

Issue 14
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Network News

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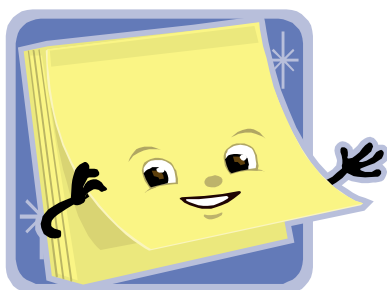
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UK DCTNs 400th Member

We are delighted to announce the Network has just recruited its 400th member, Sue Jordan (pictured right). Sue is a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Dermatology based at Derbyshire Royal Infirmary Derby. She joined the Network at the beginning of August and is involved in recruiting into the PATCH trial. As a token of appreciation and to mark the event, Sue received a £50 M&S voucher.



This is a fantastic landmark for the UK DCTN, which began with a meeting of just 20 BAD members in 2002. Interest in the Network continues to grow, demonstrated by an increase in membership of over 30% in the past year alone. As some UK DCTN trials will involve recruitment in Europe, we are also now actively seeking overseas colleagues to become members. If you know of anyone who would like to join the UK DCTN and would benefit from getting involved, please get them to contact the Network Administrator, Maggie McPhee.



Reminder

The Closing Date for the UK DCTN SpR Fellowship and Nursing Prize Awards is Friday 24th October. Please ensure that your applications are in by this time and if you have any queries please contact the Network Manager, Carron Layfield.

Funding Update

- **Lentigo Maligna Study**

This phase II study looking at the use of imiquimod in the treatment of lentigo maligna has now been funded by the Research for Patient Benefit Scheme and is currently at set up stage. If you are interested in taking part, please contact the Senior Trials Manager, Joanne Chalmers.

- **Programme Grant: Reducing Uncertainties in Skin Disease**

Please see page 3 for a letter from the Chair, Hywel Williams, regarding the outcome of this award.

Getting Nursing Support to Help You Take Part in Network-led Studies

Here at the UK DCTN co-ordinating centre we've recently had a campaign to raise the profile of the Network amongst the 26 Comprehensive Local Research Networks (CLRNs) across England. As you may remember from previous newsletters, the CLRNs have been set up to provide support for clinical research that falls outside the topic specific areas of cancer, childrens' medicines, dementia, stroke, mental health and diabetes. Fourteen areas have identified dermatology as a local priority and the local leads will come together to form a National Dermatology Speciality Group which will be chaired by Hywel Williams.

The response that we have received from the CLRNs has, for the most part, been extremely encouraging. To date, twelve CLRNs have agreed to provide support for dermatology research in a variety of ways. This includes PA protected time for clinicians to take on their role as local dermatology lead and to become more involved in our studies, payments to GP practices who are becoming involved in the SWET eczema study, help with pharmacy costs for the PATCH study and perhaps most importantly the provision of nursing time to help

with recruitment of patients into our studies. CLRNs including West Anglia, Cheshire and Merseyside, Cumbria and Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Norfolk and Suffolk and Thames Valley have so far agreed to provide nursing support for help with UK DCTN studies, varying from 0.5-5 days per week. CRC Cymru in Wales are also providing support for our studies.

If you are currently involved in our studies or have registered an interest in becoming so, you should have received all the relevant information necessary to make contact with your local CLRN. We strongly encourage you to do this as soon as possible as many of the CLRNs are in the process of setting budgets for the year ahead. If you have been put off taking part in a Network led study due to the lack of time and resources, now is an excellent time to get in touch with us so that we can put you in contact with your relevant CLRN and help you to get the support you need to get involved. If you would like any further information or advice regarding anything to do with the CLRNs then please contact the Network Manager, Carron Layfield, and please remember to feedback to us any support you receive.



National Knowledge Weeks on Eczema and Psoriasis

The National Library for Health (NLH) Skin Disorders Specialist Library held a National Knowledge Week on eczema, w/c 15th Sept. Aimed at NHS health professionals to highlight sources of information and guidance on eczema and its treatment, this excellent resource can still be accessed via the Library homepage www.library.nhs.uk/skin. The National Knowledge Week on psoriasis, with similar resources, will be held w/c 3rd Nov.

New Staff: Eleanor Mitchell, STOP-GAP Trial Manager



I started as a medical secretary after leaving school, but moved to an academic research department 7 years ago when I was appointed as project co-ordinator for a large osteoarthritis gene-environmental interaction study called the 'GOAL' Study. After 3 years, I was promoted to Research Manager in Rheumatology, where I oversaw a variety of research projects investigating common musculoskeletal disorders such as a osteoarthritis, knee pain and gout. During my time in Rheumatology, I undertook a BA(Hons) in business studies – having previously completed a management diploma.

I joined the Centre of Evidence Based Dermatology in August 2008 as the clinical trial manager for the STOP GAP study, investigating treatments for pyoderma gangrenosum. If you would like further information about STOP GAP and/or are interested in becoming a recruiting centre, please email me at Eleanor.mitchell@nottingham.ac.uk or phone 0115 8468634.

Letter From The Chair: Success in the NIHR Programme Grant



In issue 10 of Network News last summer, I indicated to you that we were all working very hard at the Centre of Evidence Based Dermatology to put in a programme grant for dermatology. I am delighted to report that we have now been awarded this flagship programme

grant in open competition with the rest of medicine – the only one to be awarded to dermatology.

The value of the grant is almost £2m and work will start this autumn and continue for 5 years. The idea behind these programme grants is to conduct research that will be of benefit to the NHS, and our programme is called, 'Setting priorities and uncertainties for people with skin disease (SPRUSD)' It was a lot of work putting the programme grant together, and it will be even more work delivering what we have set out to do.

We are using a variety of methodologies including systematic reviews, priority setting exercises for identifying the most important studies to do next, feasibility studies that inform randomised controlled trials, and of course randomised controlled trials themselves. In addition we will be producing patient resources and playing a key role in disseminating the information so that it can be brought into clinical practice. The whole programme will also allow us to build capacity for dermatology research in the NHS and amongst consumers and the public.

The five work themes include :

- Eczema prevention
- Eczema treatment
- Squamous cell carcinoma
- Vitiligo
- Pyoderma gangrenosum

This all sounds very well and a bit vague at the moment, but the most important thing for the UK Dermatology Clinical Trials Network is that the programme grant includes funding for our randomised controlled trial of oral prednisolone versus oral ciclosporin for the treatment of pyoderma gangrenosum. The pyoderma gangrenosum project is being led by Dr Tony Ormerod from Aberdeen, and it is something that we have been developing for the last few years. It is a study that can only be done on a national basis, and you will be hearing more about the study through our emails and circulars. ***Trying to do a randomised controlled trial of a less common condition like pyoderma gangrenosum is really tough, so we really could do with your help in recruiting all your PG patients into this study.***

The other advantage of the programme grant is that it identifies priorities from systematic reviews which then lead on to feasibility studies. We have at least 3 feasibility studies in mind for eczema prevention, treatment of squamous cell carcinoma and vitiligo, and providing these feasibility studies show that patients are willing to be randomised into such studies, then these will progress to full applications to the NIHR Health Technology Assessment Board. The programme grant therefore provides a wonderful platform for building up evidence to win major trial grants that will keep us busy for the next 10 years or so. We will keep you posted on the progress of the programme grant and how it feeds into the UK Dermatology Clinical Trials Network.

PATCH News

Please remember that the PATCH II study is now closed for recruitment so that we can focus our efforts on the PATCH I trial. The PATCH I study is looking at patients with recurrent cellulitis and involves a 12 month intervention period. We really do need to have a final push to make this study a success and any queries should be directed to the Trial Manager, Katherine Foster.

Research Prioritisation Panel Update

Following on from its inaugural meeting at the recent BAD event in Liverpool the UK DCTN Research Panel has established its mode of operation. Chaired by Dr Ibrahim Nasr, the panel will operate in both a reactive and proactive way. In its reactive mode, the panel will assess all vignettes that come into the Network according to a predefined plan and decide whether they should progress to the next stage of development which is presentation to the Steering Committee. This should help enormously with the initial sifting of trial ideas that are proposed to us.

The pro-active aim of the panel is to help to develop a research agenda for independent dermatology research in the UK using a variety of evidence sources including Cochrane Systematic Reviews and clinical and policy debates. The group is now investigating various methods of collecting such information including keeping a research diary of ideas during consultations, departmental noticeboards and discussions following on from journal clubs and local educational meetings.

A full article about the panel, along with a call for research ideas will appear in the Winter Edition of the BAD Newsletter. If you have any queries or suggestions to make regarding the panel, please contact Carron Layfield.

Annual Evidence Based Update Meeting 2009

Following on from feedback from delegates at the meeting on Blistering Skin Disorders earlier this year, the subject topic for the 2009 event has been chosen and the meeting will be focussed on Urticaria.

Confirmed speakers for the meeting, which will take place on Thursday 14th May at Holywell Park In Loughborough, include Bettina Wedi, Marcus Maurer, Clive Grattan, Randolph Brehler, Malcolm Greaves, James Ferguson and Stuart Cohen.

Continuing the successful format, the meeting will contain presentations on recently completed clinical trials, systematic reviews and updates on clinical practice and all proceeds from the event will be donated to the UK DCTN. To register, or for further information, please contact Carron Layfield.

Dates for your Diary

Tues 14th October	UK DCTN Steering Group Meeting UK DCTN Executive Group Meeting	12.30pm 3pm	BAD House, London BAD House, London
Friday 24th October	Closing Dates for SpR Fellowship and Nursing Prize Award		
Tues 10th February	UK DCTN Steering Group Meeting UK DCTN Executive Group Meeting	12.30pm 3pm	Nottingham University Nottingham University

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