Imperial College London

NIHR | Imperial Biomedical Research Centre

Patient Experience Research Centre

Young People's Advisory Network Newsletter

December 2020

Welcome to the December issue of the Patient Experience Research Centre YPAN Newsletter.

It has been a while since we have been in touch. We have been working hard to put together a brand new newsletter which will keep you up to date with the latest research news, events and engagement and involvement opportunities. Feel free to let us know what you think and what content you might like to see in the newsletter going forward !

2020 has been a challenging year for many of us and we wanted to say a big thank you for all your support and contributions this year. We wish you all a wonderful, safe and relaxing festive period, and are looking forward to working with you in 2021!!

News and updates

New Video Series: COVID-19 Research Meets Performance

Over the course of the summer, Imperial College London partnered with the Burnt Orange Theatre Company to engage 20 young creatives between the ages of 14-20 in COVID-19 research.

The project was funded by the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration Northwest London and was initiated and managed by Fola Afolabi Graduate Management Trainee with Imperial PERC.

Each group of young people created a short film which incorporated some of their personal experiences during the pandemic, and elements of Imperial College London COVID-19 research reports.

See the full series of videos on the Imperial College London YouTube.

Fola and the Burnt Orange Theatre Company were also invited to present their approach to involving young people in research at the annual National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement conference Engage 2020.

Diversifying Research Podcast

We have launched a new podcast which brings together underrepresented individuals who are either involved in research themselves or engage other underrepresented groups in research.

Over the course of this podcast series, Fola Afolabi, Graduate Management Trainee with the Imperial PERC and her guests critically consider how to improve the inclusion of underrepresented voices in research.

You can find out more and listen to the podcasts here.

Sharing science on TikTok

Find out how scientists working on vaccines have been using TikTok to provide information and reassurance about the safety of jabs in this recent article from the BBC.

Want to follow other researchers working on COVID-19 on social media? Check out Team Halo.

Take part in the Royal College of Science Union Science Challenge

The Science Challenge is the perfect opportunity for young people to communicate science in an engaging, concise and creative manner. You can take part in the Science Challenge if you're an Imperial student, no matter what faculty you are part of, or if you are in the last 4 years of secondary school. You can also enter as an individual or in a team.

Each year a theme is chosen, with 3-4 questions set for the contestants. This year's topics include COVID-19, climate change, artificial intelligence and more.

The submission deadline is 21st February 2021 at 9PM and prizes for winners range from £1200 - £350 in cash.

Find out more and enter here.

Public involvement opportunities

Help inform research on health, air pollution and climate change in the UK

Researchers at the School of Public Health, Imperial College London are inviting individuals (age 16 and over) to be involved in a research project investigating the impact of the strategies to meet the Government's target to bring greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. The researchers are looking for 2 individuals to join their steering committee and up to 12 individuals to join a focus group to discuss and shape the research. There is no specific experience required for either of these roles and time and expenses will be reimbursed in line with NIHR guidelines.

You can find out more about the project and apply for the opportunities **here.**

Help us grow our VOICE community

VOICE is an online platform which brings together members of the public, patients and carers who want to influence and inform UK health research and innovation.

Imperial joined VOICE in January 2019, with the ambition to improve the way we involve patients and members of the public in our research. The public are at the heart of what we do, so ensuring your involvement, engagement and participation in research is a key priority for us. Through VOICE, we hope to capture the wealth of experience and valuable perspectives that individuals and communities can offer on the way our research is designed and delivered.

On the VOICE platform you will find opportunities for involvement, engagement and participation as well as upcoming events relating to health and social care. To keep updated with the latest VOICE opportunities and help to influence and inform our research, sign up today at voice-global.org

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COVID-19 research and updates

Spotlight on the REACT study

Since May 2020, Imperial College London has been leading a major programme of home testing for COVID-19 called REACT (REal-time Assessment of Community Transmission). It was commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care and is supported by Ipsos MORI.

The REACT study invites random samples of the population to check for either current COVID-19 infection via a nose/throat swab that's returned to the lab (REACT-1) or past infection via an at-home finger-prick antibody test (REACT-2). Each round of data collection includes between 100,000 and 170,000 participants. To date, seven rounds of REACT-1 and four rounds of REACT-2 have been completed and over 1.5 million people have taken part. The results are reported directly to DHSC each week and have been critical in informing the actions that need to be taken to control the outbreak.

PERC, and over 15,000 public volunteers, played a critical role in the early set up of REACT-2 to ensure the at-home antibody tests were acceptable and easy to use (more on this story here). But since then, we've continued to support both sides of the programme, with immense thanks to the REACT Public Advisory Group. With the help of our eight public members, we've ensured ongoing, as well as new, plans and study material are reviewed with the public's needs, interests and perspectives in mind. Most recently, this has included exploring the possible roll out of rapid at-home antigen tests to the wider general public (to test for current infection).

The programme is still ongoing with the latest findings from REACT-1 Round 7 released this week. These were based on 168,181 swabs collected in England between 13th November and 3rd December (i.e. the final part of lockdown 2.0). While early results from this round showed the prevalence of cases falling by 30% during the second half of the lockdown. The final dataset shows that this decline was not sustained and was already starting to level off by the time the lockdown came to an end. To read more, see this news article or read the full pre-print online.

Want to know more?

- Visit the REACT study page and/or follow @Imperial_IGHI to learn more and keep up to date with the latest findings
- Learn what it's like to shape the REACT Programme from three of our public advisory group members who shared their stories in this blog earlier this year

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COVID-19 Resources

Since the emergence of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) December 2019, Imperial have adopted a policy of immediately sharing research findings on the developing pandemic.

Here you can access all public resources for coronavirus developed by the Imperial College COVID-19 Response Team to help you navigate the wealth of information about COVID-19.

Take part in the Climate Cares: Changing World Study

The Changing Worlds Study is a two-part study being led by Imperial College London seeking to explore, compare and contrast the links between climate change, the coronavirus crisis and mental health.

The research team are inviting individuals aged 16 - 24 to complete an online survey to share their feelings about environmental problems and COVID-19. Upon completing the survey, you can enter into a draw to win one of several gift vouchers.

You can find out more and access the survey here.

Upcoming events

3-4th July 2021 - Save the date: Great Exhibition Road Festival

You can keep up to date with upcoming Imperial events on the What's On page and catch up on previous events on the Imperial YouTube Channel

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Contact us:
publicinvolvement@imperial.ac.uk

Our mailing address is:
Patient Experience Research Centre
St Marys Campus
Norfolk Place
London, W2 1PG

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