



# Research Bulletin from the Diabetes Trials Unit Translational Research Group

Issue 6 – April 2012

Welcome to the Translational Research Group (TRG)'s research bulletin, where we share our group's recent activities, and keep you up-to-date with our current studies. We hope it's an interesting read!

## TRG COMPLETES ITS FIRST STUDY

The TRG has completed a study that evaluated whether a novel electronic screening device may enable people to test themselves for diabetes in the comfort of their own home.



The findings of this study, funded by the pharmaceutical company Novartis but designed and run by the TRG, were presented at the 2012 Diabetes UK (DUK) Professional Conference in Glasgow. The results have been submitted for publication in a scientific journal and will be detailed in a future edition of the TRG research bulletin.



The Diabetes UK Professional Conference, which took place from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> March 2012, was themed "Diabetes: overcoming hurdles, achieving success". It is the only event of its kind in the UK run exclusively for healthcare professionals and scientists working in the field of diabetes with over 3,000 attendees.

Dr Angelyn Bethel's poster describing the first TRG study and outlining the results obtained, was well received and generated considerable interest.

## DUK RD Lawrence Lecture Award

At Diabetes UK we were delighted to see an outstanding RD Lawrence Lecture given by Dr Katharine Owen about rare types of diabetes and new methods to diagnose them. Dr Owen is a NIHR-funded Clinician Scientist, and an OCDEM Consultant Physician. She was given the prestigious RD Lawrence Lecture award for her outstanding genetic research work. Congratulations Katharine!

## Should all people with diabetes take aspirin to help prevent heart disease?

A new TRG study is seeking to find out if changing the way we give aspirin to people with type 2 diabetes could help protect them from heart attacks and strokes.

High blood pressure, smoking, diabetes and high cholesterol are well known 'risk factors' that increase a person's chance of developing heart disease. People can help to minimise their impact by making changes to their lifestyle, or by taking medicines prescribed by their doctor.



One of these medicines is aspirin, which helps prevent both heart attacks and strokes because it makes platelets (a component of our blood) less likely to stick together and form a clot. Blood clots can cause heart attacks when they block an artery that supplies blood (and oxygen) to the heart muscle, or a stroke when they block an artery supplying blood to the brain. Aspirin is usually well tolerated, but on rare occasions can cause problems with bleeding.

“Unfortunately, aspirin does not appear to work as well in people with diabetes, who have a 2 fold greater risk of heart attack or stroke than people without diabetes” says Dr Angelyn Bethel, who is leading the TRG study. “There are probably many reasons why this is true, but one possibility is that their platelets are more ‘resistant’ to aspirin,” she says.



With funding from the British Heart Foundation, the TRG are looking for 24 people with diabetes who do not have heart disease to join a 12-week study to examine the potential benefits of different doses of aspirin. Each person will receive in random order 100 mg aspirin once a day, 200 mg once a day or 100 mg twice a day, for two weeks at a time.

“We will measure the effect of these different aspirin doses on platelets to see if taking aspirin more frequently or at a higher dose makes the them less *sticky*” says Dr Bethel. “We hope this may help to unravel why aspirin may be less effective in people with diabetes. If a higher dose of aspirin can help protect their heart health and doesn’t cause harm, that would be great news”.

To find out more about this study and how you can get involved in our diabetes research, email [cru@ocdem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:cru@ocdem.ox.ac.uk) or call 01865 857287.

### Successful 2012 Oxford Biomedical Research Centre Open Day

Several groups within the Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) diabetes theme took part in this year’s public open day which was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> March in the Churchill Hospital.

This third annual event was filled with enthusiastic patients, members of the public and healthcare professionals all there to learn more about local science and medicine.

Tucked in amongst stands focusing on many subjects, from retinal implants and meningococcal vaccines to clinical trials in cancer, there was a steady stream of people to

our busy diabetes corner, all interested in hearing more about new developments.

Professor Rury Holman, the Oxford Biomedical Research Centre diabetes theme, leader said “It is wonderful to see so many people here taking their time to walk around the exhibitions and to learn about the pioneering work that Oxford is undertaking in diabetes”.

### UKCTG - UK Clinical Trials Gateway

Research and clinical trials are an everyday part of the NHS. The UK Clinical Trials Gateway (UKCTG) provides easy to understand information about clinical research trials running in the UK, and gives access to a large range of information about these trials. The UKCTG aims to allow you to search a number of different international trial registries to find clinical trials that are of interest to you or your clinician that are taking place in the United Kingdom. They even provide a free iphone app to enable you to do so. Their website is at [www.ukctg.nihr.ac.uk/](http://www.ukctg.nihr.ac.uk/)

### VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

OCDEM is a leading research centre and we are always looking for new volunteers, with or without diabetes, to join our research register.

If you, or someone you know, would like further details on our upcoming studies, or are interested in joining our research register, please head to our TRG website at [www.dtu.ox.ac.uk/trg](http://www.dtu.ox.ac.uk/trg).

### FIND OUT MORE

For further information about our group and what we do, visit our website, [www.dtu.ox.ac.uk/trg](http://www.dtu.ox.ac.uk/trg) or e-mail us at [trg@dtu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:trg@dtu.ox.ac.uk).