

George's Academic Training (GAT) Newsletter

July 2018

NIHR ACF and CL posts awarded for 2019 recruitment

GOOD NEWS FOR ST GEORGE'S!!

NIHR have confirmed that we have been awarded the following IAT posts for 2019 recruitment:-

Formula posts - ACFs in Pharmacology and Rheumatology, CL in Infectious Diseases

Competition posts - ACFs in Dermatology/Genetics and Cardiology

Feedback from the NIHR panel noted that 'the partnership now has the Athena Swan Silver award and is able to host IAT posts'.



SGUL has received an Athena SWAN institutional silver award in recognition of our commitment to gender equality. The Principal acknowledged that this "tremendous achievement would not have been possible without the hard work of those who contributed to the application submitted last December. As well as signalling that St George's is an institution that cares deeply about equality, the award also allows access to opportunities for National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) funding".

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News from our Academic Foundation year 2 doctors

Chantal Cox-George, AFP Year 2

Chantal recently had a publication go to [press in the BMJ SRH](#) and this has received a good deal of [media interest](#). A version of the paper was also presented at the RCP in May.

The screenshot shows the article page for "I, Sex Robot: the health implications of the sex robot industry" in the journal BMJ Sexual & Reproductive Health. The article is by Chantal Cox-George and Susan Bewley. It is an editorial, free to read, and has a DOI of 10.1136/bmjshr-2017-200012. The page includes a sidebar with navigation options like Article Text, Article info, Citation Tools, Share, Responses, Article metrics, and Alerts. The main content area lists author affiliations: 1. St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, London, UK; 2. Women's Health Academic Centre, King's College London, London, UK. It also features a correspondence to Dr Chantal Cox-George and a statistics section from Altmetric.com showing 206 mentions: 19 news outlets, 4 blogs, 32 tweets, and 2 redites.

News from our trainees

Kate Stenson – NIHR Clinical Lecturer in Vascular Surgery

Kate was appointed as a lecturer in April 2017 having completed an MD(Res) at SGUL under the supervision of Professors Matt Thompson, Peter Holt and Ian Loftus. Her thesis was titled "The use of endovascular aneurysm sealing for abdominal aneurysm". She is currently conducting her postdoctoral research on the treatment of complex aortic aneurysms alongside clinical training as an ST6.

In the past year, Kate's research has been published in the Journal of Vascular Surgery, the Journal of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery and the British Journal of Surgery. With her colleagues at St George's Vascular Institute, she has published work in Circulation and the European Journal of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery.

Kate has been very active on the international podium circuit, having given presentations at a number of prestigious international conferences, including the Veith Symposium in New York, the Leipzig Interventional Course (pictured), the Annual Meeting of the European Society for Vascular Surgery in Copenhagen and the Charing Cross Symposium here in London, where she was awarded a Certificate of Merit for her outstanding presentation. She will be speaking later this month at the Annual Meeting of the British Society of Endovascular Therapy, where she has been shortlisted for the Aortic Prize.



Here at SGUL, Kate regularly gives lectures and seminars for the medical students, as well as clinical teaching in small groups in theatre, clinics and on the ward. She has given talks to the SGUL Surgical Society and at a GAT workshop. She also supervises 3 PhD students and medical student projects, one of whom won a prize at a national student conference for her presentation.

News from our trainees

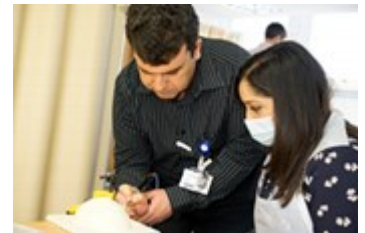
Dr Gavin Guy, Clinical Lecturer/Subspecialty Trainee in Fetal Medicine

An exciting collaboration with the Fetal Medicine Department at St George's Hospital and Congenica Laboratories is about to begin. The "Non-Invasive Prenatal Genetic Screening" (NPGS) study aims to identify gene defects that cause fetal abnormalities from a simple blood sample. Currently, an invasive tissue sample is needed from the fetus to diagnose a genetic disorder, but this carries a 1% risk of miscarriage and is also not very pleasant for the mother. The new method will use fragments of fetal DNA (known as cell-free fetal-DNA), that are found in maternal blood during pregnancy, to detect known genetic disorders on a range of fetal abnormalities diagnosed at ultrasound. The study aims to recruit at least 100 patients from St George's, and seeks to develop an accurate test with the help of Congenica's Bioinformatics expertise that is co-located within the university. The study will also be offered nationwide via the NIHR clinical studies portfolio. For more information, please contact Dr Gavin Guy, Subspecialty Trainee in Fetal Medicine / Lecturer via email: gavinguy@nhs.net.

As part of the Professional Education portfolio, **Mr Anan Shtaya, NIHR Clinical Lecturer in Neurosurgery**, ran a half day Neurosurgery High Speed Drilling Course on Friday 9th March.

How it was put together

Mr Shtaya believes that developing drilling skills is an essential operative skills in Neurosurgery (curriculum requirement) and that all Junior trainees should have the opportunity to simulate before working on patients.



A programme was put together to address the basics of drilling with Mr Erlick Pereira and Mr James Laban participating in the talks and practicals. The course was sponsored by Stryker who provided a talk, all equipment and catering for the day. Nikki George, Professional Education Manager provided all administrative support and logistics prior, during and after the course finished. Anan is keen to run the course on an annual basis and details will be posted on the [website](#) as soon as dates are agreed.

Attendees, feedback

The course was aimed at Junior Neurosurgery Trainees (ST1-4) but due to interest this was opened up to Physician's Associate colleagues. Feedback from the course was very positive and some comments from the course are below:

"I would recommend this to my neurosurgery doctor and PA colleagues. I think it would be beneficial to pen this up to other allied healthcare professionals such as Pas"

"Taught me everything so I can be more comfortable"

"Well organised and sufficient time for sessions"

"good exposure to practical aspects"

"Wow!!"

"As a newly qualified physician associate I felt that I was able to keep pace with the pace and level given"

St George's actively supports academics in developing [short courses in their areas of expertise](#), if you feel there is a gap in a particular area or you have an idea. For help and advice, please contact the Professional Education Manager, [Nikki George](#).

News from our trainees

Cristina Suarez Fernandez - Clinical Lecturer in Medical Microbiology

I am an Academic Clinical Lecturer in Infectious diseases and microbiology and I am currently in the last year heading to my CCT date. During my clinical lecturer post I have divided the academic and clinical time in different ways, usually in blocks (ie alternating several months in a row of only academic work and several months of only clinical work). However, in the last few months I have been alternating every week 2 days of academic/research time at St George's University with 3 days of clinical time per week at the University College Hospital. Although it is quite intense, it is allowing me to keep a certain level of academic activity and make progress in my projects while doing the clinical training I need to complete my specialist training.



Despite being a very limited amount of time per week, actually a fair amount of work can be done. For example, I have been supervising since August 2017 three SGUL BsC student's projects. This has involved designing the research projects, supervising the writing of the proposals, organise the laboratory for the wet projects, teach interview and basic statistical techniques needed for the collection and data analysis, organise induction in the laboratory and teach the basic laboratory techniques they needed for the project, often helping with data collection, supervising data analysis, dissertation writing and preparation for the viva currently.

Since my ACL post started, I have been heavily involved in the bacteraemia project within the NIHR-funded Collaborations in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) South London programme (Infection Theme). We are working on understanding the epidemiology of invasive Gram negative infection in South London and on improving the current workflows and bacteraemia pathways across three sites (St George's, Kings College and St Thomas' hospitals). We have collected a large cohort of patients admitted with invasive Gram negative infection and a large collection of data to understand how these infections are dealt with at each of the sites and how we can improve their management. This is part of an ambitious projects that aims to introduce rapid antimicrobial susceptibility testing methods in our laboratories to reduce the turnaround time of relevant microbiology results that should have an impact in the treatment we offer to patients with these severe infections. I designed the study and all the tools used, coordinated the data collection, helped with recruitment and supervision of the clinical fellows working in the project among other things. My current focus is to complete the data analysis and write the manuscripts from the first phase of the project. I am also supervising the adaptation of the data collection tools for the second phase, which is now undergoing. Finally, I am in charge of the data analysis for this project, which is per se a very important piece of work.

Linked to the CLAHRC, I have also applied and been nominated a PPI (Public and Patient Involvement) Champion for the Infection theme. This means that I am in charge of of recruiting users, patients and members of the public with interest in become part of our research team and engage them with our future research projects. For that, I have established a contacts network with local/regional patients, PPI groups and relevant CCGs in the catchment area of St George's Hospital. I also gave a talk at the recent PPI open research day organised by the CLAHRC South London and I am proud to say that I organised the first ever PPI group for Gram negative infection workshop at St George's in March, which was successfully attended by an enthusiastic group of users with plenty of ideas to improve the research we do.

In this year, I have been awarded the Hospital for Infection Society (HIS) Mike Emmerson award for young investigators. This funds will be used to study transmission of mainly Gram negative bacteria between patients and the hospital environment by using a whole genome sequencing approach. This will be done by comparing the genomes of bacteria isolated from patients' samples and their immediate environment and will help to understand how they transmit. This should help to improve the preventive measures currently in place to avoid transmission of resistant bacteria by identifying precisely which bacteria / resistant determinants are actually transmitted. By using genome sequencing we would improve the detection of transmission events, which is not possible using less discriminant traditional methods.

Cristina Suarez Fernandez - Clinical Lecturer in Medical Microbiology

Lastly, I have presented preliminary results of our studies at the European Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases meeting in Madrid in April and I have attended a Wellcome course on molecular techniques important for clinical and research microbiology. This is a prestigious course given by internationally renowned specialists in the field at the Wellcome Genome Campus in Cambridge. It is run as a 5 days long, presentational course at the Campus and has lots of theoretical and practical hands-on session in the laboratory, using a variety of molecular techniques (from PCRs to whole genome sequencing), and also in the IT laboratory learning basic bioinformatic techniques. It is an excellent course, focused in the future of microbiology and a must for any infection trainee. Also, I cannot be grateful enough to the institutional funding I received from SGUL to help with the extra childcare costs incurred, which is a great initiative to help mums in research to progress with their careers (without emptying their pockets).



The results gathered by Cristina on the bacteraemia workflow at St George's, Kings College and St Thomas' are essential to evaluate the impact of the introduction of new rapid tests for the antimicrobial susceptibility testing of Gram negative bacteraemia'.

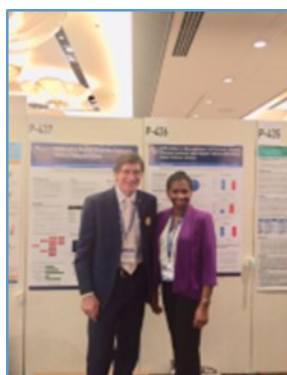
Cristina and Vanesa, the clinical research fellow implementing one of the rapid antimicrobial testing methods at St George's, are part of the antimicrobial resistance research group lead by Tim Planche.

Meet Racquel Lowe-Jones, International Society of Nephrology (ISN) Clinical Fellow & Kidney Research UK Fellow

I am from Kingston, Jamaica, a medical graduate of the University of the West Indies for my MBBS and Doctor of Medicine in Internal Medicine residency. I am the recipient of the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) Clinical Fellowship and UK Kidney Research Fellow scholarship to pursue clinical nephrology training at St George's University Hospital which began 1 August 2017. My clinical kidney research at St George's, University of London is under the supervision of Dr Debasish Banerjee, Consultant Nephrologist at Molecular and Clinical Sciences Research Institute. The focus of my research is examining chronic kidney disease in patients with varying cardiac illness and determining ways to improve their outcomes. I am looking forward to continuing my exceptional clinical and research experience at St. Georges.

Highlights of my fellowship have been the following:

- Winning a prize at SGHT Clinical Audit Half Day for my oral presentation on the Role of a Combined Kidney Failure-Heart Failure Clinic in December 2017.
- Inaugural International Society of Nephrology Frontiers meeting in Tokyo, Japan February 2018. Of 3 posters presented, was chosen for top 10%.
- Supporting our renal runners at the 2018 London Marathon via Kidney Research UK
- Poster presentation on Vascular structure and function abnormalities in CKD, haemodialysis and kidney transplant patients and impact of traditional and non-traditional risk factors at the European Renal Association-European Dialysis and Transplant Association 55th Annual Congress in Denmark May 2018.
- Accepted poster presentations for UK Kidney Week June 2018 on Role of a multidisciplinary clinic in managing patients referred to "CKD-Heart Failure" clinic; Use of Renin-Angiotensin-Aldosterone-System inhibitors in heart failure patients with CKD, role of hyperkalaemia and Role of Cardio-Renal MDT in managing high-risk patients on the kidney transplant waitlist.
- Poster presentation Royal College of Physician Innovations Meeting June 2018.
- Accepted oral presentation at the Caribbean Cardiac Society July 2018





Save
the
Date

SGUL's annual Research Day will be held on Wednesday 21 November 2018. [The Research Day website](#) will be updated during the year as details of the event are confirmed. Clinical academic trainees should be prepared to submit a poster — posters from previous meetings will be accepted.

Public Engagement Funding Opportunities

[Wellcome Trust Public engagement fund](#) (deadline 11 Sept 2018)

This enables individuals and organisations to use creative approaches in engaging the public with health research. Grants are worth £25-250K over three years. Four calls pa (January, May, June, September).

[Physiological Society grants](#) (deadline 14 Jan 2019)

Grants up to £5K, open to members and non-members. Two calls pa (January and June).

[Endocrinology Society grants](#) (deadline 26 Sept 2018)

Grants up to £1K. People who are not members of the Society must contact them >6 weeks before the deadline (i.e. before 15 August) to allow a partner to be found.