

# HEB Newsletter

Health Economics at Bristol

Winter 2018, Issue 5



**HESG comes to Bristol**

**20th-22nd June 2018**

***Look inside for more information***

*The HEB team*

## “Welcome from Will”



Hello and welcome to the Winter 2018 edition of the HEB Newsletter. Inside you'll find details of the Bristol Summer 2018 HESG meeting. Please mark the dates in your diary. We're looking forward to welcoming you to Bristol, hearing about the latest in Health Economics research and showing you some of the things we love about the city – home of Ribena, the pirate Blackbeard and the world's largest hot air balloon manufacturer, apparently.

Our applied research, highlighted in this issue, nicely sums up the current NHS funding dilemma. Exciting new treatments offer a breakthrough in providing an effective cure for patients with hepatitis C, but cost tens of thousands of pounds per patient treated. In the current financial climate, if the NHS invests more in hepatitis C then savings have to be made elsewhere. As a result many commissioners are narrowing the boundaries of care provided by the NHS. Patients with Coeliac Disease can no longer receive prescriptions for Gluten Free foods in many areas of England, shifting the costs onto patients. Our research will explore whether this is economically and morally justified.

We continue to strengthen collaboration with colleagues in the Department of Economics. We will be teaching on the MSc Economics, Health Economics module run by Dr Stephanie von Hinke and Prof Gerard van den Berg – whose work on the long-run effects of conditions early in life on health and other outcomes is outlined in this issue. The case for many public health initiatives rests on the extent to which interventions early in life change behaviour and outcomes over the lifecourse – but high quality causal evidence is scarce and relies on econometric analysis of natural experiments.

**Will Hollingworth, Director of HEB**

## Horizon 2020 funding awarded

Joanna Thorn ([@ThornJC](#)), Will Hollingworth ([@willh108](#)), Sian Noble

HEB colleagues were awarded three years of funding from the Horizon2020 programme



PECUNIA (“ProgramME in Costing, resource-use measurement and outcome valuation for Use in multi-sectoral National and International health economic evaluAtions”) is an ambitious project that aims to establish standardised costing and outcome assessment measures for optimised national healthcare provision in the European Union. The three million euro project (funded through the Horizon 2020 programme) led by Judit Simon at the Medical University of Vienna, formally got underway in January 2018 when the ten European partner institutions held a meeting in Vienna. **Will Hollingworth**, **Sian Noble** and **Jo Thorn** will be focusing on the methodology of cost measurement.

## HESG Summer 2018

HEB team ([@UoBrisHEB](#))

We are delighted to be hosting the 2018 summer meeting of the Health Economists’ Study Group (HESG), **20th-22nd June**.

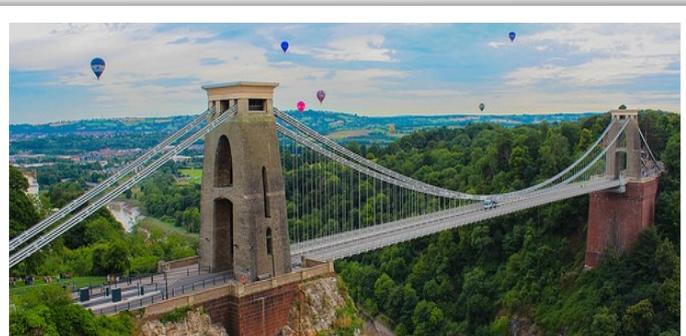
HESG is an internationally renowned meeting, where health economists meet and hold constructive discussions on work-in-progress research papers. Priority is also given to PhD students and early career researchers. All papers are pre-circulated and discussed in hour-long sessions where health economists from other institutions lead the discussion of papers, rather than author presentations.

The summer meeting will take place at [Mercure Bristol Holland House](#) with accommodation on site. Our topical plenary will be focused on the *Opportunities and challenges of Brexit for health economists*. Registration and abstract submission is now open — visit our [meeting website](#) for further details.

Bristol is a vibrant city, with street art from Banksy and others sure to inspire conversation amongst delegates. Bristol was voted the best place to live in the UK in 2017 by the Times newspaper and became the first UK city to hold the title of European Green Capital in 2015. We look forward to showcasing all that Bristol has to offer – both inside and outside of meeting sessions!

### Key dates for your diaries:

Abstract & Registration opens: 1st February 2018  
 Abstract submission closes: 2nd March 2018  
 Abstract decisions on acceptance: 13th April 2018  
 Early bird registration closes: 30th April 2018  
 Standard registration closes: 11th May 2018  
 Accepted papers submitted by: 11th May 2018



See you in Bristol!

### HEB Research Themes:

- Economics of Health and Care across the Life Course
- Methods for Applied Health Economics
- Efficiency and Equity in Decision Making

## Cost-effectiveness of shortened treatment duration for chronic hepatitis C virus

Christopher Fawsitt ([@CGFawsitt](#)) Nicky Welton

Direct-acting antivirals are successful in curing hepatitis C virus (HCV) in over 95% of patients treated for 12 weeks. However, the cost of a 12-week treatment course is high, with prices ranging from £30,000 to £60,000 per patient in the UK. Shortened treatment durations, which have lower cure rates, have been proposed to reduce costs. With colleagues from Imperial College London and University of Bristol, HEB members Christopher and Nicky evaluated the cost-effectiveness of different shortened treatment durations for non-cirrhotic patients with HCV genotype 1. Shortening treatment to eight or six weeks is cost-effective, while shorter durations are not. Christopher shared these findings at ISPOR Glasgow, 2017 – look out for this publication in 2018. Christopher and Nicky are now attempting to identify patients for whom shortened treatment is likely to be effective, with treatment duration optimised accordingly.



Nicky and Christopher

## Financial & moral complexities of NHS prescriptions for gluten free foods

Myles-Jay Linton, Tim Jones, Will Hollingworth ([@willh108](#))



Tim, Myles & Will

NHS England is currently analysing public feedback following a national consultation in 2017 on the availability of gluten-free (GF) foods through NHS prescriptions. GF foods are prescribed to patients with Coeliac Disease (CD), an autoimmune disease characterised by gastrointestinal symptoms following the ingestion of grains containing gluten (wheat, barley and rye). Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are increasingly opting to restrict these provisions in the face of increasing financial pressures.

HEB members Myles, Tim and Will have been using prescription data linked to GP characteristics to investigate how further policy changes may impact patients and expenditure within CCGs. The availability of GF food on prescription highlights an important question concerning what should constitute 'healthcare', and a much broader moral ambiguity concerning what the NHS has a responsibility to provide.

## HEB's links across the University



Gerard

Gerard van den Berg (affiliate member of HEB)

Gerard is Professor of Economics at the University of Bristol. Most of his research is in the fields of health economics, econometrics, and labor economics. In particular, he is interested in long-run effects of conditions early in life, bereavement effects, and the interrelations between health and labor at the individual level. In 2009, Gerard won the so-called Alexander von Humboldt Professorship prize of 3.5 million euro, supported by the German federal government through the Humboldt Foundation. Van den Berg was the first economist and social scientist to receive this prize. Before this, he was Professor at the Dept. of Economics at VU University Amsterdam. Previously he worked at Northwestern University, Princeton University, and Stockholm School of Economics. Since 2013 he has been a Fellow of the Econometric Society.

# Bookings are open for our short course

**Introduction to Economic Evaluation, 5th-7th March 2018**

Designed for clinicians, public health specialists and health care researchers. No previous knowledge required.

We still have a few places left - for further details and to book please click [here](#)

## Key publications

### Methods for Applied Health Economics

**Coast, J.** (2017). A history that goes hand in hand: Reflections on the development of health economics and the role played by Social Science & Medicine, 1967-2017. Social science & medicine [doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.10.032](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.10.032)

**Dritsaki, M., Gray, A., Petrou, S., Dutton, S., Lamb, S. E., & Thorn, J. C.** (2017). Current UK Practices on Health Economics Analysis Plans (HEAPs): Are We Using Heaps of Them? PharmacoEconomics, 1-5. DOI: [10.1007/s40273-017-0598-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s40273-017-0598-x)

**Keeney, E., Dawoud, D., & Dias, S.** (2017). Different Methods for Modelling Severe Hypoglycaemic Events: Implications for Effectiveness and Cost-Effectiveness Analyses. Value in Health, 20(9), A408. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jval.2017.08.062>

**Sanghera, S., Coast, J., Martin, R., Donovan, J., & Mohiuddin, S.** (2017). Cost-effectiveness of prostate cancer screening: a systematic review of decision-analytical models. BMC Cancer. DOI [10.1186/s12885-017-3974-1](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12885-017-3974-1)

### Efficiency and Equity in Decision Making

**Hollingworth, W., Jones, T., Reeves, B. C., & Peto, T.** (2017). A longitudinal study to assess the frequency and cost of antivasular endothelial therapy, and inequalities in access, in England between 2005 and 2015. BMJ open, 7(10), e018289. [doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2017-018289](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2017-018289)

**Kandiyali, R., Lasserson, D. S., Whiting, P., Richards, A., & Mant, J.** (2017). Predictive values of referrals for transient ischaemic attack from first-contact health care: a systematic review. Br J Gen Pract, 67(665), e871-e880. <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp17X693677>

**López-López, J. A., Sterne, J. A., Thom, H. H., Higgins, J. P., Hingorani, A. D., Okoli, G. N., ... & Hollingworth, W.** (2017). Oral anticoagulants for prevention of stroke in atrial fibrillation: systematic review, network meta-analysis, and cost effectiveness analysis. bmj, 359, j5058. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.j5058>

**Edwards, H. B., Marques, E., Hollingworth, W., Horwood, J., Farr, M., Bernard, E., ... & Northstone, K.** (2017). Use of a primary care online consultation system, by whom, when and why: evaluation of a pilot observational study in 36 general practices in South West England. BMJ open, 7(11), e016901. [doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2017-016901](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2017-016901)

### Economics of Health and Care across the Life Course

**Hudson, B., Round, J., Georgeson, B., Pring, A., Forbes, K., McCune, C. A., & Verne, J.** (2017). Cirrhosis with ascites in the last year of life: a nationwide analysis of factors shaping costs, health-care use, and place of death in England. The Lancet Gastroenterology & Hepatology. DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2468-1253\(17\)30362-X](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2468-1253(17)30362-X)

## HEB is growing!



### Caoimhe Rice

Caoimhe joined HEB in October 2017. She is working on economic evaluations alongside RCTs with the Bristol Randomised Trials Collaboration (BRTC).

Her previous research involved evaluation of public policy in Spain, NHS service evaluation, and history of medicine. Her research interests include: equitable access to healthcare, and health service evaluation.

Caoimhe is working with **Joanna Coast, Will Hollingworth, Rebecca Kandiyali, and Sian Noble**

## Congratulations to:

### Sam Husbands & Paul Mitchell

Sam and Paul have been appointed to work with **Joanna Coast** on her Wellcome Investigator Award.



Sam was appointed as a Senior Research Associate and will be leading the qualitative research

Paul was appointed as a Research Fellow and will lead the quantitative research

### Jeff Round

Jeff was recently appointed as **Senior Lecturer in Health Economic modelling**



### Promotions

**Sabina Sanghera** and **Padraig Dixon** were both recently promoted from Senior Research Associate to Research Fellow.