

# Scottish Health Informatics Programme



July 2012

## SHIP Retreat 2012

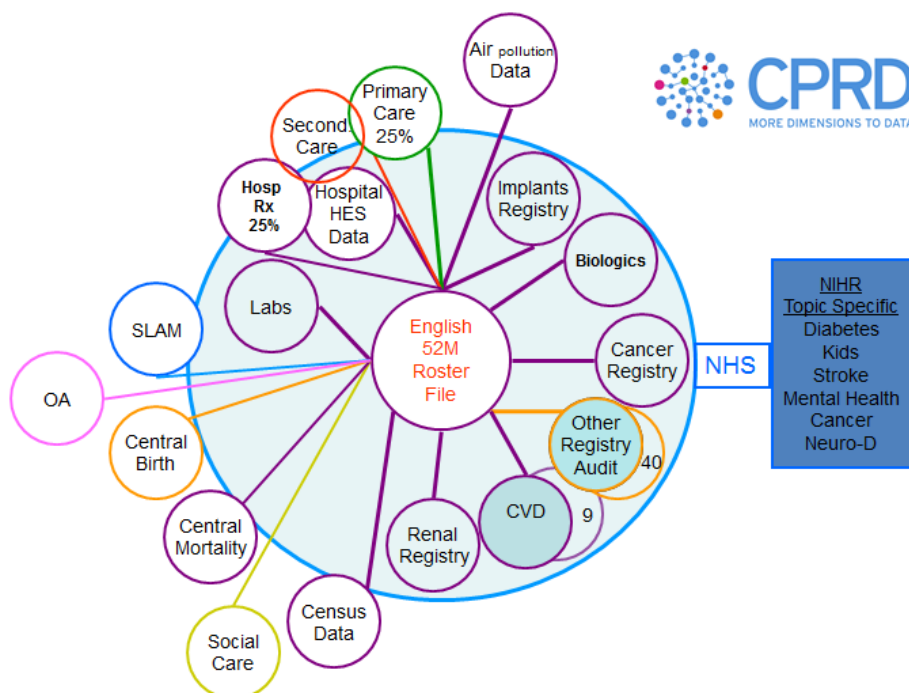
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The SHIP Retreat 2012 was held on 31<sup>st</sup> May to 1<sup>st</sup> June and was attended by 62 people. We were well catered for at Dunblane Hydro Hotel for the second year running. We were lucky to have two high profile keynote speakers, John Parkinson Director of the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD) and D'Arcy Holman, Professor of Public Health at the University of Western Australia. Prof Holman spoke on "Opportunities for Record Linkage Today & Tomorrow But will the Obstacles Prevail?" comparing the proceedings of a Record Linkage symposium from 1967 with the International Data Linkage Conference in Australia this year. We've made great strides in many of the data problems we had in 1967 and the benefits of data linkage are now difficult to refute.



Professor D'Arcy Holman speaking at this year's SHIP Retreat



However we still contend with unnecessarily conservative interpretations of the legal framework and a lack of expert system architects and data analysts. On the positive, sufficient computing power for the task is now available to us.

John Parkinson spoke on CPRD: the new English NHS data linkage service. It is the successor to GPRD and the Research Capability Programme and is funded by NIHR and the MHRA. It uses a trusted third party system to link anonymised NHS clinical data (summarised left) to any data defined by an approved protocol.

CPRD welcomes research from the private sector and makes possible interventional and observational research beneficial to public health.

## Introducing Katharine Sharpe

Katharine Sharpe has worked in various roles in NHS Scotland since 1990 having been employed previously in the US and Australian healthcare systems. She began her career in the NHS working for Greater Glasgow Health Board. In 1993, Katharine moved to Stirling Royal Infirmary Trust as Head of Information followed by a move in 1996 to the National Services Scotland where she has had a variety of roles in ISD including Head of Workforce Plan-

ning and Cancer Information Programme Principal. Currently, she is an Information Consultant coordinating implementation of the SHIP technical infrastructure to deliver an efficient process supporting academic research. To this end, Katharine is working closely with Fiona Campbell, an ISD colleague who has responsibility for developing the research coordinator service.

Katharine is pursuing a PhD in Cancer Epidemiology and is currently working with the Scottish

Longitudinal Study to understand the relative importance of area and individual socioeconomic indicators as determinants of cancer risk. She has also participated in the Scottish Health Ethnicity Linkage Study (SHELS) to understand if ethnic differences in place of death from cancer exist in Scotland.

Katharine is very pleased to be working with the SHIP initiative and looks forward to the challenge presented.  
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Katharine Sharpe

## Training Scotland's Researchers

In January 2011 an MRC report on "UK e-health Records Research Capacity and Capability" identified a need for training in electronic health records research. In a session at the SHIP retreat Dr Chris Dibben and Nayha Sethi presented work on current training for using the Administrative Data Liaison Service and Information Governance respectively, before Dr Colin McCowan and Professor Jere-

my Wyatt engaged with delegates to gather feedback on three key questions:

1. What key research skills do you think a SHIP researcher needs?
2. What training is available in Scotland in this field?
3. Can we develop a collaborative SHIP Programme of Short Courses?

There were concerns that as

Universities rely on Masters modules and short courses for income, it may be difficult to agree a collaborative approach to providing research training. It was therefore felt that concentrating on short courses for continuing professional development would work best as a collaborative option.

It was also highlighted that there are already a number of generic methodology training courses

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No.	Topic	Essential/ Preferred	Existing courses
1	Information Governance	E	SHIP eLearning
2	Record Linkage Methods /problems	P	
3	National Datasets in Scotland: Health data & others	E	Administrative Data Liaison Service listings
4	Basic analysis methods & biases	E	Many generic courses
5	Data, source, meta-data etc	P	Some generic courses
6	Design of studies using routine data	E	Many generic epidemiology courses
7	Disclosure control	E	SG Manual
8	Multi-level modelling, Spatial analysis, Bayesian statistics etc	P	Some generic courses
9	Tools / techniques for "big data"	P	A few courses
10	Current developments in...	P	

Responses from SHIP Retreat delegates on key research skills and their existing provision.

which would be suitable for e-health records researchers and there was no desire to replicate these. The discussion session therefore focussed on what were the key research skills needed, whether they were essential or desirable and whether these were currently available. The results are presented in the table below left. It was felt to be important that all researchers had accreditation for 1 and 3 before they were permitted access to data delivered via SHIP. The key courses were seen to be 1-3 and 7-9 and that there was a need to develop a course on disclosure control. Since the meeting Professor D'Arcy Holman has re-

tired and has suggested a colleague would be able to continue delivering courses on Routine Analysis of Health Care Data in future. However the suggestion was made that a specific Scottish/UK tailored introductory course could be developed and delivered next year under the SHIP umbrella. There may be some funding within the Engaging Researcher strand which could support the development if the wider body agreed.

Other potential resources / ideas that SHIP Engaging Researchers strand could examine include:

1. Provide mechanisms for mentoring / support for isolated PhDs etc.
2. Directory of projects or groups using specific datasets
3. Look at data visualisation techniques & communication training. The Karolinska Institute is known for expertise in this field.
4. Investigate possibility of videoing / recording workshops and training and making these available on line. There may be an issue with copyright / IPR for taught courses.

Contact Colin McCowan with any comments or ideas:

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## Launch of SHIP online course and toolkit



### SHIP: Information Governance

- ▶ About the 'SHIP Information Governance' course
- ▶ Legal Concepts
- ▶ Legal Framework
- ▶ 'Safe Projects'
- ▶ 'Safe Data'
- ▶ 'Safe Settings'
- ▶ 'Safe Outputs'

SHIP is pleased to announce the launch of the online training course and toolkit which have been developed by Sarah Sutherland and others at the University of Edinburgh. The toolkit is a free online resource to help you navigate the legal and ethical requirements surrounding the secondary use of health information for research purposes. It is available from the SHIP website. The course in Information Governance is a

new online self-access course that promotes the importance of good information governance, by exploring the key legal concepts involving the secondary use of health data, the legal framework governing information, and data security. The course was developed in partnership with SCRIPT – the law and technology research centre based in the School of Law at University of Edinburgh who host the course. As well as being a centre of research excellence SCRIPT is internationally renowned as a leader in distance learning.

Successful completion of this course is a requirement for researchers to be awarded 'SHIP-approved researcher status' which will allow access to the SHIP data linkage system when it becomes available towards the end of the year. Approved researcher status will last for a period of two years before renewal is needed.

To find out more about this course please visit the course web page:

<http://www.law.ed.ac.uk/ahrc/teaching/cpd/ship-information-governance/>

## Forthcoming courses

### 1 day workshop: Introduction To Spatial Analysis in Public Health and Healthcare

Presented by: Prof Sanjeev Sridhanan  
Date: 19th September 2012  
Location: University of Dundee  
Further details at [www.scot-ship.ac.uk](http://www.scot-ship.ac.uk)

### Training Course: An Introduction to Bayesian Statistics Using WinBUGS

Presented by: Prof Nicky Best  
Dates: Monday 3rd to Wednesday 5th December 2012  
Location: University of Glasgow  
Further details at [www.scot-ship.ac.uk](http://www.scot-ship.ac.uk) shortly



University of Dundee main campus