Summer Newsletter No 5

Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

RESEARCH bytes

research and development • finding a better way •

"Getting it Right First Time" with Dr. Vineet Prakash ...



What is your background?

I am a dual accredited Diagnostic Radiologist and Nuclear Medicine Physician here at Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (ASPH).

What research are you currently involved in?

ElaTION is the first study at ASPH where a Radiologist has been the Principal Investigator (PI). We have directly influenced the study protocol, with our constructive feedback by working closely with colleagues in Research and Cytology at ASPH and Histopathology at the Royal Surrey County Hospital.

What is the ElaTION study all about?

ElaTION aims to find out whether a new ultrasound method called **Real Time Ultrasound Elastography (RTE)**, will detect cases of benign thyroid nodules better than the current standard method of ultrasound diagnosis and reduce unnecessary diagnostic thyroid operations.

The study is a **multi-centre randomised controlled trial**, based at the University of Birmingham. One group will have the new treatment and one group the standard treatment which will be allocated at random (like tossing a coin). **If proven effective in reducing the false positive rates and the need for Fine needle aspiration cytology, then RTE has the potential to reduce patient distress and healthcare costs significantly.**

Why is this study important?

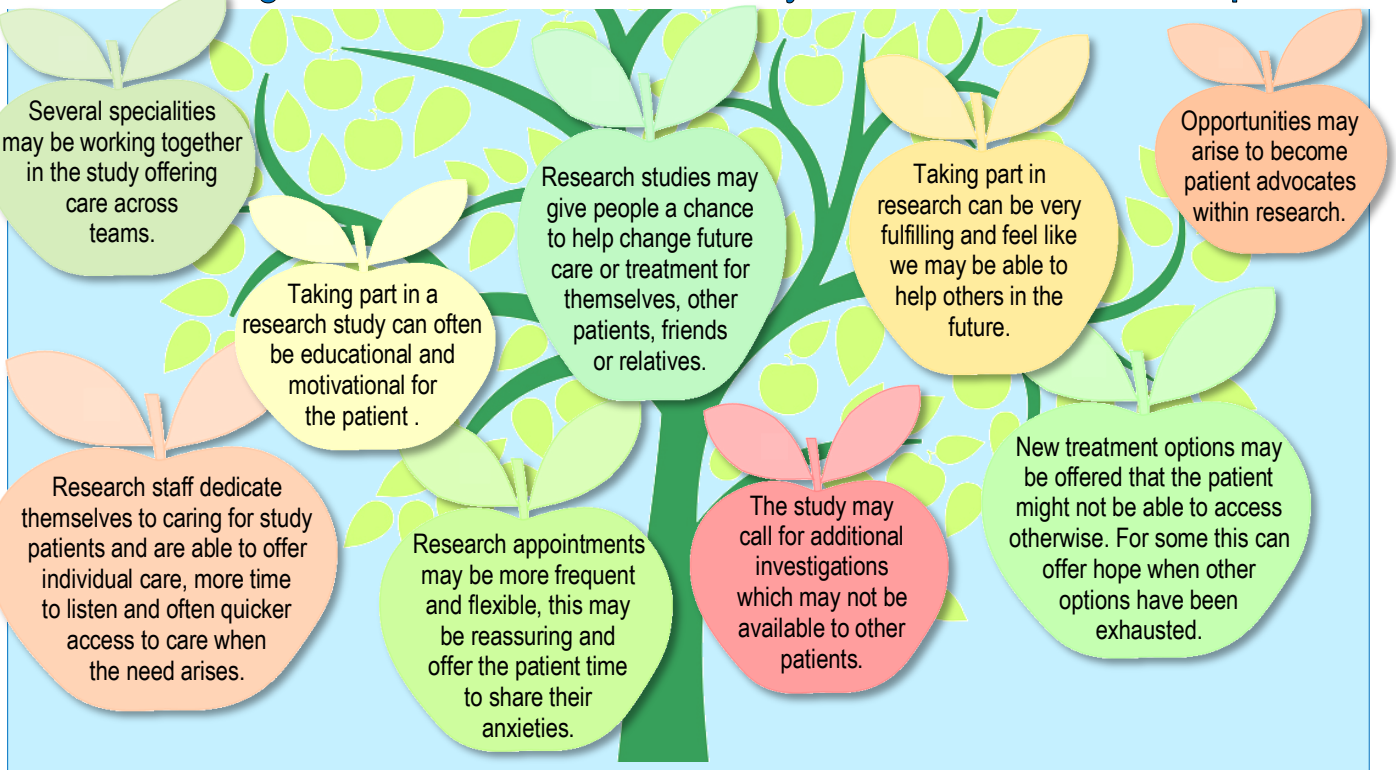
Thyroid lumps are very common but only about 1 in 20 are cancerous. Currently the recommended way of getting a diagnosis is to guide a needle by ultrasound into the lump to extract cells. Sometimes it is difficult to be absolutely sure of the diagnosis and then further investigation and treatment is needed.

Ultrasound imaging is an important mainstay in patient management and this research study is a good example of the **"Getting it right first time"** quality improvement programme that the NHS is promoting (https://improvement.nhs.uk/news-alerts/getting-it-right-first-time-recruits-new-clinical-leads/)

Which other Research studies excite you?

A recent publication in "Nature" entitled "Phylogenetic ctDNA analysis depicts early-stage lung cancer evolution" is the publication that most appeals to me currently. Working with the P.I, Charles Swanton, my fellow colleagues were also co-authors on this paper; Dr Irvin-Sellars, Dr Ismail, Dr Ezhil and myself. This makes it an even more satisfying read!

How is Taking Part in a Research Study fruitful for the Participant …



Taking part in a research study can often be educational and motivational for the patient, offering positive outcomes

2ND SPRINT NATIONAL ANAESTHESIA PROJECT (SNAP-2)

At the end of March 2017 the Trust participated in a surgical study which was designed to be undertaken across as many hospitals as possible throughout the United Kingdom.

snap2

SNAP-2 was a national audit designed to assess the critical care provision for patients after surgery.

Between March 21st and 27th all our patients undergoing inpatient surgery, including emergency, elective and obstetric surgery, who were due to stay overnight, were invited to participate in this national study.

This required the support and engagement of everyone involved in the pathway of treatment and care of our patients and was a huge team effort .

We are delighted to say that we recruited 99% of all the patients who went for surgery that week, which was 101 in total.

We, as a Trust, are really proud of this achievement, and thank our patients for giving their consent to be involved in this study which we hope will inform and hence improve the care for people undergoing surgery.

Are you interested in Research?

The **UK Clinical Trials Gateway** makes it easy for people to sign up and volunteer to take part in NHS medical research. http://ukctg.nihr.ac.uk

Go to the website and sign up! They can help you:

- Learn more about **what clinical trials are and why you might join one**
- Find out **what you need to know** if you're considering joining a trial
- Find out **what happens when you're on a trial**
- **Give your consent for researchers to contact you** when a relevant trial is looking for people to take part
- Search UK clinical trials to find ones that are of interest to you by using the **'trial search'** in the navigation bar

The **UKCTG** is run by the **National Institute for Health Research** whose aim is to **"Improve the Health and Wealth of the Nation through Research".**

Artemisinins

Artemisinins like Artesunate are one of the most widely used antimalarial compounds, having been used to treat tens of millions of adults and children globally. They come from a plant called Sweet Wormwood, and have been used for more than two millennia in traditional Chinese medicine to treat a variety of ailments.

A Research study called `NeoART` opened to recruitment at St Peter's, Chertsey in April 2017. It is a Phase II randomized, double blind, placebo controlled trial.

`NeoART` was set up by a team of colorectal cancer and infectious disease specialists at St George's University of London and aims to recruit 200 participants at 7 trial centres across the UK.

It will help determine if giving 2 weeks of pre-operative oral Artesunate can reduce the risk of cancer recurring after surgery in patients with Stage II/III operable bowel cancer. Colorectal cancer is a leading cause of cancer related morbidity and mortality with a global incidence of one million new cases per year. Each day in the UK, 110 new colorectal cancer cases are diagnosed. Over half of new cases present with locally advanced disease making recurrence more likely, particularly in the elderly.

Current treatments involve complex combinations of surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. All these measures however haven't increased overall survival beyond 60% five years after patients receive a diagnosis.

There have been a number of lab based studies looking at the anticancer effects of Artemisinins which appear to reduce the ability of cancer cells to survive and grow. A feasibility study at St George's Hospital showed that pre-operative Artesunate showed encouraging results, which now need to be confirmed in a larger study looking at both the benefits and side-effects of taking Artesunate in a larger group of patients.

The NeoART team took a unique approach to fund the study – running a successful crowd-funding campaign on FutSci and managed to raise over £56,000 in 3 months to purchase the drug and meet other trial related costs. A small charity called Bowel Disease UK also raised funds to support a clinical research fellow for 3 years to set up and run the study. The study team are conducting further fundraising events to support study follow-up for the next 7 years.

For further information or to donate please visit the study website:
http://neoarttrial.org/


Sweet Wormwood

Respiratory Research

Dr Monica Nordstrom and Rakhi Patel lead on the Respiratory Research within the Trust. They have undertaken various advanced respiratory clinical trials over the years, which often offer patients treatment which will enhance their quality of life. Dealing with respiratory conditions can have a major impact on a patient's well-being and so being able to offer these interventional clinical trials is of great importance. During an investigator meeting in Rome in January 2017, St Peter's respiratory research team was noted to be top respiratory research recruiter for pharmaceutical company Astra Zeneca. This accolade is due to their continued dedication to clinical trials and a passion for enhancing the treatment on offer for respiratory patients.

The team are currently looking for patients to take part in a moderate to severe Asthma Study, which has been described by **The Guardian and BBC News**, as *a potential "game-changer" in the treatment of uncontrolled asthma*. This study will aim to add to previous research which found that patients taking Fevipiprant once daily had fewer inflammatory cells in their phlegm and airways, a significant decrease of asthma symptoms and an improvement to their lung function with reduced inflammation of the lungs.

More research is needed, but it's an exciting development.

If you wish to take part in this exciting New Asthma study Please call the Respiratory team at St Peter's Hospital on 01932 722310

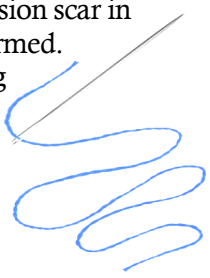
A stitch in time saves nine...

Mr Nisar, Consultant Colorectal Surgeon here at ASPH is the principal investigator overseeing a randomised, controlled trial called **HART** (**Hughes Abdominal Repair Trial**) which is running throughout the UK.

The trial aims to see if the rates of incisional hernias are affected, when using a different method of sewing up the abdominal wall after colon surgery (called the **Hughes repair**).

This will be compared to a more standard closure method called **Mass closure**.

An **incisional hernia** is a weakness in the abdominal wall that occurs at the site of an incision scar in up to 3 of every 10 operations performed. Hernias can be painful and repairing them can be difficult, which means that any method that reduces the occurrence of hernias will be a great benefit to all patients undergoing surgery.



bytes...



*The **Research and Knowledge Hub** brings together Research activities, presentations and publications written by Trust staff. Access it via the library's KnowledgeNet website.*

http://www.knowledgenet.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk

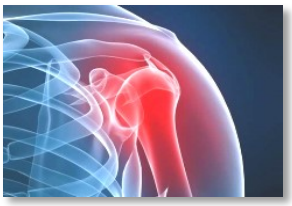
Lighter Bytes...



In the 1880`s a couple of doctors allegedly experimented on a dog by removing its pancreas to find out more about this organ's role.

They later noticed that flies swarmed around the dog's urine and then found that it contained sugar because by removing the pancreas they had given the dog diabetes. This eventually led to the discovery of insulin and the treatment of Type 1 Diabetes.

Ramifications of Research



Polymyalgia Rheumatica & Giant Cell Arteritis UK (PMRGCA-UK) (http://www.pmrgca.co.uk/content/home-page) is a registered charity established to meet the needs of people with these debilitating rheumatological conditions, supporting their friends, families and professionals.

PMRGC UK Surrey patient support group emerged as a consequence of a survey and an educational afternoon organized by the Rheumatology Department with the specific purpose to gather background information to set up a qualitative study on Polymyalgia Rheumatica. With membership over 60 strong, this group has been meeting every two months for the last 5 years, showing that there was a real need to support people with PMR and GCA. Alternating informal and formal meetings (with a speaker) has maintained the keen interest of the members. The Research and Development team have continued to support the group and reaped the benefits of this relationship as many members have been willing to participate in a further piece of research into Giant Cell Arteritis.

One should never underestimate the importance of extra-curricular activities!

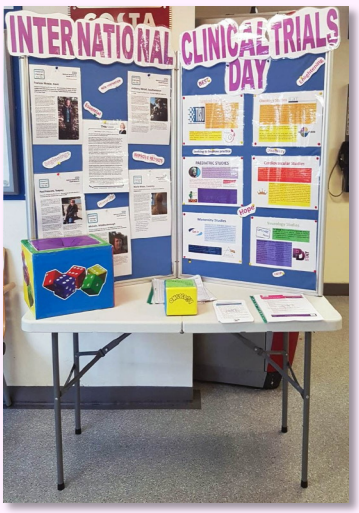
I am Research –

International Clinical Trials Day May 19th, 2017

The NIHR "I am research" campaign aims to raise awareness of the benefits of health and social care research and the impact it has on people's lives.

This year, our team produced a very informative display board and interactive game demonstrating how patients are randomized into studies.

The stall was positioned in the main entrance of St Peter's Hospital and was manned all day by Maria Croft, with many members of the research team providing support throughout the day.







See website for further details of our studies and activities, diary information and contact details.

http://www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk/research-and-development

R&D "Aspiration for Innovation"