

# George's Academic Training (GAT) Newsletter

NINTH EDITION December 2020

## **George's Clinical Academic New Starters 2020**

### ***Welcome to St George's!***

NIHR funded trainees with awards starting in 2020

- **Sarah Sturrock**, Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF) Paediatric Infectious Diseases
- **Richard Rees**, ACF Neurology
- **Rae Wake**, Clinical Lecturer Infectious Diseases
- **Dipender Gill**, Clinical Lecturer Pharmacology and Therapeutics

Locally-funded trainees with awards starting in 2020

- **Charlotte Mason-Apps**, ACF in General Practice
- **Reem Yahia**, ACF in General Practice
- **Abteen Mostofi**, Clinical Lecturer Neurosurgery
- **Chris Miles**, Clinical Lecturer Cardiology

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*Congratulations*

Congratulations to Dr Anna Sadnicka Chadburn Clinical Lecturer, Motor Control and Movement Disorder Group. Anna has been appointed as the trainee representative for medicine for the Integrated Academic Training Advisory Committee (InterACT). InterACT works with the NIHR Academy and other funders to provide input to the strategy for development of integrated clinical academic training at a national level.



Anna's role within the group is to represent the views of Clinical Lecturer trainees from across all regions and to bring suggestions or queries to the group from trainees.

A webpage and twitter account will be launched soon to facilitate communication but for now suggestions and queries can be sent to Anna directly ([asadnick@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:asadnick@sgul.ac.uk)).

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### Addressing the challenges of COVID-19 second wave or another pandemic

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Clinical Academic Training Forum: Working Group to support returning clinical academics during a further (COVID-19) pandemic

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1. Clinical Academic Training Forum: Working Group to support returning clinical academics during a further (COVID-19) pandemic

[Follow this link for](#) the NIHR document "Addressing the challenges of COVID-19 second wave or another pandemic".

*Congratulations*

Congratulations to Dr Joseph Salem, Academic Foundation Programme Year 2 doctor. Joseph's abstract "**COVID-19: How has it affected the wellbeing and training of junior doctors?**" won two prizes at this year's Research Day including the prestigious Chrissie Fenske Prize which was awarded for the best overall abstract submission. The £1000 prize money can be put towards conference/meeting attendance.

## News from our academic foundation programme doctors

We receive a fixed annual income to our Small Grant Fund from the Isaac Schapera Research Trust to support research conducted during Academic Foundation Programme years.

Dr David Ryan made a successful application for funding and here is his report:-

### Dr David Ryan Academic Foundation Programme Year 2 doctor attended a course on Mendelian Randomisation



I was very grateful to receive funding from the St George's Academic Training Fund to attend a course run by the MRC Biostatistics Unit, University of Cambridge on Mendelian Randomisation. Studies based on Mendelian randomisation are increasingly being used to distinguish causal relationships from observational associations in Epidemiology and to prioritise potential targets for pharmaceutical interventions. This course taught me about the use of genetic data to proxy various exposures or drug effects and I gained experience of working with data from large genome-wide association studies. Following this course, I have been working on a project with Dr Dipender Gill (Clinical Pharmacology SpR) and Dr Drew Walker (Clinical Pharmacology Teaching Fellow) investigating whether genetically proxied IL-6 signalling inhibition has an effect on renal function. There is increasing interest in using IL-6 inhibitors as a cardioprotective strategy for patients with chronic kidney disease and this study showed that IL-6 inhibition is unlikely to have a direct impact on kidney function using genetic data. We are hoping to publish this work in the next few months.

## News from our clinical academic trainees

### Dr Kathryn Biddle, Academic Clinical Fellow in Rheumatology

When I applied for an academic clinical fellowship in rheumatology, I could have never guessed that my research would take on an infectious theme and centre upon a novel virus!

Over the last 5 months, I have been undertaking a study investigating the outcomes of patients with autoimmune disease who develop Covid-19. My project has involved the collection of clinical data surrounding the symptoms and outcomes of Covid-19 infection in patients with rheumatic disease (compared to patients without autoimmune disease). In addition to clinical outcomes, we have collected data regarding serology and are currently investigating T cell activation in response to Covid-19 peptides.

In addition to undertaking this research, I have presented a case of hyperinflammatory Covid-19 at the BSR Case Conference and co-authored a book chapter surrounding the pathogenesis of pain in rheumatoid arthritis.

I have really enjoyed my time in research so far and feel that I have gained a lot of skills in both the clinical and laboratory setting. I would like to thank Professor Sofat and the rest of her group for their support during this research placement!

### Dr Sarah Sturrock, Academic Clinical Fellow - Paediatric Infectious Diseases

As part of my Academic Clinical Fellowship with the PIDRG (supervised by Professor Kirsty Le Doare), I have been planning a national study of the epidemiology of SARS-CoV-2 in pregnancy, its risk of vertical transmission, and its effects on neonatal outcomes (periCOVID). The project leads on from a Public Health England study that began earlier in the year, and will provide vitally important information for healthcare workers, expectant mothers, and families as to the risks associated with this global pandemic. We were very pleased to receive funding of £199,995 from Action Medical Research for Children that will give us invaluable support in completing the 18-month study, and I am really looking forward to starting recruitment in 2021.

## Link with your Liaison Librarian



In this short piece, we'd like to highlight the work of our Library Liaison team and how they can help you connect with the right digital resources at the right time to grow your practice and research as clinical academics.

### Meet the team

For each of our distinct user groups – students, academic staff and researchers and NHS practitioners – you will find dedicated Library Liaison staff, available throughout the year to provide specialist help and support with the Library's resources.

Your Liaison Librarians for SGUL students, staff and researchers are:

Zena Ali [zali@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:zali@sgul.ac.uk)

Anne Binsfeld [abinsfeld@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:abinsfeld@sgul.ac.uk)

Your Liaison Librarians for NHS staff, researchers and placements students are:

Karen John-Pierre [kjohn@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:kjohn@sgul.ac.uk)

Stephen Reid [sreid@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:sreid@sgul.ac.uk)

The team provides one-to-one support and offers innovative, practical teaching sessions for all on a range of topics such as online literature searching or evidence-based practice and managing your references.

### How do we support our users?

#### Finding Information

For each subject area of focus at St George's, Liaison Librarians have developed online [Subject Guides](#) curated by the relevant Librarian. These guides outline the key high-quality digital resources (think literature search databases, websites, search engines, evidence-based tools and journals) for your bespoke area and are a great launch pad to start your resource exploration.

Liaison Librarians also design and run [open information skills courses](#) to help you use these digital tools efficiently and find the best available research to underpin your projects.

Our specialist team can also help you draw up efficient search strategies for systematic reviews and research proposals, run literature searches on your behalf via our Clinical and Research Enquiry Service (CARES) <http://www.cares.sgul.ac.uk> or help you keep up to date with the latest research papers in your specialty.

During normal times users could also [make an appointment](#) to see one of the team or drop in to our [Research Enquiries Desk](#) for advice. However, along with everyone else, we have adapted our services to online only environments such as MS teams for delivery of our support and programmes.

## Link with your Liaison Librarian



### Managing Information

To keep information overload at bay and assist you in keeping track of your references, ask your liaison librarian about [tools like RefWorks or Mendeley](#). These tools allow you to create personalised databases of references which can be integrated into Microsoft Word, saving you time when writing up research manuscripts.

### Research Support Services

The library is also the home of our Research Data Management service and we co-ordinate SGUL's [CRIS](#) (Current Research Information System) and [SORA](#) (St George's Online Research Archive, our institutional open access publications repository) - two systems allowing St George's, University of London researchers to record their publications, make them more discoverable, and meet their funders' open access mandates.

### Connect with us

If you want to brush up on your searching or referencing skills, there are plenty of opportunities to get help from the Liaison team and the wider library team

### Visit us online at one of our research online drop-ins

**When?** Monday to Friday 12pm-1pm

**Where?** MS Teams. View current time table until the end of term here: <https://sgul.libcal.com/>

### Book on to our Information Skills workshops

See the [Training pages](#) of the website for course information and our booking form.

### Book 1-2-1s or bespoke group training

By emailing [liaison@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:liaison@sgul.ac.uk)

We hope you've found this brief introduction into the range of work and support our liaison team carry out informative and inspiring. To find out more, visit our [website](#) where you will find audience-focused pages that highlight what's on offer for researchers, NHS staff and teaching staff.

Check out our Covid-19 update page for the latest information about our service offer and opening hours: <https://www.sgul.ac.uk/about/our-professional-services/information-services/library/covid-19-updates>



[The NIHR Fellowship Programme supports individuals on their trajectory to becoming future leaders in NIHR research.](#)

# Academic Clinical Fellows in General Practice

Each year SGUL is pleased to offer two locally funded GP Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF) posts which provide specialist clinical training in general practice combined with training in academic primary care (research and teaching), usually over a four year period. In ST1 and ST2 they complete 18 months in hospital posts and 6 months in General Practice. In ST3 and ST4 they undertake integrated academic training working 50% in Academic training and 50% in General Practice

St George's currently has nine GP ACFs in post and four of the trainees have shared their news:-

## Dr Roaa Al-bedaery



Roaa is approaching the end of her third year as an Academic Clinical Fellow in General Practice. With a keen interest in medical education, she has used much of her academic time teaching students and undertaking a master's degree in Health Professions Education, based at University College London. Currently in the final year of this, her dissertation is a research project exploring the use of remote telephone and video consultations for teaching medical students in primary care. She hopes to better understand how teaching and learning can be optimised in this setting, as we transition to a remote model of consulting.

## Dr Mohammad Sharif Razai

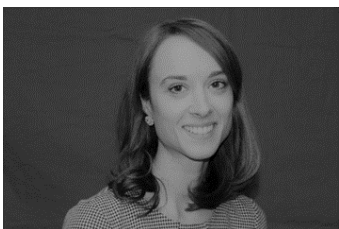
In Spring 2020 I wrote two Covid-19 related guides for primary care using expertise from general practice, public health, and infectious diseases. Both guides were published with open access via fast-track pathways in the BMJ: "Covid-19: a guide for UK GPs" and "Mitigating the psychological impact of social isolation during the covid-19 pandemic". I then lead the development of two rapid massive open online courses (MOOCs) on the free FutureLearn platform. The MOOCs were developed to support primary care staff and to inform members of the public in the UK and Africa. In their first run, both MOOCs had over 30,000 learners from 180 countries about 40% of the participants were from the general public. Currently, I am working on a quality improvement project in primary care for post-acute covid-19 'Long Covid' patients as well as undertaking feasibility study of a clinical trial. I am also using my academic time to teach and study for a PgCert in Medical Humanities.



## Dr Felicity Knights

I have recently returned to St George's following the birth of my daughter in late January 2020. Like most of us, my plans for 2020 did not go as anticipated! During the first wave, I co-authored an editorial on provision of palliative care to those dying of COVID-19, drawing on experiences of palliative care overseas. I am also working as part of a team exploring the impact of the pandemic upon access of migrants to primary care and COVID-19 vaccine roll-out. Since my return, the transition to working online, both in GP practice and in academia has been a steep learning curve – and it has been particularly interesting to reflect upon the changes in teaching format and approach required to deliver sessions I have been involved in both before and after maternity leave – primarily quality improvement teaching and as part of the Case Analysis Project team. For me as for many, this year has posed a series of personal and professional challenges, but also provided many opportunities for learning.

## Dr Lucia Magee

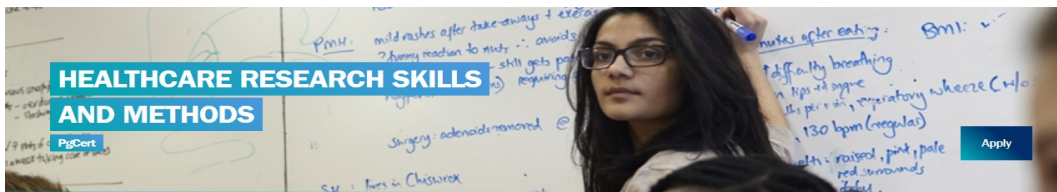


Lucia is in the final year of her Academic Clinical Fellowship and is working on developing her interest in behaviour change. She is currently studying for a PgCert in Behaviour Change at UCL and undertaking research within PHRI that aligns with this interest.

Lucia continues to be an advocate for female leadership and the importance of [balanced gender representation](#). Recently, she published a piece on [Gender Balance in unprecedented times](#), raising the profile of women leaders during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Postgraduate Certificate in Healthcare Research Skills and Methods



Following the September 2019 launch of the [PgCert in Healthcare Research Skills and Methods](#) we had excellent uptake from Academic Foundation Programme doctors and Academic Clinical Fellows, in addition to allied health professionals including Pharmacists, Radiographers and Nurses.

This skill mix continues with the cohort of 20 students for the current academic year which includes AFP doctors, medical/surgical doctors in training and post-CCT along with allied health professionals.

Two students from the 2019 cohort have sent their comments on the course:-

### From Vicky Mummery



I work as an Emergency Practitioner at St George's Hospital Emergency Department. I was successful in my application to the first year of the PGCert in Healthcare Research Methods and Skills, funded by the Emergency Department Clinical Research Unit. Application to this course was ignited from a previous one-year research and quality improvement project manager role.

Completing this course has expanded my knowledge and skills varying ways for example in understanding differing research methods, critical appraisal of literature, mobilisation of research into practice and application of statistical tests to data sets. The opportunity to collaborate with other course members from different professional backgrounds on differing research career pathways was of great benefit to my learning and research skills development. The mix of teaching formats including lectures, group sessions, debates, practical use of data and student led seminars ensured the course was dynamic and interactive. This course has opened opportunities including understanding and completing fellowship applications, alongside my current completion of the remaining two modules comprising the Masters in Clinical Research. This course has proved a pivotal step in developing my pathway towards a clinical-academic career, particularly in providing a strong foundation of research knowledge and skills application.

### From Dr Joseph Salem



I completed the PGCert in Healthcare research skills and methods at St George's Hospital kindly funded by the Isaac Schapera Trust. As an academic foundation doctor I wanted to build on my previous research skills and felt this would be a great opportunity to learn new research methodology, hone analytical skills alongside getting involved in a research project during my foundation training.

The course was run in person but with the opportunity to view lectures and course materials online. Topics covered included how to write a research proposal, critical appraisal of journal articles, an optional negotiated learning project and statistics. Due to the full time foundation rota alongside on-call shifts, the course was fitted around zero days, weekends and holiday. Whilst this was at times difficult especially with exams set on days post night shifts the material was engaging and manageable.

I thoroughly enjoyed having the opportunity to form my own project, something of a rarity at a junior level. The staff running the course were fantastic and very understanding of the busy rota and the disruption from the covid pandemic.

I would recommend the course to any healthcare professional interested in research irrespective of their previous experience. It goes through the building blocks needed to become a good researcher and provides a great foundation and springboard into the world of healthcare research.