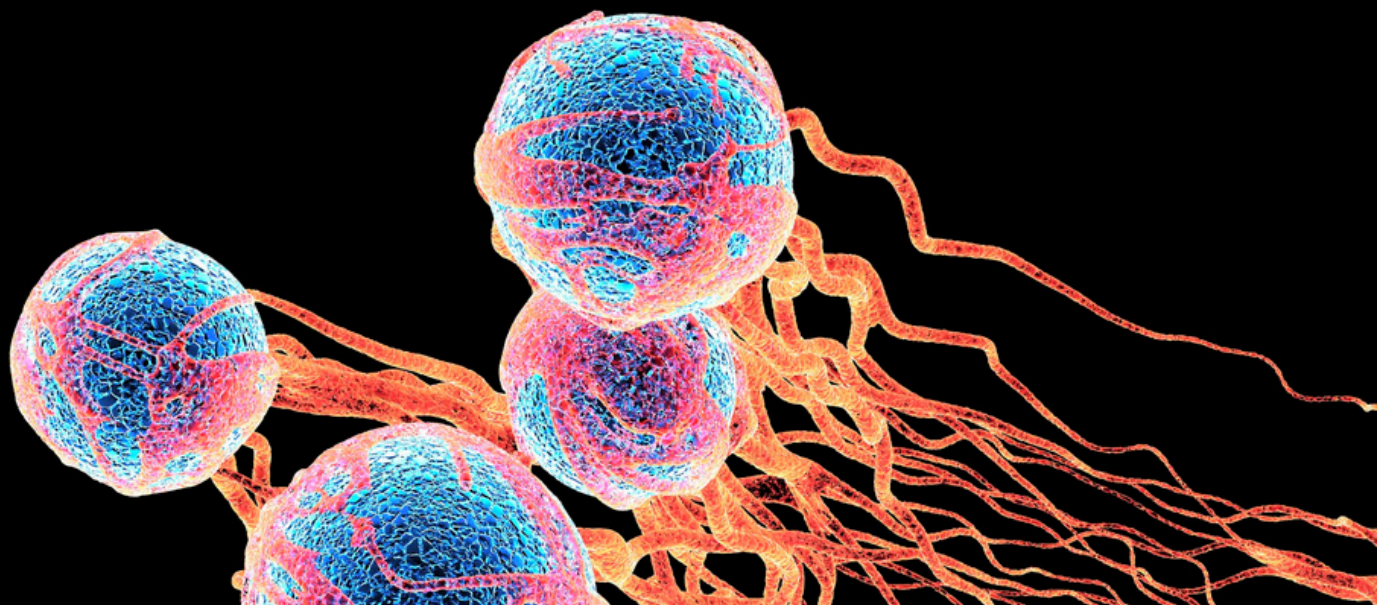




Project title: “Supporting oncology staff to engage with, communicate and act on genomic information: What works, for whom, how and under what circumstances?”



Welcome, colleagues,
to our first letter.



This issue kicks off with an introduction to our study and team.

In the UK, the genomics landscape has changed rapidly over the last decade, for both patients and the workforce. The NHS now uses genomic testing as a preventative healthcare approach to certain cancers. A 'genomic test' looks for changes in a person's genes to help doctors and nurses understand the cause of their illness or symptoms and choose the best treatment for them. Genomic testing can also help close relatives to understand their own risk of having the same condition and take steps to reduce their risk.

To help more people to benefit from this testing, nurses, midwives and doctors are now being trained to provide genomic tests and give the results to their patients without involving a genetic specialist. However, this is difficult information to communicate, and staff don't always have the support they need, including training, to make this a smooth experience. Our study will help address this gap, by exploring what training and support cancer nurses and doctors need to help them provide genomic testing information to their patients. The results of our study will help guide the way genomic testing is provided in the future for cancer and other conditions.

Over the two-year course of our study, we look forward to keeping you update on our findings.

Regards,

Dr Chris Jacobs

Dr Ruth Abrams

Meet Our Team



Dr Chris Jacobs is Associate Professor in Genetic and Genomic Counselling at University of Surrey. She is currently the Interim Associate Head Research and Innovation (AHRI) and co-lead for the Long-Term Conditions and Healthy Ageing and Cancer Expert Group and Clinical Academic Careers. Prior to that she was a Senior Lecturer in Genetic Counselling at University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Australia. Her research focuses on genetic and genomic counselling and testing in cancer and other areas, with a particular interest in mainstreaming genomics. Chris is a Registered Nurse and Genetic Counsellor with many years of clinical experience. She was previously Consultant Genetic Counsellor in Cancer Genetics at Guy's Hospital.

Dr Ruth Abrams is an Associate Professor and an organisational psychologist with an internationally recognised programme of research focused on creating healthy, sustainable and equitable healthcare workplaces. Her research examines how workforce, organisational and system factors shape staff wellbeing, retention and service delivery across health and care settings. She has particular expertise in primary care workforce development, women in healthcare, and realist approaches to workplace interventions. Ruth leads and collaborates on major NIHR-funded research exploring workforce sustainability, multidisciplinary models of primary care, women's experiences of work and healthcare careers. Her work aims to generate actionable evidence that informs policy, service redesign and workforce practice. She sits on the Editorial Board for BJGP, and NIHR PHR funding committee.



Prof. Emma Ream is a Professor of Supportive Cancer Care and Director of Health Sciences Research at University of Surrey. She is a Registered Nurse with a research career spanning 30 years. She qualified in 1990 having undertaken a BSc in Nursing with Economics at St Bartholomew's Hospital in conjunction with City University, London. Her research interests include symptom trajectories during and following cancer treatment, digital health, cancer in pregnancy, support needs of families when a parent has cancer that can't be cured, and cancer inequalities.

Judy Wright is an Associate Professor and chartered librarian with an established international reputation and specialist methodological expertise in information retrieval and evidence synthesis. Judy leads the information specialist team in Leeds Institute of Health Sciences, University of Leeds, collaborating on major applied health and social care research projects funded by the NIHR and charities (e.g. CRUK). She manages a portfolio of information retrieval and evidence synthesis work for systematic reviews, realist reviews, evidence syntheses, research proposal scoping, economic evaluations and cost-effectiveness models.



Meet Our Team



Emma Jenkins Emma Jenkins is a PPI lead with lived experience of Lynch syndrome and genetic testing. Since 2023c she has contributed to patient and public involvement activities focused on hereditary cancer, including patient education, advocacy and resource development. She is an active patient representative and volunteer with organisations such including the Kent and Medway Cancer Alliance, the South East Genomic Medicine Service and Lynch Syndrome UK. Emma works in the charitable sector and is committed to ensuring that patient perspectives inform research, service development and healthcare practice.

Tootie Bueser is the Chief Nurse of the North Thames Genomic Medicine Service Alliance (GMSA). She also holds the position of Director of Nursing & Midwifery at the Southeast GMSA. She completed her PhD at King's College London as an NIHR/HEE Clinical Doctoral Fellow, and her research and clinical interests are in inherited cardiac conditions. Tootie is a member of the CNO England's council on shared professional decision making for research. Tootie is a past President for the British Association for Nursing in Cardiovascular Care and was the inaugural Chair of the Research Forum.



Alankrita Singh is a Research Fellow at the University of Surrey where her current research explores how oncology staff can best be supported in mainstreaming genomics in oncology. Her earlier research focused on health and social care, specialising in realist evaluation, qualitative research, evidence synthesis, and patient and public involvement. She works across collaborative projects involving universities, the NHS, local authorities, charities, and community partners. Her interests include co-production, implementation of complex interventions, and strengthening the involvement of patients, families, and the public in research. She enjoys using art and illustration as tools for knowledge mobilisation, helping to communicate research findings and develop accessible outputs for diverse audiences.



1. Read our Study protocol [here](#).
2. Featured [publication](#): O'Shea R, Crook A, Jacobs C, et al. (2023). A mainstreaming oncogenomics model: improving the identification of Lynch syndrome. *Frontiers in Oncology*.
3. Read our ongoing monthly blog series to know more about our methods: [Notes on craft: serialised meeting notes on realist research](#)