

Former Students



Anne Duguid PhD Student 2007 to 2010

I completed my Chief Scientist Office (CSO) funded PhD in 2010, based at University of St. Andrews, School of Management and SDHI. My Supervisory team included: Prof Rosemary Rushmer (Teesside University), Prof Huw Davies (University of St. Andrews and SDHI) and Prof Bruce Guthrie (University of Dundee and SDHI Affiliate).

My PhD title is: **Managed Clinical and Care Networks in Scotland: An ethnographic study of healthcare work organising**. My fieldwork has been based on three sites involved with non-prioritised clinical conditions and has involved observation, interview and documentary analysis. I have been interested in theorising the MCN model with regard to the localised work, concerns and contexts of practitioners who voluntarily organise themselves in this way: how MCNs then become a valuable social space to help deal with health service indeterminacy, whilst simultaneously enabling creativity.

I am interested in furthering this ethnographic work by moving onwards to an exploration of how MCN members interpret and operationalise policy (e.g. HEAT targets); how then MCNs function as a live social space to further facilitate policy and practice dialogue and distribution.

SDHI has proved to be a valuable space within which I have been supported to evolve my research ideas and skills.

The Institute's central mission of policy and practice relevant inter-disciplinarity creates a working environment which nurtures academic capacities and creativities; a supportive network of highly skilled individuals who come together to prepare professional researchers for the next stage of their individual academic journey. Personally, I have greatly benefited from the space, support and innovation that is core to SDHI activity.



Ruth Dryden PhD student 2009 to 2012

I completed my PhD in Community Health Sciences in 2012 which aimed to explore the reasons why people do and do not engage with Hearty Lives Dundee. Hearty Lives Dundee is a complex intervention which is designed to improve access to preventive services for those who are at high risk of developing heart disease. My thesis used a mixed methodology of quantitative routine data analysis and qualitative techniques including focus groups and interviews to explore the barriers and motivators to engaging with the project from staff and patient perspectives.

SDHI provides an excellent base from which to do your PhD. Surrounded by people at different stages in their career and from multi-disciplinary backgrounds, there is always someone who is willing to help or knows someone else who can. In addition to the University-run postgraduate generic skills workshops, SDHI runs its own seminar series and holds an annual postgraduate retreat which allows students to present and receive critique on their work in a non-threatening situation whilst also allowing time to socialise and mix with other students.



Gail Greig

Summary of Doctoral Work (from ESRC Today homepage, Dr G. Greig) **Organisational learning** was introduced in UK healthcare in 1997 to promote flexible, adaptive, innovative and high quality services. This involved capturing members' learning and knowledge, often through standard operating procedures, to spread uniform, evidence-based, 'best practice' across settings. Although theoretically attractive, organisational learning remained poorly understood in practice. Conceptually, little was known about the role and importance of context in relation to such learning.

An in-depth doctoral study of three specifically chosen Scottish primary care teams found that learning was inherently collective, occurring through teams' purposeful daily work. Comparative analysis showed the teams attributed different meanings to things they used in the course of their work. These reflected local cultural and historical characteristics. Each team's work simultaneously shaped - and was shaped by - local context, which in turn shaped the content of team learning; whilst specific, work overlapped similarly with other related teams' work. This implied 'best practice' varied necessarily. Attempts to standardise working practices and services across settings could have unwelcome and unforeseen consequences.

My links to SDHI

I have been affiliated to SDHI since it began towards the beginning of my PhD studies. Throughout my PhD I have been involved in various SDHI events including seminars and, of course, the annual SDHI Retreat. I found the Retreat particularly helpful, as it allowed me to meet with faculty and other PhD students from various areas of research into health-related subjects. As well as being fun, this provided an opportunity to spend time with others who had very different interests and areas of expertise from my own. Attending each year gave me the chance to share the evolution of my own research, and to hear how others' research developed too. Sharing problems, breakthroughs and laughs with other PhDs - and with excellent academic input from faculty - made these events both productive and developmental. This and other opportunities, like the regular grant-writing workshop, are testament to the supportive, developmental and positive community SDHI provides within which to gain academic experience and to develop your research and career. In my experience, the chance to become involved with a network of people from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds - across two excellent universities - makes SDHI a great home for those interested in undertaking health-related PhD research.

Contributing to the website

If you are a former student affiliated with SDHI and would like to leave feedback about your project and/or experience with SDHI, please contact the Institute Manager at fac1@st-andrews.ac.uk