



# REACH-HF News



Issue 3 Winter 2013

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## Work Package 1a Update

We are approaching a critical point in our intervention development efforts. We are aiming to have a good version of the text for the whole manual by the end of December! This will then be sent to a printer for help with formatting and typesetting. We are also working on developing a training course for our intervention nurses. This is a crucial component of the intervention, as the nurse needs to engage the patient and caregiver, assess their current situation, give them hope and tailor information and activities to meet each individual patient's needs – we are not asking much! The intervention will stand or fall depending on the quality and skills of the nurses as well as on the quality of the written materials. We are also starting to plan the next stage of the study – a 'feasibility study' where we can test out the intervention in around 20 people with heart failure (our REACH-HF test pilots!) and get some feedback (from the patients, the nurse and the caregivers) about how the intervention is working for them and if we can do anything to improve it. So, it is a busy time for the intervention development team and we are looking forward to seeing the fruits of our efforts over the last year!

## Conferences

Several members of the REACH-HF team attended the annual BACPR conference in Solihull on 3rd and 4th October. It was an informative event and Jenny Wingham presented a poster about involving heart failure patients and their caregivers in research and specifically in the REACH-HF project. This was in addition to three systematic reviews presented by Prof. Rod Taylor. Jenny more recently attended the PenCLAHRC PPI conference in Exeter and presented a poster based on her work with patients and caregivers.

## Work Package 1b Update

WP1b is almost complete! 22 interviews in Cornwall, Birmingham and Leicester have taken place, in addition to a focus group in Cornwall to decide on order and priorities for the caregiver manual.

A big **THANK YOU** to the areas that have helped in recruitment.

The caregiver resource has now been drafted and is divided into three main sections: **1. Providing Support**  
**2. Being a Caregiver** and **3. Getting Help**

## Literature Searching

**A reminder that if you would like to be added to the mailing list for any new articles relevant to the REACH-HF project, please contact Sarah on (01872) 255167 or e-mail Sarah.Buckingham@rcht.cornwall.nhs.uk**

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## WP3 Update

The trials management team at PenCTU have been busy finalising the protocol for the feasibility study in WP3. The protocol and associated documents have now been submitted for ethical approval and will be considered at a Research Ethics Committee meeting in Berkshire on 17th December. The approvals will be in place ready for the feasibility study to begin in March 2014.

Cornwall commissioners have agreed to fund our intervention nurses and Peninsula Community Health (PCH) have kindly agreed to provide the nurses we need. The Excess Treatment Costs were agreed in 2 hours! The sponsor, Chris Cannaby, and the Peninsular Comprehensive Local Research Network lead Sarah Myers are working closely with the remaining centres.

## Arrivals and Departures

A warm welcome to Jenny Elliott, who joins the Heart Manual Office team at NHS Lothian on 16th December. Jenny comes with a current wealth of both acute cardiac and rehab experience and is also a Heart Manual facilitator and a trainer. We look forward to her involvement in REACH-HF.

Congratulations to Prof. Patrick Doherty, who has been offered a new post at the University of York, replacing Prof. Bob Lewin.

Dave Turner, qualitative research fellow at RCHT who conducted several of the caregiver interviews in WP1b, will be leaving at the end of the year. Thank you for your hard work and good luck for the future.

## Patient and Public Involvement Update

The last PPI meeting took place in Truro on 5th November. This was another productive evening and the group gave valuable feedback on the draft manual chapters 'Understanding Heart Failure', 'Managing Stress' and 'Managing Your Condition'. There was also a useful discussion on the monitoring components of the manual, format and how to encourage heart failure patients and carers to use the manual, based on the group's own experiences.

The PPI group has now been asked to give their feedback on the 'Progress Tracker' section, the draft caregiver resource and the patient-facing documents that will be used in the trials (before submission for ethical approval).

### Dates for Your Diary:

- Programme Management Group (PMG) meeting on **6th December** at 1.00 pm (buffet lunch available from 12.30) in JS07, Smeall building, Exeter University (with Trial Oversight Group meeting 11.30–12.00, same venue)
- Patient and Public Involvement meeting at The County Arms, Truro on 8th January 6.00pm
- The first PMG meeting of 2014 will take place on **28th February** at 1.00–4.00 pm (venue TBC)
- Intervention nurse training: 18th to 20th March



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