

Welcome to this edition of the CTEU newsletter. This year is the **10th anniversary** of the Long Term Monitoring Programme and we would like to thank you all for your contribution so far.

Please continue to complete and return your questionnaires, they provide vital information to help us to understand the long-term health implications for cardiac surgery patients and design our research.

We hope you find this newsletter interesting. Please contact us if you have any suggestions or you would like to help us to design our research.

Getting Involved

Here at CTEU Bristol we don't just run research studies, we work with medical, nursing and other colleagues to design research studies that will help us answer important health care questions. Designing and implementing a study takes skill, experience and time.

Research studies often involve participants having extra medical tests that are not part of routine medical care. For some studies we may ask patients extra questions about their health. This can be difficult when someone is unwell. It is essential that we consider what it is like to be a patient at this time.

This is why it is important to us to involve people like you to help us design our studies and advise us at other stages of the research process.

By drawing on your experiences either as patients, carers or as a previous trial participant we hope to improve our future research and make it more acceptable to participants. Taking part can mean attending a focus group or giving us feedback via email, post or telephone.

Recently, a gentleman with a history of Thoracic Aortic Aneurysm (TAA) assisted us with our plans for a study about that condition. If you have had a TAA and would like to help in the next stage of that project please let us know.

Sharing knowledge is not just a one way process. If you attend a Patient Support group and the members would like to know more about 'How Research Works' please let us know and we will try to help.

If you are interested in finding out more about Public Involvement in Research or how you may be able to help please contact a member of the Research team by email (Bristol-cteu@bristol.ac.uk) or telephone (0117 342 2374 or 0117 342 3398).



ProMIS



We are researching different areas of NHS care, including cardiology. ProMIS is a study in patients who have had either a sudden (STEMI) or 'grumbling' (NSTEMI) heart attack.

After a heart attack, the body produces more stem cells to help new blood vessels to grow and repair the damaged heart. In this study we want to:

- ♥ improve our understanding of how the number and behaviour of stem cells in the blood vary over time after a heart attack;
- ♥ explore whether the number of stem cells released after a heart attack influences how well the heart muscle repairs itself in the three months after the heart attack (using MRI scans);
- ♥ investigate whether the number of stem cells and their ability to respond to chemicals released by damaged heart muscle differs between patients who have had mild or severe heart attacks;
- ♥ compare the number and response of stem cells in patients with and without diabetes.

Patients are being contacted 1 year after their heart attack to complete a telephone questionnaire.

Patients presenting at the Bristol Royal Infirmary and meeting the eligibility criteria of the study are being invited to participate. We plan to recruit at least 80 participants. So far 65 patients have joined this study.



We have recently finished recruiting patients to a number of our studies (summarised below). We will continue to follow-up the patients in the studies and then analyse the data. We will let you know the results when they are available.

SCAT tests whether a novel surgical approach can reduce the length of time the heart is stopped during surgery and reduce the risk of postoperative complications.

The SCAT trial recruited 165 combined valve and CABG surgery patients. Patients were recruited at the BHI and 2 centres in India from March 2008 until recruitment ended in July 2012.

PRO₂TECTION 1 tests whether ventilating the lungs at a low frequency (during bypass) results in a faster recovery, fewer lung complications and improved lung function compared with not ventilating the lungs. The results are now being analysed.

The study finished recruitment in July 2012. 62 cardiac surgery patients joined the study.

Pro²PT The ProMPT trial investigates whether the heart could be protected from potential damage, caused when the heart is stopped, by adding Propofol (a widely used general anaesthetic) to the solution used to stop the heart during surgery.

ProMPT has had fantastic recruitment, with 101 patients taking part in the study over 2 years, finishing in July 2012.

The **COPTIC** study aims to investigate whether taking blood samples at different points during heart surgery is useful in identifying abnormal blood clotting systems in patients, with the hope of improving how blood transfusions are used. (In this study, patients were not allocated to different treatments)

The study finished recruiting at the end of August with nearly **2,500 patients** consented over 2 years, our highest recruitment rate for a Bristol study so far.

Excellence in research recognised

Excellence in research at CTEU, in collaboration with colleagues at the University of Bristol and UHBristol NHS Trust has been recognised by the following national awards:

Biomedical Research Units (BRU) are based in leading NHS organisations and Universities. There are 4 cardiovascular BRUs across the country. BRUs take forward ideas based on laboratory research and evaluate them in healthcare settings, enabling health researchers and clinicians to develop new treatments for the benefit of patients. We were awarded BRU status in 2008, and were successful in achieving this status again for the period 2012-2017 when new awards were recently made.



Professors Gianni Angelini and Andrew Newby were successful in renewing their **British Heart Foundation funding** (reviewed every 5 years). These prestigious BHF awards not only fund their positions as Professors of Cardiac Surgery and Vascular Cell Biology respectively, but also fund other team members essential to the work of the CTEU and the Bristol Heart Institute.

The CTEU, along with colleagues at the Bristol Randomised Trials Collaboration and other researchers, have been successful in receiving financial support from the Royal College of Surgeons for a **Bristol Surgical Trials Centre**; only 2 were awarded nationally in this first round of funding. The award recognises Units at the forefront of surgical research and provides funds to develop this further.

The CTEU is now a **fully registered UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UK CRC) Clinical Trials Unit**. The UK CRC is a partnership between medical charities, the health care industry and the government that supports and officially recognises clinical research in the UK. It runs a programme of registration for Trials Units intended to improve the quality of available expertise to carry out clinical trials in the UK. To achieve registration, Units had to demonstrate to an international panel of leading world experts in clinical trials that they can conduct high quality clinical research.

Gratefully acknowledging the support of:

- ◆ British Heart Foundation ◆ NIHR BRU
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