Welcome

Hello and welcome to this edition of the Faculty of Health and Medicine postgraduate newsletter. Lancaster University is home to a thriving ecosystem of interdisciplinary research and so we thought it would be useful to introduce you to members across your postgraduate community, not just those in your division. This time, we are focusing on Lancaster Medical School, with introductions to some key staff members and an alumni Q&A.

A message from Postgraduate Programmes Co-ordinator, Nicola:

First and foremost, welcome to the Faculty of Health and Medicine postgraduate community.

My role is Lancaster Medical School Postgraduate Programmes Co-ordinator and I administer all the postgraduate programmes in the school, so I get to know all our PG students very well. If you ever need any support please do get in touch with me.

Myself and everyone at Lancaster Medical School look forward to you joining us soon.

Find out more

You can find out more about the Faculty of Health and Medicine and your new division on our website.

Fees and funding information is available on the University website.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

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Connect with us

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Hi, I'm **Dr Tom Keegan**, the Director of Postgraduate Research and a Senior Lecturer in Epidemiology at Lancaster Medical School.

My role as Director of Postgraduate Research involves ensuring that all students have the best available supervision, and that we are appropriately looking after your progression from admission through to submission or programme completion.

I am also a PhD supervisor, with students carrying out their projects in areas of common interest. My principal research interests are based in environmental and occupational epidemiology. Briefly, this is the study of how the physical environment and the work environment affect people’s health. More often than not these studies are about long term health, so we look at the effects of the environment or work on the chance of getting a chronic disease, such as cancer or cardiovascular disease.

**Lancaster Medical School is a great place to get involved in research.**

We have leading academics in epidemiology, statistics, social sciences, medical sciences, and medical ethics and law. With their research stimulating a variety of postgraduate research projects.

When you join Lancaster Medical School for your Master’s or PhD, you will find a lively group of academics and researchers ready to teach and collaborate with you.

We are located in the brand new Health Innovation One Building, that sits just a short walking distance from main campus. From here, we watch as our graduate students develop from new students into expert researchers, forming as they do, their own networks of friends and colleagues.
Meet the team

Each member of the supervision team at Lancaster Medical School is an active researcher whose work makes a real difference in the world. Here is just a few members of that team:

**Professor Jo Knight**

Professor Jo Knight is a Professor in Applied Data Science and a member of the Universities Data Science Institute.

Jo supervises a number of students undertaking Statistics and Epidemiology PhDs and is looking forward to supervising students on the newly opened Health Data Science option.

The research she undertakes with her PhD students is focused on using routinely collected health data to understand a range of topics such as aetiology and health care utilisation. She works with a range of data including sets relating to neurology and respiratory services, and care home residents.

**Dr John Appleby**

Dr John Appleby is a philosopher and he works on theoretical and applied issues in moral and political philosophy.

His current work focuses on:

+ The ethics of reproduction (especially the ethics of the donation of reproductive materials)

+ The ethics and law of medicine and environmental sustainability

+ The philosophy of sport
Dr Chris Gaffney

Dr Chris Gaffney is a Lecturer in Integrative Physiology and leads on our Sports and Exercise Science postgraduate programmes.

His research seeks to understand the basic physiology and metabolism that underpins disease, health, and athletic performance.

Chris’ research encompasses molecular work using cells and the model organism C. elegans, through to human-based trials. At Masters level, he has supervised projects in strength and conditioning and in interventions to improve control of blood sugar in those with diabetes.

At PhD level he currently supervises six students with a range of physiology-related projects. This includes:

+ Three students investigating exercise and nutrition interventions (known as prehabilitation) to try and improve patient outcomes from surgery

+ A student examining strategies to improve the health of surgeons.

+ A student looking at the molecular mechanisms of Alzheimer’s disease in cells and C. elegans.

+ A student exploring ground-breaking technologies to monitor glucose levels non-invasively.

Dr Emanuele Giorgi

Dr Emanuele Giorgi is a Senior Lecturer in Biostatistics, Director of the Master’s in Health Data Science and leader of the statistical and epidemiological research group the Centre for Health Information, Computation and Statistics (CHICAS).

His research area is geospatial statistics for global health and he develops and collaborates on novel statistical methods to map disease risk.

Emanuele has previously held the role of Royal Statistical Society Coordinator for the partnership with the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences and has joined several capacity-building initiatives of statistical expertise in the developing world.

He is currently supervising several PhD students on projects spanning different areas of global health research, from tropical disease mapping to the development of statistical methods for the analysis of serology data. All of the projects are carried out in collaboration with external partners to Lancaster, including scientists from the World Health Organization and research institutions in South America and sub-Saharan Africa.
Dr Cliff Shelton is a consultant, executive editor of the Journal ‘Anaesthesia Reports’ and senior clinical lecturer in anaesthesia at Lancaster Medical School.

He completed the MSc in Clinical Research as an Academic Clinical Fellow (a junior doctor who develops skills in research alongside clinical training).

Hi Cliff. Please can you tell us about your experience of completing a Master’s within Lancaster Medical School?

The MSc was very important in my development as a clinical academic. As well as giving me the skills and knowledge to thrive in this challenging field, I made contacts and formed friendships that continue to form part of my academic network. The mentoring was very good – the course director even gave me a mock interview for my doctoral training fellowship.

What skills and knowledge did the Master’s help you to develop?

Knowledge on research methods, governance, ethics, grant applications; skills in academic writing, literature review, research analysis. I was very happy with the breadth of education provided, together with the opportunity to focus on a specific area of interest through the practice-based dissertation.

What did your research project look at?

I did an observational, qualitative study of how doctors use ultrasound scanners to help with the insertion of central lines – large drips that are typically inserted into the veins of the neck. This is a relatively high-risk procedure which ultrasound should make safer.

I was interested to know how this ‘safe’ technology impacts decision making, how it is used in practice, and how trainee doctors learn to use it. This gave me a grounding in observational research in the workplace, which I later applied in my PhD, and in my educational role as director of clinical skills I have drawn on my research findings in the development of our undergraduate teaching on ultrasound-guided vascular access.

What is your current role or what are you working on at the moment?

Most of my time is spent doing clinical work at Wythenshawe Hospital in Manchester, and academic work at Lancaster Medical School. My research interests concern patient safety and care quality in anaesthesia and peri-operative medicine, environmental sustainability in healthcare, and anaesthesia for patients living with frailty.

I am the director of simulation and clinical skills for the undergraduate medical programme at Lancaster, and deliver teaching on physiology, pain, and acute illness management.