has worked with our young researchers by:

- holding one-off workshops bringing together young people from different backgrounds
- connecting with local schools to form Research Advisory Groups which allow many different young people to be involved
- In the current round of HBSC, we will continue our involvement with young people through the Sussex Partnership NHS Trust-hosted Youth Research Café.



- 1 Professor Fiona Brooks
- 2 Professor Sally Kendall
- 3 Dr Ellen Klemera
- 4 Dr Sabina Hulbert
- 5 Tamsyn Eida
- 6 Erica Ferris

Shaping policy and international impact

HBSC plays a significant role in shaping national and international policy for young people's health and well-being. Findings spanning over a decade have influenced UK policy on mental health and sex and relationships education provision in schools. Every four years WHO publishes cross-national comparisons from the HBSC study. HBSC England team members contributed to the 2012, 2016 and 2020 international reports. They will author sections of the HBSC England National report 2024.

UNICEF used HBSC international data for the Innocenti Report Cards, which produce OECD countries league tables on specific topics. The rankings provide incentive for policymakers on actions required to improve young people's wellbeing, thus improving the UK's placing in international comparisons. This reflects the significance of the 2021-24 HBSC study being located in CHSS, bringing fresh insights that will continue to impact on national and global policy. It also raises many areas for independent study for PhD students and fellowships. HBSC is ongoing, and the next four-year round begins in 2024.

Sally Kendall says: 'we are delighted to be hosting the HBSC study from CHSS. Findings across England will have important implications for how schools, health practitioners and policy makers respond to young people's health issues. This will have particular relevance for young people's lives in the light of their Covid-19 experiences, when school and home life were limited by lack of social contact and reduced educational opportunity'.

HBSC England study on Twitter:
@hbscEngland – please follow us!

Website (under reconstruction):
<https://hbscengland.org>



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Changing Child Health Services during Covid

During Covid, NHS staff had to deliver children's healthcare services in very different ways. Some changes were exciting, others concerning, and this project explored from provider perspectives, how the pandemic changed service delivery. CHSS Senior Research Fellow Dr Erica Gadsby worked with University of Aberdeen, University of Newcastle, University of Sunderland, and the Child Health and Wellbeing Network at North East and North Cumbria.



There are profound implications of sustaining some of these positive changes – for both services and users.

Erica said, 'This research really shows what we can achieve through collaborative working with other university staff and NHS partners. It was rapid and responsive, and generated much discussion with children's healthcare service managers'.

'We worked closely with NHS Scotland North in Scotland, and the Child Health and Wellbeing Network in north east England. They engage young people, parents and carers in service improvement and played an important role in shaping the research and discussing emerging themes'.

Watch a findings webinar.

They interviewed healthcare staff across two regions during the critical pandemic response period. Despite stress and anxiety, the pandemic offered staff an opportunity for positive lasting change. Staff and managers learned about new ways to work that could lead to improved services and outcomes in the future:

- practitioners felt empowered and listened to by decision makers
- barriers to change were lifted
- joint working and some new ways of working were seen as more efficient.



CHSS people

Keeping doors open during Lockdown

Ros Clark, public member, CHSS Opening Doors to Research Group

CHSS set up the Opening Doors to Research Group (ODRG) in 2016 to ensure that we are embedding patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) at all stages of research. Patient Experience and Public Involvement Lead Amanda Bates has led the Group since its inception, supported by the CHSS PPIE team. Ros Clark has been a member for around four years. She talks here about her experience of the group and public involvement during the challenging times of Covid-19.

Ros, tell us about yourself and how you came to join the group?

I heard about Opening Doors through my friend. I was keen to get involved, because health and social care is my 'thing'. I have a BA in Social Sciences and an MA in Education. I had little research experience but was a social worker and then a lecturer in health and social care. I joined after a chat with Amanda, who is wonderful. I really enjoy the group and our quarterly meetings where CHSS researchers present their projects to us.

What kind of CHSS research activity have you been involved with?

I have worked on a couple of CHSS project applications. I have experience in the voluntary sector and have recently joined Julie MacInnes' funded CAVEAT study steering group (see p3). I've reviewed several Plain English Summaries and I attended training and workshop sessions during the pandemic. It is great to keep learning with the group.

Were you in touch with CHSS and ODR members during the pandemic?

There were of course no meetings on campus and I missed them. I attended nearly everything going online, but face-to-face meetings are better. Apart from the friend who introduced me to Opening Doors, I have not been in contact with other members.

How was technology for you?

Initially challenging because my desktop PC used to play up! Over time, I got sorted on my tablet and am fairly competent with that and IT generally. It helps to have somebody at home who has a business degree! I have used several platforms and am happiest with Zoom, which I have also used with the University of the Third Age (U3A).

How was your experience of being involved different during lockdown? What was good and bad?

I didn't like the lack of social contact. I really missed the face-to-face Opening Doors meetings and our little pre-meeting chats in small groups over coffee. Still, it was a real positive that meetings went ahead online. Researchers could still present ideas to us and get on with what they need to do. The worst thing about virtual meetings is the challenge of getting to say something on Zoom sometimes. Amanda does an amazing job managing the technology and tries to make sure everybody has a fair chance to speak. I cannot say enough good things about her!

What has changed since the pandemic in terms of how you see your role with ODR and your feelings about research?

My role itself has not changed but it perhaps feels more important now. There is lots of research to be done. Covid accelerated changes and things are moving faster than they would have. People such as teachers and NHS staff have had to be reactive and just get on with changing how they work without any practice or theory behind it. It is vital that research gets done and influences policy. We need the evidence on how it has worked and the impacts of it all.

Are the public now more switched on about research? How can researchers continue to engage people in the research process?

I think the public are more switched on about health nowadays and I think those that were engaged with research before are more so since the pandemic. I know people with no previous interest who are now really into the data and stuff. The ODRG can hone in on that and reach out to under represented groups. The retired professionals among us have lots of valuable experience as service users and members of our communities, but it would also be lovely to bring some more young people in. We are working in the group to increase diversity and representation through our PPIE strategy and other initiatives. In July, I attended a CHSS/PSSRU online workshop on how best to involve people in research, and good discussion and ideas came out. I personally think self-interest is a great motivator, so targeting groups about issues particularly relevant to them is a good way to reach a wide demographic.



To engage the public, researchers need to try to involve people with relevant recent experience and a stake in the research to be part of that study. People will do it if they are interested. There are many current issues, such as eating disorders or mental health problems following disrupted schooling. Targeting the right groups, such as sixth form colleges, could help bring young people into research at an early stage.

What are you hoping for in terms of your future involvement with ODR?

I am looking forward to working on the CAVEAT steering group for the next two years. I recently reviewed a Plain English Summary that sparked my interest and would like to get involved if that project is funded, fingers crossed! I really enjoy our ODRG meetings and look forward to getting together in person again!

Beyond research, what hobbies do you enjoy? Were you able to keep them up in lockdown?

I really missed fitness classes, quizzes and the mah-jong group. I didn't really take up anything new, but watched far more television and played more games on the computer. I read more than usual, played the piano most days and kept up my writing – I joined a U3A short story group earlier this year. I spent more time walking (it is one of my main pastimes and I lead some groups in normal times) but initially could only walk with one person. I worked a lot in my garden and I revisited genealogy, tracking down some very far distant grandparents!

If you would like to know more about the Opening Doors Group, please email odrg@kent.ac.uk

Featured CHSS publications

Enabling NHS staff to do more research



Identifying and improving the capacity of healthcare staff to conduct research

February 2021

Together we will beat cancer



Cancer Research UK: Creating Time for Research: Identifying and improving the capacity of healthcare staff to conduct research.

Stephen Peckham, Tamsyn Eida, Wenjing Zhang, Ferhana Hashem, Sarah Spencer, Sally Kendall et al (2021)

Studies suggest that when led by professionals who will use it, research can improve clinical practice and enhance job satisfaction. There is growing evidence that patients treated in research-active hospitals get better quality care. However, there are concerns that NHS staff are often unable to engage with research as much as they would wish, with insufficient time, funding and inadequate organisational support to undertake research.

'*Creating Time for Research*' brings together evidence from a three-year study funded by Cancer Research UK led by Professor Stephen Peckham and a CHSS team. They worked with Kent Surrey and Sussex Clinical Research Network to discover what barriers and facilitators enable or hinder research by NHS staff.

Whilst all health service staff come up against barriers to research, the picture varies across professions. This comprehensive report presents strategies and practical solutions to boost research capacity within the workforce, optimise the research environment and support research at individual, organisation and system levels.

Read the full report on the CRUK website.

Selected CHSS publications 2020-21

Gadsby E W, Hotham S, Eida T, Lawrence C, Merritt R (2020) Impact of a community-based pilot intervention to tackle childhood obesity: a 'whole-system approach' case study. *BMC Public Health* 20, 1818 E-ISSN 1471-2458

Forbes L, Peckham S, George A (2020) Improving and protecting health in England needs more than the NHS. *Lancet* 396 (10263) ISSN 0140-6736

Mikelyte R, Abrahamson V, Hill E & Wilson P (2020) Factors influencing trends in opioid prescribing for older people: a scoping review. *Primary Health Care Research & Development* 21 E36

Billings J, Rees-Roberts M, MacInnes J, Saloniki E, Jaswal S, Mikelyte R, Borthwick R (2020) Optimising the Depression Pathway Enabled by Novel Digital Assessment Technology. *CHSS Final Evaluation Report*

Duddy C, Wong G, **Gadsby E W**, Krska J & Hibberd V (2021) NHS Health Check programme: a protocol for a realist review. *BMJ Open* 11 e048937 ISSN 2044-6055

Deluca P, **Coulton S**, Alam M F, Boniface S, Cohen D et al (2021) Brief interventions to prevent excessive alcohol use in adolescents at low-risk presenting to Emergency Departments: Three-arm, randomised trial of effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. *International Journal of Drug Policy* 93 103113 ISSN 0955-3959

Hashem F, Jaswal S K, Marchand C, Forbes L J L, Srinivasan N, Bates A & Peckham S (2021) Incorporating the interaction between health and work into the undergraduate medical curriculum – a qualitative evaluation of a teaching pilot in English medical schools. *Education for Primary Care* ISSN 1473-9879

Zhang W (2021) Market-Oriented Policies on Care for Older People in Urban China: Examining the Experiment-Based Policy Implementation Process. *Journal of Social Policy* ISSN 0047-2794

Strohmaier S, Homans K M, **Hulbert S**, Crutch S J et al (2021) Arts-based interventions for people living with dementia: Measuring 'in the moment' wellbeing with the Canterbury Wellbeing Scales. *Wellcome Open Research* ISSN 2398-502X (In press)

Gousia K & Towers A M (2021) Unmet social care needs of people living with and beyond cancer: prevalence and predictors from an English longitudinal survey. *Psycho-Oncology* ISSN 1057-9249. E-ISSN 1099-1611

Hedayioglu J, Marsden S, Sackree A & Oliver D (2021) Paid carers' understanding and experiences of meaningful involvement in bereavement for people with intellectual disability when a significant other is dying. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities* ISSN 1360-2322 E-ISSN 1468-3148

Wilson P, **Billings J, MacInnes J, Mikelyte R, Welch E & Checkland K (2021)** Investigating the nature and quality of locally commissioned evaluations of the NHS Vanguard programme: an evidence synthesis. *Health Research Policy and Systems* 19 (63) E-ISSN 1478-4505

Hammond J, **Bailey S**, Gore O, Checkland K et al (2021) The problem of success and failure in public-private innovation partnerships *Journal of Social Policy* ISSN 0047-2794 E-ISSN 1469-7823

Mills A & Peckham S (2021) Annual NO₂ as a Predictor of Hourly NO₂ Variability: Do Defra UK's Heuristics Make Sense? *Atmosphere* 12 (3) p 385 E-ISSN 2073-4433

Saddi FdC, Forbes L J L, Peckham S Guest editorial: Policy challenges and innovative analyses of payment for performance in health care *Journal of Health Organization and Management* 2021 35(3): 245-248 <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHOM-05-2021-476>

Forbes L J L, Forbes H, Checkland K, Sutton M, Peckham S. Changes in patient experience associated with growth and collaboration in general practice: observational study using data from the UK GP Patient Survey *British Journal of General Practice* 2020; 70 (701): e906-e915. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp20X713429>

Kendall S (2021) Primary Care Research – Influencing and Implementing Into Policy. *Slovenian Journal of Public Health*, 60(3) p138-144

Details of all CHSS research is available on our website: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/research/current.html

CHSS staff news

Information about all CHSS staff is available on our website: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/staff
Details of current vacancies and studentships: www.kent.ac.uk/chss/vacancies.html

Congratulations!

University of Kent Research Prize successes

CHSS Research Associate Dr Rasa Mikelyte was joint winner of the *Starting Research prize*. Hear Rasa in the video. [Research and Innovation Prizes 2021](#) (5mins in)



NIHR Research Design Service SE Kent team received an Honourable Mention in the *Research and Innovation Community Prize*. [Research and Innovation Prizes 2021](#) (37mins in)

Rasa also received a well-deserved *NIHR School for Social Care Research Career Development Award*.

Module Leader Dr Wenjing Zhang and CHSS colleagues jointly won the University of Kent teaching prize for the *Year in Data Analytics* programme.

CHSS PhD successes:

Congratulations to Dr Boniface Oyugi, Dr Nadia Brookes, Dr Emily McKean and Dr Aida Malovic.

Very well done to everyone!

New Staff Members

Dunishiya De Silva
Research and Innovation Co-ordinator,
NIHR ARC KSS



Rianne Dubois
Research and Innovation Co-ordinator,
NIHR ARC KSS



Erica Ferris
Research Assistant



Kate Gee
Programme Manager, NIHR RDS SE



Stuart Jeffery
Research Fellow, NIHR ARC KSS
Lead, Beneficial Changes Network



Abosede Lawal
Research Assistant



Emily McKean
Research Assistant



Jenny Monkhouse
Research Assistant



Visiting Research Fellows

Dr Kanchana Dilrukshi Deerasinghe and Dr Ranga Sabhapathige. Visiting Research Fellows Dilrukshi and Ranga joined CHSS in Summer to complete Post MD training in Health Care Management.



Special commendation for Pilgrims' Research

Congratulations to Pilgrims Hospice for a *Hospice UK Awards special commendation* for research undertaken in recent years. CHSS has worked in partnership with Pilgrims on many of their research projects, including the OPEL Hospice at Home Study.

NIHR | Research Design Service
South East

RDS SE – FREE advice for health and social care researchers

New to research?
Need help developing an idea?

RDS SE Weekly Drop In Sessions can help you develop an idea into a funding application. Book an hour with our friendly advisers. Details in our [online events programme](#).

www.rds-se.nihr.ac.uk

About CHSS

CHSS is a centre of research excellence carrying out high quality research into a wide range of health systems and health services issues at local, national and international levels. CHSS also supports and advises health care staff to develop and undertake research projects. CHSS collaborates with a wide range of partners in Kent, the UK and in other countries to improve the links between research, policy and practice.

Please see the CHSS website for details of current and previous research and publications.