Imperial College London

Mohn Centre

for Children's Health and Wellbeing

The Mohn Centre Memo
Quarterly Newsletter
Issue 2 - December 2023

Welcome from Dr Dougal Hargreaves, Houston Reader in Population Child Health.

Dear colleague,

I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to you all in this latest edition of 'The Mohn Centre Memo'. As a passionate advocate for the health and wellbeing of our youngest community members, I'm pleased to share some exciting updates with you.

This year has been marked by significant milestones and achievements, thanks to the dedication and collaborative spirit of the Mohn Centre.. I am particularly thrilled to announce that we have been awarded funding from NHS England for an innovative project focused on investigating the barriers that children and young people face when engaging in research. This funding, achieved through a collaborative effort with numerous community partners, underscores our commitment to breaking down obstacles and promoting active participation in research for the benefit of our future generations.

We have also had the pleasure of hosting successful events including our community film screening in September and the NIHR School of Public Health Research: Children, Young People and Families symposium in November, more of which you can read below. These events are invaluable for collaboration, developing a sense of community and showcasing ongoing research nationally. Our monthly 'Mohn Mingle' sessions have continued to be a highlight, providing a unique platform for researchers of all levels to come together in a collaborative and supportive environment. These networking sessions have proven instrumental in forging connections, sharing insights, and fostering a sense of community within our diverse team.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, I am grateful for all the support we've had from each member of the Mohn Centre. Together, we have made significant strides in advancing children's health and wellbeing through research and community engagement.

As we approach the end of 2023, I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead, including the new discoveries, partnerships, and positive impact we will make in 2024 and beyond.
Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to the Mohn Centre for Children's Health and Wellbeing. Together, we are shaping a healthier and brighter future for our children.

Warm regards

Dougal

Research updates

Health in Schools - visit to St Bernadette's Primary School in Northwest London

Under half of children in England (47%) meet the recommended physical activity guidelines of 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity per day, 30 minutes of which should take place during the school day. As part of the 'Health in Schools' theme of the Child Health Unit, two cohort studies (iMprOVE and HAPPY) aim to understand physical activity, mental health, and educational attainment of children in primary schools that take part in greater levels of physical activity compared to their peers, and how much the school environment encourages children to be physically active.

The team have been working with 40 primary schools across Greater London since 2021, 17 of which are in North West London. iMprOVE invites children to wear a wrist-worn physical activity monitor to capture different intensities of physical activity. One of the schools involved, St Bernadette's in Harrow, recently invited the iMprOVE team back to the school to deliver an assembly on physical activity and why it is important for health.

Dr Bina Ram, Research Associate and lead researcher for iMprOVE, said;
"Children spend approximately a third of their time at school, not only are school settings ideal for reaching most children, but they are a crucial way to engage children in public health research. We have had a great time visiting these schools, building relationships with the teachers, and children and their parents/guardians which has all contributed to the success of recruiting just over 1000 children into the iMprOVE study."

Find out more about the experience from the student's point of view by watching their weekly news report.

Find out more about the iMprOVE study on the Primary Care and Public Health website. If you are interested in learning more about how to successfully engage schools in research, please register your interest by emailing mohncentre@imperial.ac.uk.

Mohn Spotlight: PhD blog

We hear from Dr Arrash Yassaee, Clinical Research Fellow, on his PhD research at the Mohn Centre.

"I'm a paediatric registrar currently undertaking my PhD at Imperial College. Alongside my clinical training, I've been fortunate to spend the last three years working in the medtech industry, leading the R&D for a global digital health company headquartered in London.

"I've seen first-hand how medical software is rapidly changing. One of the most exciting changes is moving away from lots of individual 'point solutions' with limited scope, towards much more flexible platforms which can be configured to meet the needs of any care pathway. For example, rather than patients having to use separate asthma and diabetes apps, new software offers an option where a single platform can cover either or even both pathways. Whilst this is great for patients, and great for integrating care, there is still no consensus is how we should evaluate, assess and thus certify this new generation of technology. This is what I want to focus on in my PhD.

"I've really enjoyed presenting and listening to the talks offered at the Mohn Centre. Hearing how colleagues are tackling complex research challenges has been a great source of inspiration as I develop my own methods and analysis. I'm looking forward to broadening my understanding over the next year and particularly interested to hear how colleagues are evaluating complex and changing interventions. You never know where an idea from another discipline can apply to your work!".

Lights, camera, impact: The views of North West London's children and young people are championed in short films by the community and the Mohn Centre

Over the past two years, the Mohn Centre for Children's Health and Wellbeing has been working with children, young people and parents from four community groups: Old Oak Primary School, Nova Family Programme, The White City Youth Club (Part of the Harrow Club Family) and West Thames College.

Together with community partners, the Centre has supported children and young people to document the issues in their urban environment that they felt were shaping their health and wellbeing. The children and young people took photographs, created maps, recorded their views and debated topics.

The Mohn Centre has transformed all this content into a series of short films representing the key themes that have emerged through this work.

On Thursday 21 September the films were premiered to community partners, Imperial College London, local policymakers and other members of the local community.

Watch the short films on the Mohn Centre website.

Successful Annual Symposium Addresses Child Health at the Mohn Centre

On 22 November 2023, the Mohn Centre for Children's Health and Wellbeing hosted the "Children, Young People and Families Annual Symposium." The event, organised by colleagues at the National Institute of Health and Care Research (NIHR) School for Public Health Research (SPHR) and the Mohn Centre, brought together leading experts, researchers, and professionals across England dedicated to improving child health.

As well as featuring talks from colleagues from across England, we welcomed special guest speaker Dr Jeanelle de Gruchy Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England and lead for the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities at the Department of Health and Social Care who shared her insights on recent trends in child public health.

Find out more on the Mohn website.

Mohn Centre affiliation

As colleagues across Imperial continue to make contributions on research that will benefit children and young people, we kindly request that you include the affiliation of the Mohn Centre in any future work that you publish. By doing so, you not only acknowledge our collaborative effort but also help us in disseminating and communicating your research outputs effectively.

In your author affiliation:

Mohn Centre for Children's Health and Wellbeing, School of Public Health, Imperial College London, London, United Kingdom

Upcoming events

Mohn/PaeCH Winter Lecture: 'Kindness in Healthcare' by Dr Bob Klaber OBE

Thursday 14 December 16:00 – 18:30
G16, Sir Alexander Fleming Building, South Kensington

Mohn Mingle: Transdisciplinary research

Tuesday 30 January 2024 15:00 – 16:00

Mohn Mingle: Youth activism
Tuesday 27 February 2024 15:00 – 16:00

The Mohn Centre Monthly Academic Research and Networking Meetings have successfully launched this year and colleagues have taken to calling them the 'Mohn Mingle'. We have some exciting topics planned for next year, as well as speaker opportunities so do get in touch if you are interested in presenting at one of our sessions.

Opportunities

New post at the Mohn Centre: Lecturer in Early Life Epidemiology

An exciting opportunity has arisen for the appointment of a Lecturer in Early Life Epidemiology, a newly created post within the recently established Mohn Centre for Children's Health & Wellbeing at Imperial College London.

The successful candidate will play a key role in developing the cross-disciplinary research programme of the Centre and build collaborations with academic, government, industry, and voluntary sector partners. The post holder will utilise health and environmental datasets within the MRC Centre for Environment and Health, and work with partners to build appropriate, effective and relevant child and partner involvement throughout the research cycle.

Find out more information about the post on the Imperial website.

MRC Public Health Intervention Development (PHIND) Scheme

The Medical Research Council's (MRC) Public Health Intervention Development Scheme (PHIND) supports projects that will develop innovative new interventions that address a UK or global public health challenge. Proposals should address the early stage of development of new interventions including qualitative and quantitative primary research, developing theory and designing the intervention.

Projects typically span 12 – 18 months, with a maximum value of £150K.

Applications close 19 March 2024.

Find out more information about the call on the UKRI website.

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NIHR Climate Change and Health

Climate change has been identified as the biggest threat to population health of the 21st century but presents opportunity to redefine the social and environmental determinants of health. NIHR's recent call aims to understand "What are the impacts of local authority led interventions aimed at climate change mitigation and/or adaptation on health and inequalities?".

Applications close 23 April 2024.

Find out more on the NIHR website.

Waterloo Foundation Child Development Research Grants

Grants for research into the psychological and behavioural development of children, and particularly in certain neurodevelopmental conditions and the factors that influence them. The Foundation funds projects into the psychological and behavioural development of children, and particularly in certain neurodevelopmental conditions and the factors that influence them. The spring 2024 call focuses on areas relating to the diet and /or microbiome.

Projects typically span 12 – 36 months, and granted £40K - £65K.

Applications close Spring 2024.

Find out more on the Waterloo Foundation website.

NIHR Clinical Prediction Models for Early Onset Neonatal Infection

What is the accuracy of clinical prediction models for early-onset neonatal infection in the UK and what is their effectiveness in guiding management in the baby?

Applications close 22 May 2024.

Find out more on the NIHR website.

Department of Health and Social Care: Policy Research Programme

The Policy Research Programme (PRP) is a national programme of research dedicated to providing an effective evidence base for policymaking in the Department of Health (DH). PRP is an applied programme and the results are disseminated and used in many ways. Given the central purpose of the PRP, the outputs of its commissioned research are primarily used to provide the evidence base for a very wide range of policy activity.

Deadline for applications 18 June 2024.

Find out more on the NIHR website.

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If you have any suggestions on content for the Mohn Centre Memo from opportunities to research updates, resources or news articles please contact Charlotte Gredal, Mohn Centre Scientific Manager c.gredal@ic.ac.uk

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