

PEMRIG

PARKINSON'S EAST MIDLANDS RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP

Newsletter – APRIL 2024

Hello to all East Midlands' people with Parkinson's, carers, families, health professionals and others reading this April 2024 PEMRIG newsletter. Please consult the PEMRIG website (<https://pemrig.org.uk>) for details of past laboratory visits and research seminars. PEMRIG is one of twelve groups round the UK whose aim is to interest People with Parkinson's and their carers in the exciting Parkinson's research going on in the UK and all round the world.

Past events from PEMRIG that you may have missed:

'The microbiome-gut-brain axis and probiotics in Parkinson's' can be watched at: [recording link](#). You can catch up with the online meeting **'Navigating Parkinson's: Update, Imaging, and Digital Tools'**, at [this link](#). PEMRIG visited Dr Charmaine Lang's laboratory in Oxford to hear about her Parkinson's research and how this is automated. Here is a link to hear the visit again: [recording link](#).

WHAT'S NEXT FROM PEMRIG?

The online visit in May to MSD Pharma: Drug Discovery in Neuroscience to hear about their Parkinson's research is postponed until the autumn.

13th Annual PEMRIG Research and Welfare meeting 'CONTINUING TO LIVE WELL WITH PARKINSON'S'. September 7th 10.00am, to 4.00pm

This is an all day Face to Face meeting with free lunch and refreshments. The keynote speaker, **Dr Simon Stott**, Director of Research at the Cure Parkinson's Trust, will give a round up of current research and trials. Other speakers at the meeting will include **Dr Lynne Barker** (gut-brain-microbiome axis, Sheffield Hallam), **Dr Bhanu Ramaswamy** (Strength training and brain health, Hallamshire Physiotherapy Ltd), **Chris Stanley and Sarah McCracken** (Nordic Walking for Parkinson's) and **Helen Scarr** (Yoga for Parkinson's). The full programme for this event will be given in the May or June newsletter.

This event will be held at the **Conference Centre of Nottingham Trent University**, on the **Clifton Campus, Nottingham NG11 8NS** which is readily accessible from Junction 24 of the M1. PEMRIG greatly appreciates the input of Emma Parkinson and her team from Parkinson's UK for helping us with this event.

The link to register for this 13th PEMRIG Face to Face meeting will be available soon-so put this date in your diary now to reserve the day!

Next 'No Silver Bullet 'lecture – Monday 22nd April from 7.30 to 9.30pm

'How can medical cannabis help people with Parkinson's'?

Dr Michelle Sexton is an integrative medicine specialist and respected pioneer in the field of medical cannabis. She has over thirty years of experience as a herbalist and naturopathic doctor. Her NIH-funded pre-doctoral and postdoctoral research investigated cannabis use in patients with Multiple Sclerosis and its impact on inflammatory markers. She practices medicine in California. Register for this event at [this link](#).

RESEARCH NEWS

The latest eletter from Cure Parkinson's (<https://cureparkinsons.org.uk>) reports the good news that a Phase 2 clinical trial of lixisenatide has shown positive results, indicating that this Type 2 diabetes drug has the potential to slow the progression of motor symptoms in Parkinson's. This result matches similar findings with exenatide, another type 2 diabetes drug which has also been found to slows motor symptom progression. The eletter gives some detail of how these drugs work. A bigger Phase 3 exenatide trial is currently in progress in the UK and should report its findings in late 2024.

PARKINSON'S TRIALS NEEDING VOLUNTEERS....!

1. Exploring experiences of mouth care in people with Parkinson's.

Researchers from the University of Sheffield want to find out what people with Parkinson's do to keep their mouth, teeth and dentures healthy. They also want to know if having Parkinson's has affected this and if there has been a change over time. **The researchers need 15 people with Parkinson's and 15 carers.** Taking part will involve having an interview with a researcher online, by phone or attending in person if you are near Sheffield. You will be reimbursed with a £15 voucher for talking part.

Contact **Jessie Tebbutt** by MOB: **07703179151** or email Jessie.tebbutt@sheffield.ac.uk if you are interested in helping. The deadline for taking part is August 1st 2024. Read the participant information sheet at [this link](#).

2. Developing a talking therapy for people with Parkinson's who experience anxiety.

Researchers from University College London want to develop Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) that is tailored specifically for people with Parkinson's. ACT is a form of talking therapy that helps people to learn new ways of dealing with distressing thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations. This therapy has been found to be helpful for improving wellbeing in other neurological conditions such as epilepsy.

The researchers need 15 people with Parkinson's who experience anxiety and 15 health professionals working with people affected by Parkinson's. For more information read either [the participant information sheet for people with Parkinson's](#) or [the participant information sheet for health professionals](#). If you have questions contact Natasha Lyons by email at Natasha.lyons.18@ucl.ac.uk or Suzanne Reeves by phone on 07947-036-513. The deadline for taking part in this research is **September 30th 2024**.

3. Can brain training affect how people with Parkinson's feel and think?

Researchers at the University of Reading want to understand whether brain training can improve how information is stored and processed in the brain in people with Parkinson's, and whether this can help people with Parkinson's to better manage their emotions.

They need 100 people with Parkinson's who have access to a computer and a speaker. You will take part in a pre-training assessment before completing either 10 brain training sessions, or 10 placebo training sessions over a two-week period. Each training session will last approximately 20 minutes. You will also be asked to complete two follow-up assessments, at 1 month and 2 month intervals after the training.

If you are interested in participating then contact Caroline Seton by email at c.seton@pqr.reading.ac.uk or phone her on 07367-301-282. The closing date for taking part is 4 June 2024.

4. CAN CBD (CANNABIDIOL) REDUCE SYMPTOMS OF HALLUCINATIONS AND DELUSIONS IN PEOPLE WITH PARKINSON'S

Around 3 in 4 people with Parkinson's will experience symptoms of hallucinations or delusions. Hallucinations can mean that the person sees, hears or feels things that aren't there. This can be very distressing for the person and their loved ones. Current treatments for hallucinations and delusions are not very effective or come with unwanted side effects. That's why, in 2019, Parkinson's UK announced funding for [CAN-PDP](#), an innovative clinical trial working with King's College London,. The trial aims to understand whether cannabidiol (CBD) may be useful for treating these hallucination and delusion symptoms in Parkinson's. CBD has been shown to have positive effects on other brain conditions such as epilepsy.

This trial needs 120 people with Parkinson's who are over 40 years old, who have experienced any symptoms of hallucinations or delusions for at least one month, have been taking any Parkinson's medications for at least one month, are not taking clozapine and have someone who can attend visits with them to a local study centre which for our region means the Royal Hallamshire Hospital in Sheffield or at Kingsway Hospital, Kingsway, in Derby. See below for who to contact at these study centres.] [For more information, please read the participant information sheet.](#) For Sheffield contact Anna Emery or Alex Radford by Email at anna.emery@nhs.net or Alex Radford alex.radford2@nhs.net). For Derby the contact is Caroline Cheetham. Email: caroline.cheetham@nhs.net

The 'take part' hub on the Parkinson's UK website gives details of this trial, at [this link](#).

If you are interested in Parkinson's research and would like to be put on our mailing list, please contact John Turner, PEMRIG's Chair, by mobile at 07989747733 or email at: pemrig.uk@gmail.com

PEMRIG Newsletter comments, queries and submissions to the Editor (Martin Rumsby) at martin69747@gmail.com