

North-east COVID-19 observatory: issue 12.

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North-East COVID-19

Observatory

Issue 12—30th November 2020



Welcome

Welcome to our twelfth issue of the Observatory. This is issued monthly, with each month having a dedicated theme. We include news, professional matters, and relevant professional and light reading. Each issue has one or two guest contributors with a specialist interest in the chosen theme. This month we have a very new theme - **Paramedic Practice** - and, because of this, we are delighted to have **Melissa Doyle**, lecturer in paramedic practice as our guest writer. Melissa has also acted as a contributing author, for which we are very grateful. As ever, we value any feedback and encourage people to request themes or to send in resources that others might find interesting.

Please note: the next issue will be circulated on Monday 25th January 2021 to give everyone an information break!

Theme: Paramedic Practice Education at RGU

In September of this year, RGU started running a Bachelor of Science degree course in paramedic practice, in response to an increase in learning and training requirements for paramedics. It is led by **James Brogan** (Academic Team Lead: Paramedic Practice) and delivered in collaboration with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). Paramedics will learn skills that are in demand now and in the future, with urban, remote and rural placement locations. Paramedics play an integral part in the National Health Service and graduates will be trained not only to deliver evidence-based front-line emergency care, but to work in a number of advanced paramedic practice areas such as primary care and critical care. To meet the needs of this rapidly diversifying profession, this course will provide students with the knowledge and skills to confidently deliver complex high quality care across the life-span to the community. Eighty six students have enrolled for the programme. To find out more about what the course has to offer see [the course website](#).

Theme: Paramedic Practice



Our Guest writer **Melissa Doyle**, one of the lecturers on the BSc paramedic programme writes: *It has been amazing welcoming our first ever BSc Student Paramedics to Robert Gordon University. We have an absolutely amazing group full of enthusiasm. Despite the new virtual learning environments we have been using during COVID, everyone has engaged and it has been lovely and an absolute pleasure to meet and teach them all. We have had some on campus learning and the students really demonstrated how well they have engaged online and put it into practice.*

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)

Paramedics will be registered with the HCPC and the register contains two annotations: Supplementary Prescribing (SP) and Independent Prescribing (IP). This statutory body regulates 15 professions that may have one or more designated titles that are protected by law. Professionals must be registered with the HCPC to use these titles. The HCPC set the standards for the professionals on the HCPC register, take action when professionals do not meet their standards and approve any programmes that professionals must complete in order to register with the HCPC. You can access the HCPC website [here](#).

Human Factors

You may know, or be interested to know, that Human Factors is a scientific discipline. It examines the interactions between parts of a system, whilst aiming to improve both system performance and human well-being. It explores those things that affect an individual's performance. A human factors approach is key to safer healthcare. You can read about this in an interesting short article '**Implementing Human Factors in Clinical Practice**' by Timmons et al. (2014). The authors explore whether aviation-derived human factors training is acceptable and useful to health care professionals. You can access the article [here](#).

For those of you who wish to read more about this topic, there are two general textbooks (level 1 and level 2) by Debbie Rosenorn-Lanng called '**Human Factors: A Pocket Guide for Clinical Instructors**'. These books explain the SHEEP framework (Systems, Human Interaction, Environment and Personal). You can access details of these books on the RGU Library catalogue ([Level 1](#) and [Level 2](#))

Specifically for paramedics is a book entitled '**Human Factors in Paramedic Practice**', which is edited by Gary Rutherford (more details are available from [the publisher website](#)). This text is an informative guide to the concepts of human factors and ergonomics in the field of paramedic practice. It shows how an understanding and application of these principles can improve paramedic performance and well-being, and ultimately patient care. Whilst it is aimed at paramedics, it can be a useful resource for those working in critical care in any organisation.

Podcast

One podcast you may be interested in is called **Roadside to Resus**. The podcast comes from a group of UK specialists, who have set up a site called The Resus Room. They critically analyse and discuss new research, talking about methods of treating patients and exploring if current methods of emergency care are effective - and how things could be done differently. The site can be accessed [here](#) and you can follow this work on Twitter ([@TheResusRoom](#)) or on Facebook ([at TheResusRoom1](#)).

Vaccination Plans for Scotland

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman gave a statement to Parliament on Thursday 19 November. In it she states:

From December, we expect to see the first delivery of vaccines to Scotland. We are planning on the basis both that the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) are able to review the clinical evidence and provide Governments with a recommendation, and that the vaccine receives a license [...] we're hopeful that, over the coming weeks into 2021, we will have more than one vaccine available to us, so that

we can, with minimum delay, vaccinate as many people as possible, as quickly as possible [...] So nationally we will set out the policy direction; we will set out the delivery framework accompanied by information for those at the frontline; we will develop and deploy a national workforce model; provide national training national training; undertake procurement and logistics; provide national information and advice; tools to record data about vaccinations, so that they are there on peoples' medical records; and, from Phase 2, a national booking service. NHS Boards will then lead local delivery, identifying acceptable and accessible locations, both for mass vaccination and for local access. Taking account of their population and geography, they will undertake recruitment and deployment of staff, and the management of local vaccination clinics. Over the coming weeks and months we will be sending out information to everyone across Scotland explaining what the vaccine is, how we are prioritising who gets the vaccine, what to expect when you are vaccinated, and so on.

You can read the Health Secretary's full statement on [the Scottish Government's website](#).

Who will administer the vaccine? The four nations have taken their own rapid approaches to handling the pandemic and this difference continues concerning who can administer vaccinations. The Department of Health and Social Care have declared that midwives and paramedics can deliver flu and COVID vaccines after new laws come into force. However, the HCPC have responded to the Department of Health and Social Care's consultation on changes to the Human Medicines Regulations to support the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines. The HCPC is not satisfied with the new law and state their measured and many reasons. It is an important argument which will be interesting to all health and social care staff. You can read the HCPC response [here](#), or [visit their website](#) for more details.

Information for Students Returning Home

The Scottish Government have updated guidance on students returning home from university for Christmas. It explains how restrictions on social gatherings apply, as well as plans for the end of term 2020. It is important for all students to read - you can access the guidance on [the government website](#).

Resources

The Scottish Ambulance Service has a [website that is an excellent resource](#), giving advice and information for its staff. The site includes the 2020 strategy: **Towards 2020: Taking Care to the Patient**. The Scottish Ambulance Service recognises that it has a significant contribution to make to the effective delivery of the Scottish Government 2020 vision as a frontline service providing emergency, unscheduled and scheduled care 24/7. This five year strategic framework describes how they plan to do that in a way that supports the NHS Scotland quality ambitions for person-centred, safe and effective care. The strategy can be accessed [on the SAS website](#).

The College of Paramedics was established in 2001. Membership is open to those who are UK paramedics registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), those who are interested in the sector and those who are studying to become a paramedic. The website is very informative and also gives details of up and coming events and conferences. You can find out more about the college and can sign up to become a member [on the college website](#).

Journal of Paramedic Practice (JPP) is currently the only [monthly, peer-reviewed journal](#) dedicated to the clinical and professional needs of paramedics. It is an excellent resource for paramedics, enabling them to enhance their professional knowledge. At present it is by subscription only, but - with the new programme at RGU - it may soon be an addition to the university's library, which would give free access to RGU paramedic students.

Join the NoSCAR research seminars online: Paramedics and paramedic students (along with our NMAHPs, of course) are very welcome to join the series of seminars run by NoSCAR (the North of Scotland Centre for Applied Nursing Midwifery and Allied Health Professions Research). On December 10th at 2pm we are offering a one hour seminar on statistics. A new programme of events will be available soon for 2021. All you need to do is click on the MT link to join in. To get the link to this event, e-mail noscar@rgu.ac.uk.

Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance (SCAA)

The SCAA works in partnership with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). SCAA is an integral part of Scotland's frontline emergency response network, responding to trauma incidents and medical emergencies across the country, covering an area of more than 30,000 square miles. It is Scotland's only charity air ambulance and is funded by the people of Scotland, primarily through donations, fundraising, events and the lottery. You can find out more about SCAA [on their website](#).

On April 3rd 2020, SCAA launched their second charity air ambulance - Helimed 79. Based at Aberdeen Airport, Helimed 79 allows SCAA to deliver more care, more quickly, to more people across Scotland. You can read about Helimed 79 [here](#).

COVID 19 Library

Academic Reading

We have three articles for you:

- Anderson, C., Pooley, J.A., Mills, B., Anderson, E. and Smith, E.C., 2020. **Do Paramedics Have a Professional Obligation to Work During a Pandemic? A Qualitative Exploration of Community Member Expectations.** Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness, pp.1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1017/dmp.2020.212>

This first article explores the right to protect oneself from serious risk versus the obligation to respond to patients in need, and is applicable to all health and social care workers during the pandemic.

- Perkins, A., Kelly, S., Dumbleton, H., and Whitfield, S., 2020. **Pandemic pupils: COVID-19 and the impact on student paramedics.** Australasian Journal of Paramedicine, 17. <https://doi.org/10.33151/ajp.17.811>

This article looks at what the authors call 'pandemic pupils' and will be of interest to all health and social care students and educators.

- Nolan, B., Chartier, L.B., Verbeek, P.R., Huyer, D. and Mazurik, L., 2020. **Recommendations for emergency departments receiving patients with vital signs absent from paramedics during COVID-19.** Canadian Journal of Emergency Medicine, pp.1-5. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cem.2020.389>

This third article is Canadian, providing recommendations to enhance staff and patient safety during

the pandemic by reducing unnecessary exposure to aerosol-generated medical procedures for emergency staff, paramedics and other patients in an emergency department, when treating a patient whose vital signs are absent.

Light Reading

We have articles and a BBC news piece for light reading:

- Ostlere, L., 2020. **I am a paramedic working in the coronavirus crisis – some patients have left it too late to call.** [online]. London: Independent. Available from: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/paramedic-nhs-ppe-coronavirus-covid-19-a9493456.html>

This first article, in The Independent, gives an account of some of the issues faced by paramedics.

- Wankhade, P., 2020. **Emergency service workers are already at high risk of burnout – coronavirus will make this worse.** [online]. London: The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/emergency-service-workers-are-already-at-high-risk-of-burnout-coronavirus-will-make-this-worse-136006>

In this second article, from The Conversation, the author highlights research from MIND, which found that 9 in 10 emergency services staff and volunteers experienced stress, low mood and poor mental health while working for the emergency services.

- Barbour, S., 2020. **Jet suit paramedic tested in the Lake District ‘could save lives’.** [online]. London: BBC. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-54331994>

Technology is advancing all the time, and a jet suit for paramedics has been tested in the Lake District by the Great North Air Ambulance Service and Gravity Industries. The aim is for ‘flying’ paramedics to reach patients within minutes. Instead of taking 30 minutes by foot, a paramedic can rush to the top of a fell in 90 seconds.

New Head of School for Nursing Midwifery and Paramedic Practice



Professor Susan Dawkes came into post on November 16th. She is a registered nurse, who has spent over twenty years working with cardiology patients in Scotland and Canada. Her clinical roles included nursing in acute cardiology units and latterly working as a specialist nurse in cardiac rehabilitation.

Susan is President of the British Association of Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation (BACPR), and represents BACPR on the International Council of Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation. She is a member of the Association of Cardiovascular Nursing and Allied Professions (ACNAP) Education Committee for the European Society of Cardiology. Susan is on the editorial board of the British Journal of Cardiac Nursing, and she is working nationally to support and improve the education of healthcare professionals in relation to secondary prevention of heart disease and rehabilitation.

Having secured more than £400,000 of funding for research (with half of this as PI), Susan has a track record of undertaking quality research that has a direct impact on patients' lives. An example of a grant which Susan led is the Scottish Men's Participation After Exercise Referral (SMARTER) study: an examination of the reasons why men living with a least one long-term condition do not participate in an exercise referral scheme, designed to support their physical recovery and psycho-social wellbeing. This was in collaboration

with colleagues from the NHS, local authorities, Edinburgh Napier University, the University of Sydney and Flinders University. Currently, Susan is Co-I on grant proposals for circa £2 million.

Susan has 28 peer-reviewed publications and has given nine keynote presentations at international conferences and forums, more than twenty peer-reviewed presentations internationally and provides regular knowledge exchange sessions, including webinars.

The Editorial Team

We are a small team from the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice at Robert Gordon University (RGU). Angela Kydd (Clinical Professor in Nursing RGU / NHSG) is the editor, Colin MacLean is the librarian and Rahul Oza provides technical support.

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