



Is Calais healthier than Brighton or Dover?

Which is healthier? Calais or Brighton, Lille or Maidstone? A new project to compare health in the Nord Pas de Calais and the Kent, Medway and Sussex regions aims to find out. The project, worth £702,000 over two years, will make comparisons between health and health behaviour looking at socio economic variations, smoking and obesity as well as hospitalisation rates, lengths of stay, readmission and mortality rates.

Project lead, Dr Palmer (pictured right) is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at CHSS and Consultant in Public Health, employed by Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Primary Care Trust. She will lead a team of researchers from CRESGE, (a research department of the Institut Catholique de Lille), the Regional Public Health Observatory in Nord Pas de Calais, CHSS,

University of Greenwich and Kent Social Services.

"I am very hopeful that the project will provide a comparison of mortality. Do people in Nord Pas de Calais live longer and have more years disability free and what are the major causes of death? What are the reasons for any differences between health in our two regions? We will also be involving the public which is very exciting, exploring the extent to which they are involved in the health agenda and what people think their roles and responsibilities are". Said Dr Palmer.

The project is funded by Interreg, a European Commission stream financed under the European Development Fund. Interreg is designed to strengthen economic and social cohesion throughout the EU, by fostering the balanced development of the continent through cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation.



The project will start in June and have a website so that the public can follow progress. A steering group will monitor progress and ensure the project delivers its objectives on both sides of the channel.

For further information contact
Dr Ann Palmer, at: a.p.palmer@kent.ac.uk

Door to door delivery to find out the needs of the over 60s in Canterbury's Westgate ward

Older people have special needs in City's cathedral ward

The Canterbury and District Pensioners' Forum are currently assessing the needs of people aged 60 years and over in a project supported by CHSS and the Tizard Centre at the University of Kent.

The Forum aims to find out about the health and lifestyle of pensioners in the Westgate ward of Canterbury (which contains the cathedral and the city centre) and focuses on issues developed by the pensioners themselves. Assisting the Forum are Jenny Billings, Research Fellow at CHSS, and Dr Eleni Hatzidimitriadou, a researcher and lecturer in community psychology at the Tizard Centre.

Anne Belworthy, David Beddall, Maurice Mason and Stella Williams of the Pensioners' Forum designed the survey and questionnaire. It examines lifestyle, retirement and health and social services. Canterbury City Council are helping with distribution of questionnaires.

Explaining the reasons for the study, Maurice Mason, a retired horticultural lecturer who has lived in Canterbury for over 40 years, said: *'We thought about what makes life good for a pensioner and what makes life hard. Working with the Tizard Centre and CHSS, we developed a user-friendly questionnaire that should take about 20 to 35 minutes to complete – most of the questions can be answered by ticking boxes – but it will ensure that pensioners voices are heard by the council and health services.'*

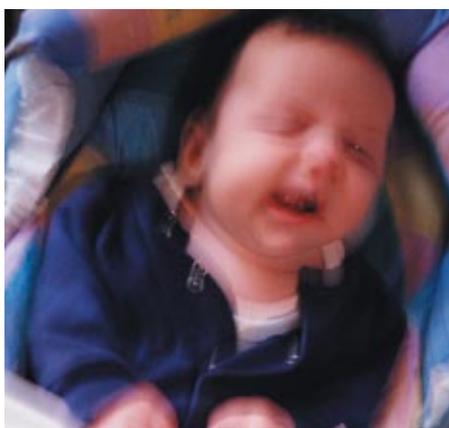
Stella Williams, a former schoolteacher, added: *'We wanted to highlight some of the difficulties pensioners may face. For example, even though your doctor is there to keep you fit and healthy, can public transport get you to the surgery?'*

Canterbury and District Pensioners' Forum are a group committed to ensuring that the views and concerns of older people are taken into account in the development of Canterbury's health and social care, public transport and other amenities. This group realised that Canterbury's Westgate ward has some special needs that are not being met.

For further information contact Jenny Billings at: j.r.billings@kent.ac.uk



Survey team delivering their questionnaires



Sexual health services for teenagers in Kent

Listening to teenagers talk about sex and relationships is giving researchers fascinating insights into what makes education and family support services successful – or not. Kent teenagers are sharing their experiences and views in a project that promises to help service development. Project lead Jenny Billings, Research Fellow at CHSS says that: *“Without listening to teenagers, services will continue to meet the needs of some, but miss vital opportunities to support the needs especially of vulnerable groups”*.

In the first of three annual surveys of 2,400 teenagers aged 15 and 16 from across schools in Kent. Sarah Appleton, the project’s research assistant said *“Teenagers have been brilliant about telling us how they get information and how they use sexual health services. This is not an easy subject, but we had around an 80% response rate in 2004 and we are very grateful for the enthusiastic support given to the study by the schools. I am hearing about things like the problems of access for teenagers. A teenager from Swale said: “My local clinic is only open on Monday and Tuesday evenings, so if somebody has unprotected sex on Wednesday, its too late to get the morning after pill. There should be services that are easy to reach and open seven days a week”*.

The three-year programme aims to describe strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the way that services are currently provided. The study, which is being carried out with the Kent Teenage Pregnancy Partnership, will seek views of a wide range of teenagers from different backgrounds. A large number will be recruited from schools across Kent, but also others such as “looked after children” are being invited to take part. *“Teenagers who move around a lot often miss out on sexual education and hearing about services, so might need special attention”*, said Sarah Appleton.

The research will highlight improvements from teenagers’ perspectives, and help pinpoint examples of good practice that can be shared. The results will assist the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership in tackling key Department of Health Targets for teenage pregnancy and sexual health.

It will provide information for the Kent Supporting Independence Programme for the development of services more suited to the needs of vulnerable young people, helping them to improve their life chances.

For further information contact Jenny Billings at: j.r.billings@kent.ac.uk

Helping vulnerable families in Thanet and Deal

Vulnerable families with young children in Thanet and Deal are benefiting from a new early intervention scheme. Health and social care workers from Kent Social Services and East Kent Coastal PCT are helping families to have speedy and timely access to the right kinds of services to prevent problems from getting out of hand. At the same time, CHSS is helping to evaluate the new service.

Project lead Jenny Billings, says that: *“The Thanet project is well under way and has recruited more than 50 families and in Deal the service is currently being set-up. Once both projects are fully established, they will be evaluated”*.

Evaluation from the organisational and user perspective will have three parts:

- A database of in-built service evaluation criteria will collect demographic and service use information about clients
- Professionals involved in the project will be asked about their perceptions of working in an early intervention scheme through focus groups
- A sample of users will be asked about their views of using the service

This information will help to inform any future projects of this kind.

For further information contact Jenny Billings at: j.r.billings@kent.ac.uk



Ethnicity report is essential reading for health services

A new report on ethnicity, highlighted in the NHS Chief Executive Bulletin in July 2004, is recommended as essential reading for anyone working in healthcare.



The report by CHSS Senior Research Fellow Peter Aspinall (pictured left) for the London Health Observatory and Department of Health has a series of key findings that will impact on healthcare, including:

- South Asians have moderately higher rates of coronary heart disease than other groups
- South Asians have much higher rates of non-insulin dependent diabetes and rates are also raised amongst Black Caribbeans
- Rates of suicide are elevated amongst men born in Scotland and Ireland and amongst young Asian women
- Some minority ethnic groups are disproportionately affected by sexually transmitted infections, a complex set of factors underlying such variation
- Black Africans are at greatest risk of TB
- Patterns of smoking, drinking, diet, and exercise in some ethnic groups highlight major health concerns for the future

The review, which was commissioned by the Department of Health's Equality and Human Rights Group examines the evidence of ethnic inequalities in health and the extent to which the NHS provides equitable services.

Professor Andy Alaszewski said that: "The report focuses on the key health priorities set out by the government including coronary heart disease, cancers, diabetes, mental health, sexually transmitted infections and communicable diseases. I would recommend this report to all those working in the health service who provide services in these areas. CHSS has ordered copies of the report to send out to libraries and research managers in Kent and Surrey because we think it deserves wide readership."

Further copies of the full report and the executive summary can be obtained from the London Health Observatory website at: www.lho.org.uk, by following the link to the publication pages.

Aspinall PJ & Jacobson B. *Ethnic Disparities in Health and Health Care*. London: London Health Observatory & Department of Health, 2004.

For further information contact Peter Aspinall at: p.j.aspinall@kent.ac.uk

Survey of patients attending hospices

The CHSS Health and Social Survey Unit is carrying out a survey of over 2,000 people attending hospices in England as both day and inpatients to find out more about their levels of satisfaction with the services provided.

The study led by Linda Jenkins and Charlotte Hastie, was commissioned by Help the Hospices, a charity set up to support hospices in their vital work on the frontline of caring for people who face the end of life and caring for those who love them. The support given takes many forms – training, education, information, advocacy, grant-aid, advice and national fundraising events and activities.

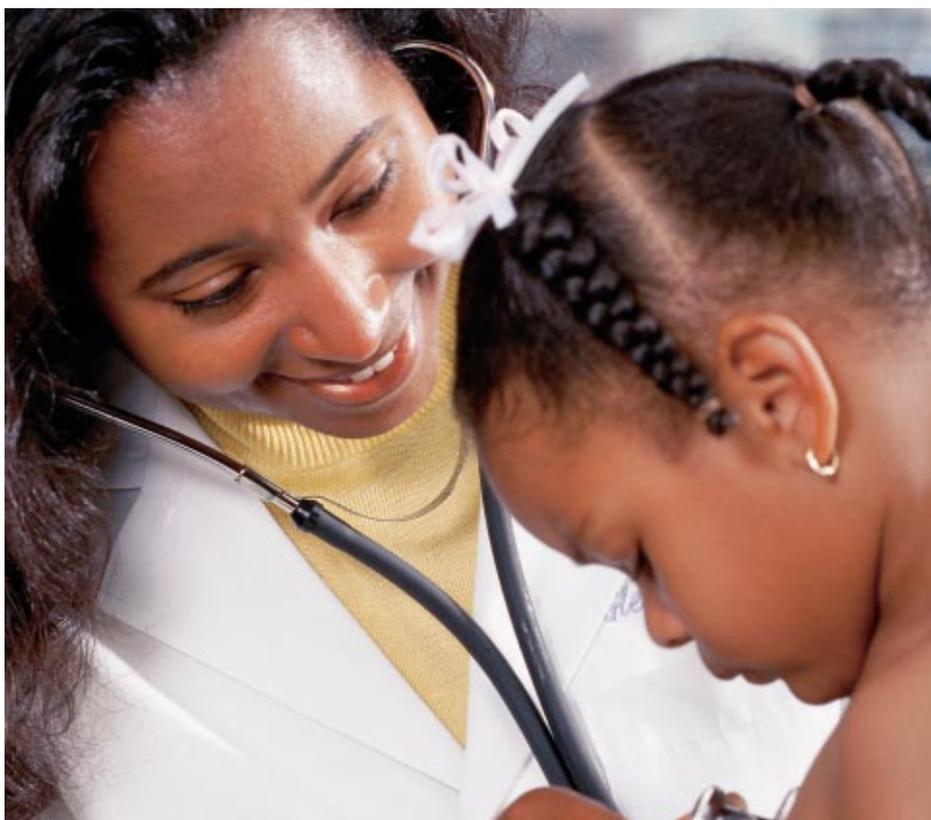
CHSS has established a reputation for undertaking quick and efficient health and social surveys. It started during the late eighties when the department undertook 'Apple a Day' health and lifestyle surveys throughout Great Britain. These surveys informed the development of health services and promotion policies. CHSS now has a dedicated Health and Social Survey Unit which provides a cost-effective solution for managers, professionals and researchers in health and social care.

For further information on the Health and Social Survey Unit contact Linda Jenkins on 01227 823680 email: l.m.jenkins@kent.ac.uk

National database of assessments for older people

CHSS's Senectus programme, which is led by Dr Iain Carpenter and funded by Pfizer Ltd has taken a step further towards a national database of assessments of older people. NHS research ethics approval has been given for assessment made using the MDS/RAI for the NHS's Single Assessment Programme to be held at the University of Kent. Customised management reports can be commissioned by care homes. Researchers will be able to access the consented, anonymised data for studies which have received NHS ethical approval.

For more information contact Dr Iain Carpenter on 01227 827760 or email: g.i.carpenter@kent.ac.uk www.senectus.org



Evaluating online learning for GPs

The Department for Work and Pensions Corporate Medical Group has started to develop online training and advice for GPs. This follows an extensive consultation exercise: 'Pathways to Work: Helping People into Employment', which outlined plans to improve the quality of advice provided to patients on matters relating to benefits and services, particularly those who have a health condition or disability. CHSS has been invited to investigate GPs experiences of using the first of four on-line learning modules to assist the improvement and development of this and further modules.

Module one is about issuing medical statements which are medically and legally appropriately. This module is currently live and has been formally accredited for four hours of continuing medical education.



Depending on experience, GPs could complete the module in a shorter time.

Researchers from the Health and Social Survey Unit will approach a sample of GPs registered as users of the modules and interview them about their attitudes to and experiences with the module.

The report from this study will be published as part of the DWP's research report series.

GPs can view the online modules at: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/medical/hottopics/pilots.asp>

For further information contact Linda Jenkins on 01227 823680 email: l.m.jenkins@kent.ac.uk

You should have been there!

If you are interested in research in primary care, but put off by a lack of know how and support, then you should have attended the one-day conference hosted the Kent & Medway Primary Care Research Network on March 15th 2005 at the Kings Hill conference centre! Feedback from the day was



Professor Mike Bury

excellent and there was a really good atmosphere.

The conference was a mixture of presentations and opportunities to discuss research in

primary care. Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Royal Holloway University of London, Mike Bury explained his research into the expert patient programme, demonstrating how his findings have implications for primary care. Catherine Minns Lowe, a research physiotherapist from the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre in Oxford discussed the barriers to evidence



Professor Clare Mackie

based practice and research and development in the allied health professions and some of the strategies she has implemented to

address these. Professor Clare Mackie, Dean of the Medway School of Pharmacy reviewed research and managing medicines in primary care.

The conference attracted over 80 health and social care professionals, researchers, managers and people from higher education.

A major event at the conference was the awarding of Primary Care Research Network research bursaries to:

Athene Lane-Martin, Health promotion specialist (mental health) at East Kent Mental Health Trust (EKCPCT), for her study into suicide prevention

Gill Packham, Senior Occupational Therapist, Canterbury and Coastal PCT for her study into the use of professional portfolios in community occupational therapy

Sergio Moura, Health promotion specialist (health inequalities), East Kent Mental Health Trust (EKCPCT), for his study into the effectiveness of a healthy eating programme

Dr David McGavin, Blackthorn medical centre, Maidstone, for his feasibility study for an RCT of psychotherapy vs anthroposophical care for patients with secondary cancer

Paul Bayliss, trainee clinical psychologist, Centre for Applied Social and Psychological

Development, Tunbridge Wells, for his study into the treatment of depression in primary care

Muriel Gall, Senior Dietician, Darent Valley Hospital for her study of community dietician practice (a comparison of dietician vs rehabilitation advice to stroke rehabilitation patients)

Fiona Cooper, Nurse Practitioner, SW Kent PCT, for her study into the effects of the GMS contract upon diabetes care in General Practice

Dr Ann Palmer, Consultant in Public Health, Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT, for her study of the health needs of rural communities

Both the conference and research bursaries was generously supported by Medway Teaching Primary Care Trust, East Kent Coastal Primary Care Trust. Pfizer and Schering Plough Ltd supported the conference

The Kent and Medway Primary Care Research Network is hosted by the Centre for Health Services Studies at the University of Kent.

For information on support for research in primary care contact Kirstie Coxon, PCRN Manager, telephone 01227 827963 email: k.coxon@kent.ac.uk

CHSS leads major new NHS development

CHSS is leading in a new collaborative venture between the Universities of Surrey, Brighton and Kent to establish a unit to support health services research and development in the South East.

The aim of the unit is to support the development of an evidence-based NHS, one in which there is an active programme of research identifying the most effective way of providing care for patients, ensuring that NHS professionals, managers and patients are engaged in research and can make use of research findings.

Funding for the South East Research and Development Support Unit, which will amount to £1.8million over the next three years, so that academics from the three universities can develop research capacity in the NHS by providing advice services, research training, mentoring and supervision and undertake collaborative research with the NHS.

The Research and Development Support Unit will work to influence research agendas of organisations in Kent, Surrey and Sussex including PCTs, acute trusts, the Strategic

Health Authorities and Workforce Development Confederations.

Professor Andy Alaszewski, who is Director of CHSS and the new Unit said that: *“Although this is a development of work that we have been providing in Kent and Surrey for the last seven years, it will make a big difference to include Sussex too. Not only does it give us access to expertise at the University of Brighton but the new unit will contribute to development of research capacity for the NHS. We are very much looking forward to working with new partners in Surrey and Sussex”.*

A single RDSU will have the critical mass of resources and expertise to make a major contribution to the development of research capacity in Kent and Medway, Surrey and Sussex and beyond.

Each University will have clearly defined responsibilities and will have a designated research lead who will be responsible for the quality of delivery.

For further information contact: David Wainwright at: d.wainwright@kent.ac.uk

CHSS participates in university's 40th anniversary celebrations

CHSS is participating in the university's 40th anniversary celebrations by hosting one of the commemorative open lectures in the Autumn series. Previous speakers have included Chris Patten, Professor Susan Greenfield, Peter Mandelson MP and Martin Rees, the Astronomer Royal. The CHSS Open Lecture will be given by Professor Ron Akehurst, Dean and Professor of Health Economics in the School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR) at the University of Sheffield.

The lecture will be held at 6pm in the Brabourne Lecture Theatre, Keynes College on Friday 2nd December 2005.

The Open Lecture will be preceded by a celebration within CHSS to mark the official opening of the new knowledge management centre. The centre is to be named after former director of CHSS, Emeritus Professor of Health Services Studies, John Butler. John retired in 2001 from his post as Professor of Health Services Studies in the School of Social Policy, Social Research and Sociology. During his career at the University of Kent he had been, at different times, Head of Department, Dean of the Faculty and Director of the Centre for Health Services Studies. John Butler is a Foundation Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, and an Honorary Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine.

While CHSS as a research unit does not quite go back 40 years, John Butler came to the university in 1969 as a research associate on a Department of Health funded project. He was director of CHSS from 1988 to 1994 and managed the department in a period when it was entirely funded from research grants.

For further information contact Peta Hampshire email: p.r.hampshire@kent.ac.uk

Men with prostate cancer lack information

According to the Prostate Cancer Charity Chief Executive, John Neate: *“From cancelled outpatient appointments, to limited time spent in clinic, to lack of information, to unresolved pain after discharge from hospital – prostate cancer patients continue to get a raw deal.”*

Men with prostate cancer are ill informed about treatment side effects, like impotence and incontinence which can be serious and long-lasting.

John Neate's comments were made in response to a recent National Audit Office report on cancer services. CHSS researchers, Dr Hilary Bungay and Rose Cappello are currently engaged in an exploratory study for the charity of the information and support needs for men aged over 75 years with prostate cancer.

The purpose and aim of the study is to determine whether men with prostate cancer are missing out on information and

medical, social and psychological support due to the fear, apprehension and stigma often associated with the disease. It will also explore whether there are any other factors preventing them from accessing available services. For example, older people may have grown up feeling the doctor 'knows best' and concerns that seeking additional information could affect their relationship with the doctor.

Every year 27,000 men are diagnosed with the disease and 10,000 men die from it. Prostate cancer is now the most common cancer diagnosed in men in the UK. African Caribbean men are three times more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer than their white counterparts.

For further information on The Prostate Cancer Charity go to www.prostate-cancer.org.uk For information about the research project contact Rose Cappello at: r.cappello@kent.ac.uk

New Senior Lecturer in Health Services Research



To support development of the South East R&D Support Unit, Dr David Wainwright has been appointed Senior Lecturer in Health Services Research at CHSS. Dr Wainwright comes to Kent

from the School of Social Sciences at Bath Spa University College. David has had a long association with Kent and following his degree at the university worked for Bexley and Greenwich Health Authority as an R&D Co-ordinator. David moved with ex CHSS Director Professor Mike Calnan to set up the MRC Health Services Research Collaboration at the University of Bristol.

David's role will primarily be linking CHSS with the local NHS, strengthening research capacity development and teaching. David's research interests include psychosomatic illness and its relationship with work stress and quality of life following treatment of cancer. His most recent work in this area has been on oesophagectomy for carcinoma of the oesophagus.

Here David answers a few questions...

What are you looking forward to in this new post?

I am looking forward to collaborating with researchers in the NHS and University departments, to develop a programme of research that addresses the needs of local NHS providers and patients, but which also contributes to the broader disciplines within Health Services Research.

How are you hoping to develop collaborative research?

CHSS and the RDSU already have a well developed framework which consults with the NHS. In addition to this I will be contacting researchers directly to initiate collaborative projects some of which will be led by the NHS, some of which will be led by academics.

How does it feel coming back to working directly with the NHS?

One of the problems with purely academic research is that it can lose touch with the everyday practical problems of service providers. Partnership with NHS researchers provides a better grounding for applied research and increases the likelihood that research findings will be acted upon.

Thanks David and good luck in the new job
You can contact David on 01227 827637
email: d.wainwright@kent.ac.uk

New MA in Health Services Research

"Finally understanding health services policy and the machinations of Europe's largest employer" has been the greatest benefit in undertaking an MA Health Services Research for student, Stephen Cochrane. Stephen is in his second year and explains that he joined the health service after a career in local government, working in environmental health. Stephen said: "I already had an MSc, so I found the exposure to the social sciences and qualitative research in particular, most helpful. I have also learned about the complete pathway of care, from the cradle to the grave. This together with the emphasis on policy has greatly increased my knowledge of the NHS."

The course team stimulate group formation for mutual support and an additional bonus

for Stephen has been a hugely increased network of fellow students throughout Kent and Medway. *"Not only have we worked together on the course, but they have been supportive in my professional work and I can call on them when I need help in new areas"* said Stephen.

Experienced NHS professionals and recent graduate seeking a research career in health services research are benefiting from the new MA. The course offers a way of accessing a range of career opportunities in health and social care research and an opportunity for either a career change, or an enhancement of their career development.

The course is full time for one year, or part time over two years with these modules:

- research design and data collection
- using secondary and qualitative data
- philosophical approaches to research
- quantitative analysis
- the management of health risks
- the formation and implementation of health policy
- health care ethics
- current issues in health policy

The MA aims to produce graduates with skills in health services research and a critical understanding of current health issues and the research agenda. Graduates should gain the ability to contribute to the development of health and social care both regionally and nationally.

Do the MA for Free

NHS staff working in Kent can do the MA in Health Services Research free of charge by winning a competition to pay their tuition fees. The award will pay full tuition fees for two students taking the course on a full-time or part-time basis. (It will not reimburse employers for study leave.) In order to enter the competition, applicants need to submit a CV giving details of their education, current post and previous employment. Entrants should also write up to 500 words answering the following question: "How will an MA in Health Services Research benefit your career?" Competition entries should be sent to Jackie Newton at the address below, by 30th June. Winners of the competition will be notified by the end of July.

If you are interested in finding out more about the course please contact Jackie Newton, telephone 01227 827851 or email: j.r.newton@kent.ac.uk, Centre for Health Studies, George Allen Wing, University of Kent CT2 7NF

Recent publications in Journals

Aspinall, P.J. (2005). Language matters: the vocabulary of racism in health care. *Journal of Health Services Research and Policy*, 10 (1), 57-59

Coxon, K. (2005). Common experiences of staff working in integrated health and social care organisations: A European perspective. *Journal of Integrated Care*, 13 (2), 13-21

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Koehler, M., Rabinowitz, T., Hirdes, J., Stones, M., Carpenter, G.I., Fries, B.E., Morris, J.N., and Jones, R.N. (2005). Measuring depression in nursing home residents with the MDS and GDS: an observational psychometric study. *Bio Med Central Geriatrics*, 5 (1)

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Alaszewski, A.M. (2004). Health, risk and society: Six years on. *Health Risk and Society*, 6 (1), 3-6

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Carpenter, G.I. (2004). Aging and community care. *Aging Clinical and Experimental Research*, 16 (4), 257-258.

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Kotiadis, K., Mackenzie, M. (2004). Simulation modelling for intermediate care, *British Journal of Health Care Management*, 10 (8), 240-248.

Kotiadis, K. (2004). A scientific approach to assessing service resources. *Nursing and Residential Care*, 6 (10), 502-503.

Kwakkel, G., van Peppen, R., Wagenaar, R.C., Wood Dauphinee, S., Richards, C., Ashburn, A., Miller, K., Lincoln, N., Partridge, C., Wellwood, I., Langhorne, P. (2004). Effects of augmented exercise therapy time after stroke: A meta-analysis. *Stroke*, (35), 2529-2536

Macdonald, J.D., Roberts, A., Carpenter, G.I. (2004). De facto imprisonment and covert medication use in general nursing homes for older people in South East England. *Aging Clinical and Experimental Research*, 16 (4), 326-326

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About CHSS

Centre for Health Services Studies is an interdisciplinary research centre of the University of Kent which has a programme of national and international health services research. The Centre draws together a wide range of research and disciplinary expertise, including health and social policy, medical sociology, public health and epidemiology, geriatric medicine, health economics, primary care, physiotherapy, statistical and information analysis.