

Regional Clinical Healthcare Science Leads

Office of the Chief Scientific Officer

February 2021

NHS England and NHS Improvement



Eight Regional Clinical Healthcare Science (HCS) Leads were appointed in November 2020:



Why are these regional HCS roles needed?



Healthcare Scientists will be an essential part of the Regional, ICS and PCN multidisciplinary teams. Regionally they will be responsible for offering scientific advice and expertise while also collaborating and coordinating delivery networks regionally.

They will also support the expansion of preventive measures, for example, in cardiovascular disease will be achieved through access to healthcare science services within the community; such as in Community Diagnostic Hubs (CDH) and within primary care networks (PCNs); for example, testing for atrial fibrillation, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and other risk factors.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, lead healthcare scientists have been actively engaged in the national, regional and local responses. This includes supporting regional medical teams HCS strategic and operational leadership.

Added value has been demonstrated in four key areas;

- Leadership
- Workforce
- Diagnostic services
- Service improvement

What is the role of the Regional Healthcare Science Clinical Leads?



The Regional Healthcare Science Leads will collaborate and coordinate with colleagues within NHS England and NHS Improvements' regional structures.

Working in collaboration, the post holders will adopt an integrated approach with colleagues across the system, influencing and advising the system to improve quality and outcomes for patients and contribute to the embedding of innovation and science in healthcare. They will establish a formalised regional network, which will provide clear lines of accountability and responsibility.

They will act as the conduit from the National teams to the Region to bridge that gap, ensuring that the national steer is clearly implemented within regions and that the on-the-ground / local intelligence is reported up and factored into policy and decision making.

They will support both the Office of the CSO and the Regional Medical Directors to deliver their priorities by developing an effective strategy for promoting and enhancing healthcare science across the Region and nationally.

Dr Anna Barnes



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Anna trained in medical physics in Glasgow and became a Clinical Scientist in 1999 after completing her training in Biomedical Engineering and Equipment Management and PhD in advanced Neuroimaging in Neurology and psychiatry.

Anna continued her career in advanced neuroimaging; working at the Glasgow Institute of Neurology, New York University PET imaging centre, GE Healthcare radiopharmaceutical development team, Columbia University fMRI psychology lab and at the University of Cambridge Brain Mapping Unit developing imaging biomarkers for psychiatry applications.

In 2012, she became Lead Clinical Scientist at University College Hospitals London (UCLH) tasked to introduce the novel combined PET and MRI scanner in the newly built Macmillan Cancer Centre. During this time she also represented the Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine as their VP for External Relations and chair of their Communications Committee, gaining NIHR fellowship bids focussed on standardisation of MR imaging in oncology and data science.

Most recently, Anna represents the Medical Physics Imaging workforce for IPEM by serving on the National Imaging Optimisation Delivery Board – part of the Transforming Imaging Services initiative – during the Covid-19 pandemic. Anna is still based in the Nuclear Medicine Department at UCLH in London.



Peter Bill



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Peter's scientific background is Neurophysiology and he leads the Specialised Paediatric Service at Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital. Peter has over 20 years experience in the field and has developed a number of key specialised services such as visual electrodiagnostics, pre-surgical assessment of epilepsy and more recently non-invasive brain mapping using navigated transcranial magnetic stimulation.

Peter has a great interest in continued professional development and has established a research culture within the team as well as supporting advanced practice within the scientific team.

Peter was a previous chair of the Association of Neurophysiological Scientists professional body (ANS) and currently occupies the lead Healthcare Scientist role for the Trust and now the West Midlands.

On a personal note he is a family man, a sports enthusiast and is missing social interaction and is looking forward to meeting everyone face to face, one day.



Sarah Cooper



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Sarah is the Chief Cardiac Scientist and Training and Development Manager at the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust (RCHT). Sarah's main clinical responsibility is echocardiography where she performs and reports echocardiograms. As Training and Development manager, she provides training, support and specialist knowledge to develop junior staff and medics. This led to the Trust being awarded 'Healthcare Science Workplace Educator Award of Excellence' & 'South West Work Place Educator of the Year'. Sarah was honoured to attend the HEE South West Star Awards 2018, as a finalist for the award of Education and Training Team of the Year.

Sarah is a member of the RCHT Learning committee and has a passion for research and innovation and aims to inspire those around her with an 'anything is possible' attitude. Sarah is a member of the South West Clinical Senate assembly, providing expert advice to their Council, and is a member of the Institute of Leadership and Management.

At a national level, Sarah is a member of the Society for Cardiological Science and Technology (SCST) council and is the current Joint Chair of Standards. Sarah is a STEM ambassador, and embraces a passion for the breadth of healthcare science. In 2018/19, Sarah was selected to be one of four recipients of The Chief Scientific Officer's (CSO) Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Fellowship with NHS England.



Dr Harriet Crook



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Harriet has been a Clinical Scientist in Audiology since 2003, working in complex hearing loss at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. She has been the Co-ordinator for the Adult Implant Assessment and Rehabilitation Programme in Sheffield since 2008 and also has research interests in auditory processing, music and hearing loss.

Harriet has worked on funded research collaborations with the University of Sheffield Departments of Music, Computer Science and Human Communication Sciences including an honorary research fellowship with the department of Music 2009-2011. She has since been a founder member of the AHRC funded 'Hearing aids for Music' research group with the University of Leeds' School of Music with a continuing program of research and publication.

She was appointed as organisational lead for healthcare science at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust in 2018. She has contributed to the National School of Healthcare Science educational programme as an examiner and member of the physiological science themed board.

Harriet has been a member of the British Academy of Audiology Board as director of education from 2014-16 and as chief examiner 2018 -2020. She is currently a member of the North East and Yorkshire Healthcare Science Board and the South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Healthcare Science Council.



Claire Greaves



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Claire is a Consultant Clinical Scientist with many years of experience working in a range of different NHS Trusts. Claire specialises in Nuclear Medicine and leads the Medical Physics & Clinical Engineering (MPCE) Service in Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) NHS Trust but has had a broader role as Clinical Director for the Science and Technology Pathway comprising Bowel Cancer Screening, Medical Physics and Clinical Engineering (MPCE), Sterile Services, and the Trent Simulation and Clinical Skills Centre. Claire is also the Chief Scientist at NUH NHS Trust.

Claire is an Honorary Associate Professor in the University of Nottingham School of Medicine and a member of the East Midlands Clinical Senate Council and Clinical Advisory Group.

Over her Career Claire has supported a number of national committees (BNMS, IPEM, ARSAC) and been is also a Technical Advisor for UKAS supporting the development of BS70000 and the accreditation systems for scientific services.

Outside work Claire enjoys boxing, volleyball and walking.



Michelle Foster



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Michelle started her career as a Biochemist completing her undergraduate degree and PhD in the field. She enjoyed the patient facing element and care so much she retrained on the STP to become a Clinical Scientist in Audiology. She has worked for over 10 years as a paediatric Audiologist and for the least three years has been Head of the large Adult and Paediatric Audiology Service at Leeds Teaching hospitals.

Michelle has a broader regional role as the founder and chair of the Northeast and Yorkshire Healthcare Science network. The network has worked collaboratively to impact the various Integrated Care systems (ICS), HEE, education and training. Michelle is also the chair of the West Yorkshire and Harrogate HCS council which feeds directly into the clinical and workforce ICS programmes.

She has represented her professional body at a national level through Academy of Healthcare Science meetings. Michelle is actively involved in an award winning regional HCS apprenticeship consortium and in the Summer was awarded a Shine award within her trust for the regional and national work she participates in. In 2017/18 she was selected to be one of four recipients of The Chief Scientific Officer's (CSO) Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Fellowship with NHS England.



Dr Jagjit Sethi



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Jagjit has over 30 years experience across the scientific and technical fields of audiology. She originally started her career as a trainee Physiological Measurement Technician in Audiology at Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel. She went on to complete her Masters in Audiology (MSc), followed by Doctorate of Audiology (DAud) and more recently attained the NHS Leadership Academy Senior Healthcare Leadership award and Masters (MSc) in Healthcare Leadership.

In her career, she has led a variety of clinical audiology services in the NHS through transformational change, which in turn has cultivated her passion for service development and quality improvement.

Other roles have also included working for the National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS) as the Professional Lead for Neurosensory Sciences where her role was to support students, training officers and other key stakeholders of the Modernising Scientific Careers (MSC) programme. More recently she led a 5-year strategy refresh programme for her local NHS Trust and was the President for British Academy of Audiology alongside working with Chief Scientific Officer at NHS England on the National Commissioning Framework for Hearing loss, chairing the Action Plan on Hearing Loss research and innovation and data, quality and assurance task and finish groups



Ruth Thomsen



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Ruth is currently working as the Regional Healthcare Science Lead for London, and Pathology Incident Director for London.

In 2019 she received the NHS Inspirational Leader of the year HEAT award. Ruth was also recognised by the Office of the Chief Scientific Officer with an Award for the highly evaluated 'Practical Skills for Education Training and Leadership' programme and was awarded the National Academy for Healthcare Science 'NHS Inspirational Leader of the Year' in 2020, where she won the award for 'Inspiring the Healthcare Science Workforce of the Future'.

Ruth also maintains a clinical role at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust working in Research and Development and Service Improvement in Audiology. More recently Ruth has been appointed to the Ida Institute Advisory Board.

Ruth leads on the Office of the Chief Scientific Officer leadership development workstream for Healthcare Scientists. Ruth has a constant eye on accreditation and quality, innovation spread and adoption which she believes is what scientists can do best. Ruth enables professional diversity by working collaboratively across complex health and care systems at a National, Regional and local level.

