

Centre for Cognitive Ageing and Cognitive Epidemiology

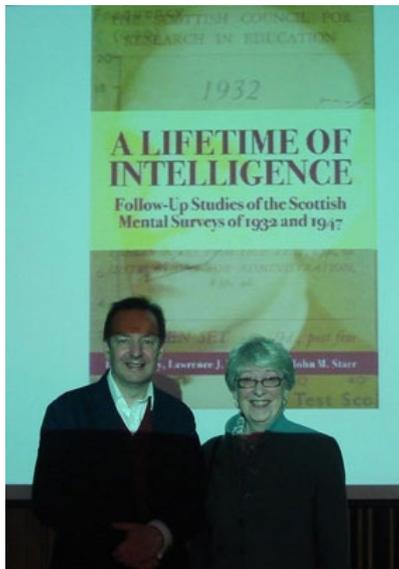


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News

CCACE official London launch

The Centre for Cognitive Ageing and Cognitive Epidemiology was officially launched by the MRC at the British Library in London on 11th May, along with the other Phase 1 Lifelong Health and Wellbeing Centres: from Newcastle (Centre for Brain Ageing and Vitality, Director Professor Doug Turnbull); and University College London (The Crucible Centre, Director Professor Nick Tyler). CCACE Director Professor Ian Deary spoke about our Centre, and Group Leader Professor Bob Logie attended. Also, at the same location on the same day Ian had chaired the Lifelong Health and Wellbeing Phase 2 Working Party meetings.



Ian with one of the LBC1936 participants after his Science Festival presentation

CCACE attracts sell-out audiences for Edinburgh Science Festival events

CCACE Director Professor Ian Deary gave a talk at this year's Edinburgh Science Festival. The talk, entitled "How intelligence affects life and vice versa", was given to a sell-out audience in the Informatics Forum on the University of Edinburgh George Square campus. The follow-up studies of the Scottish Mental Surveys provided the focus of the talk, with The Disconnected Mind research used to highlight how the cognitive ageing research is continuing and expanding in the coming years.

The CCACE was involved a Science Festival drop-in event at the City Art Centre, entitled "What makes you so special?". This interactive event for children was run by Psychology PhD students Dominika Dykiert and Dave Hope. Over 1000 children stepped inside a mock up of an MRC laboratory. Dave and Dominika ran an experiment where the children took reaction time tests and scanned their hands to reveal their level of body asymmetry. They will use the data in their PhDs.

Successful Brainstorming Session on Ageing: Lifelong health and Well Being at the University of Edinburgh

Professor Ian Deary chaired a recent brainstorming session on 'ageing: lifelong health and well being' in the Informatics Forum. The event attracted around 50 academics with an interest in ageing from a range of departments across the University. The session comprised 25 short, five-minute presentations on the different types of ageing research going on across the University. The aim was to encourage new collaborations for an expected call from the research councils. If you would like a copy of the list of speakers please contact Beverly Roberts (beverly.roberts@ed.ac.uk). CCACE organised the event.

New Research Group Leader for CCACE

Please welcome Professor Alasdair MacLullich as the new group leader of the 'Neuroendocrine Aspects of Cognitive Ageing' CCACE Research Group. Alasdair takes over from Professor Jonathan Seckl, who will remain one of the CCACE's Co-Directors. Please now direct any Neuroendocrine Research Group business to Alasdair (a.maclullich@ed.ac.uk).

Help the Aged visit to The Disconnected Mind

The Disconnected Mind offices are receiving some important visitors. Tom Wright, CEO of the new charity formed by the merger of Age Concern and Help the Aged (who fund The Disconnected Mind), will be joined on his visit on June 3rd by James Goodwin, Head of Research. Their afternoon will include visits to all key Disconnected Mind sites where they will meet with Principal Investigators and research personnel.

The Disconnected Mind project was also pleased to launch its new website on May 1st. The website can be found at www.disconnectedmind.ed.ac.uk and will be a place for the DM team, interested researchers and the public to access the latest news and progress on the study.

CCACE Seminar series

Since our previous newsletter CCACE has hosted three successful seminars. We thank Professor Alan Jackson (University of Manchester, 6th march), Professor Trevor Robbins (University of Cambridge, 30th April), and Professor John Quinn (University of Liverpool, 12th May) for offering their time to give very interesting talks. All three presentations were well attended, so thank you for your support.

Teaching/Training

CCACE Clinical Lecturer

After a successful round of interviews we have now filled the Centre's Clinical Training Fellowship. Please welcome Dr Alixe Kilgour to the Centre, she will be starting with us in August 2009. Dr Kilgour's training post is unique in that it is funded by the CCACE and supported by the Edinburgh Clinical Academic Track (ECAT) training programme. The post is designed to provide specialist clinical training in geriatric medicine and to equip the trainee with a range of research skills to become an independent investigator in ageing.



CCACE PhD studentships

The Centre has now completed the first round of recruitment for our fully funded 1+3 PhD studentships. Congratulations to Catherine Calvin (cognitive epidemiology) and Simon Cox (human cognitive ageing) who were successful in the CHSS studentships, and to Jamie McQueen (animal models of cognitive ageing) and Hiu Lam Sin (neuroendocrine aspects of cognitive ageing) who were successful in the CMVM studentships. The students will begin their studies in August/September 2009. Adverts for the September 2010 studentships (1 CHSS and 1CMVM) will be posted in November 2009.

BBSRC PhD studentships

Professor Alasdair MacLulich and colleagues were successful in securing funding from the BBSRC for three fully-funded PhD studentships for September 2009. Applications for the studentships are currently open (closing date 15th June). Full details on the funding available and an application form can be found on the home page of the CCACE website (www.ccace.ed.ac.uk).

Grants/Awards

Wellcome Trust grant

Professor David Porteous and colleagues (Paul Barlow, Juri Rappsilber, Malcolm Walkinshaw and Kirsty Millar) were recently awarded a Wellcome Trust Project Grant entitled, "DISC1 biophysical properties and structure-function relationships".

EUROCORES theme proposal

Professor Ian Deary has led an enthusiastic European group of researchers to propose a EUROCORES Theme in Cognitive Epidemiology which, if accepted, will then go forward as a European Science Foundation programme grant call. The theme involved the collaboration of 10 core proposers from a number of European countries including the UK, France, Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. CCACE compiled around 80 international scientists with an interest in the proposed programme.

Communications award

At the recent Association of Medical Research Charities' awards reception, Research into Ageing received the science communication award for 'a report for a non-expert audience'. The award was given in recognition of their fundraising prospectus for The Disconnected Mind, developed by the Major Gifts team. The prospectus was praised for "its user friendliness, clear writing style, the consistent use of the theme of a disconnected mind that ran through the publication, with engaging case studies and quotes that drew the reader in to the report".

Publications: a small selection from the Centre's recent large output

Methodology paper on the analysis of proteomic datasets

Dr Ruth Deighton, a post-doc working with CCACE group leader Professor Jim McCulloch, has recently published a methodology paper examining two distinct approaches that will enhance the analysis of proteomic datasets. This paper highlights the possibility for cross-group collaboration between CCACE research groups as Dr Alan Gow, a CCACE Associate member of the Cognitive Ageing research group, collaborated on the paper. Deighton, R., Short, D.M., McGregor, R.J., Gow, A.J., Whittle, I.R., & McCulloch, J. (2009). The utility of functional interaction and cluster analysis in CNS proteomics. *Journal of Neuroscience Methods*, 180, 321-329.

Two systematic reviews in brain imaging

CCACE group leader Professor Joanna Wardlaw and colleagues have published two systematic reviews in the journal *Neurobiology of Aging*. The first examined evidence that blood-brain barrier permeability is altered in patients with manifestations of cerebral microvascular disease. The second examined the current literature on metabolic changes with healthy ageing. Farrall, A.J., & Wardlaw, J. (2009). Blood-brain barrier: Ageing and microvascular disease – systematic review and meta-analysis. *Neurobiology of Aging*, 30, 337-352. Haga, K.K., Khor, Y.P., Farrall, A., & Wardlaw, J.M. (2009). A systematic review of brain metabolic changes, measured with ¹H magnetic resonance spectroscopy, in healthy aging. *Neurobiology of Aging*, 30, 353-363.

The relative influence of cognition and other standard risk factors for death

Dr Beverly Roberts has an in press paper in the journal *Intelligence* which examines the relative association between reaction time and established risk factors for total and cardiovascular disease mortality. The paper found that reaction time was the second most important risk factor for death after smoking for total mortality and after blood pressure for death from cardiovascular disease. Roberts, B.A., Der, G., Deary, I.J., & Batty, G.D. (in press). Reaction time and established risk factors for total and cardiovascular disease mortality: Comparison of effect estimates in the follow-up of a large, UK-wide, general-population based survey. *Intelligence*.

Press coverage: a small selection from the Centre's recent large output

A number of our Centre scientists have received press coverage in the past few months for their work. Dr David Batty received coverage on his work on linking IQ and risk of death in one million Swedish men. Professor Joanna Wardlaw published work on lacunar stroke mechanisms in the *Annals of Neurology* and her findings were quoted by the *Scotsman* newspaper, Channel 4 news, and the *Sun* newspaper. The research article noted above by Dr Beverly Roberts on cognition and mortality gained interest from a range of UK newspapers and, alongside Mr Geoff Der, she gave a broadcast interview on the subject to Radio Scotland. The *Scotsman* and *Herald* ran stories on a paper published by Professor Ian Deary on intelligence and medication compliance. Professor Ian Deary wrote an invited article for *Project Syndicate* entitled, "Why do smart people live longer?". This highlighted CCACE research and was subsequently published by 23 newspapers in 9 languages: Czech, Danish, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Invited Talks

CCACE Director presenting at Cheltenham Science Festival and summer conferences

Professor Ian Deary has been invited to give a talk on, "A lifetime of intelligence" at Cheltenham Science Festival on 6th June at Cheltenham Town Hall. Ian is also giving keynote lectures to the International Society for the Study of Individual Differences in Chicago in July, and to the National Conference of the University of the Third Age in Edinburgh in September.

CCACE Group Leader to give summer conference talks

Professor David Porteous will deliver a presentation at the 14th Annual Meeting of the Institute of Biology to be held at Stirling University of Thursday 4th June. He has also been invited to speak at the Gengage (the Scottish Healthcare Genetics Public Engagement Network) conference on 17th June in Glasgow.

New appointments

Knowledge Transfer Officer

We are currently advertising for a part-time (55% FTE) CCACE Knowledge Transfer (KT) Officer (closing date 5th June). Their main role will be to work with Centre members in all aspects of scientific reporting, outreach and public relations activities to maintain the Centre's high profile and good reputation with the scientific community, the public, policy makers, and industry. Please visit www.jobs.ed.ac.uk (ref: 3010987) for further details and an application form.

Statistical Geneticist and Bioinformatician in Cognition

We are advertising for a full time statistical geneticist/bioinformatician (closing date 12th June). This individual will work in David Porteous's unit in the Molecular Medicine Centre at the Western General Hospital and will work on the genetic datasets generated by CCACE members. Please visit www.jobs.ed.ac.uk (ref: 3010950) for further details and an application form.

Animal technician

We shall readvertise this post in the coming weeks.

Using the CCACE core staff

In order to advertise the useful and varied skills of the CCACE core staff we have produced a set of individual brochures explaining the services that they can provide. All Centre members will receive a set in the coming weeks. If you have a project or grant application that would benefit from the skills offered by the CCACE core staff their contact details can be found on the back of the brochures.

Dates for your diary

Stop press: All CCACE members' research day

To mark the beginning of the second year of the Centre the annual Centre Research Day will take place on **Thursday 10th September** in 7 George Square. This year the day will include talks from more junior members of the Centre on research they have been working on during the past year. Professor Michael Owen from the Department of Social Medicine at Cardiff University will give the invited lecture. All Centre members should attend and are warmly invited to stay for the drinks reception after the meeting. We shall soon be sending out a call for abstracts for the meeting.

SINAPSE annual meeting

SINAPSE (Scottish Imaging Network—A Platform for Scientific Excellence) are holding their annual scientific meeting on **17th June** at The Royal College of Physicians Edinburgh.

Seminar series timetable

There are a number of regularly scheduled seminars across the University that may have content related to cognitive ageing. Many thanks to Jane Haley from Neuroscience for putting this list together.

	Lunchtime	Afternoon
Monday	<p>SFC Brain Imaging Research Centre: 12-1pm, alternate weeks, Western General Hospital (www.sbirc.ed.ac.uk/education)</p> <p>Geriatric Medicine: 1.15-2pm, monthly, Royal Infirmary, Little France</p>	<p>Psychology Colloquia: 4.15-5.30pm, weekly, 7 George Square (www.psy.ed.ac.uk/seminars)</p>
Tuesday	<p>Cardiovascular Sciences: 12-1pm, weekly, QMRI, Little France (www.cvs.med.ed.ac.uk)</p>	
Wednesday		<p>Stroke Research Group: 2-3pm, weekly, Western General Hospital (www.dcn.ed.ac.uk/dcn/stroke)</p> <p>CCBS – Psychiatry: 2-3pm, alternate weeks, Royal Edinburgh Hospital (www.pst.ed.ac.uk)</p>
Thursday		<p>Molecular Medicine Centre: 12-1pm, 2 per month, Western general Hospital (www.mmc.med.ed.ac.uk/seminars)</p> <p>MRC Human Genetics Unit: 1-2pm, weekly, Western General Hospital (www.hgu.mrc.ac.uk/seminars_section)</p>
Friday	<p>MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine, 12-1pm, weekly, Kings Buildings (www.crm.ed.ac.uk/events)</p> <p>Inflammation Research, 12-1pm, weekly, QMRI, Little France (www.cir.med.ed.ac.uk/internal/seminarprogramme)</p>	<p>Psychology – Human Cognitive Neuroscience, 4-5pm, weekly, 7 George Square (www.psy.ed.ac.uk/research/hcn/whatson)</p> <p>Cognitive Neuroimaging, 3.30-5pm, monthly, 1 George Square (www.psy.ed.ac.uk/events/research_seminars)</p> <p>Neurodegeneration, 4-5pm, alternate weeks, Little France (www.cnr.ed.ac.uk/newsevents/seminars)</p>

Contact and news

If you have any news, planned events, new research grants, new prominent research papers, or media coverage of your work—or anything you want to tell us about—then please send the details to Beverly Roberts (beverly.roberts@ed.ac.uk) and we shall include it in a future Centre Newsletter.