Happy New Year!

Research activities within the Pharmacy Research Group were satisfactory in 2011, with a few grants successes, a good number of publications in peer reviewed journals broadly within the area of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences, a couple of books and several book chapters. Eight research seminars took place in 2011. Among those, a fascinating talk from the invited speaker Prof Trevor M Jones was the most high profile one.

Pharmacy Research Away day was held for the first time last year. This important session provided a valuable forum for open discussion on various research-related matters amongst current members of the Pharmacy Research Group.

Department of Pharmacy started its first MSc programme in October 2011 with a first intake of 10 students. These students will undertake research projects as part of their MSc programme, in summer 2012. It is expected that these projects will generate good quality pilot data, which may form the basis of future grant applications.

Prof Satyajit D Sarker & Prof Rae Morgan
Editors

INSPIRE Visit to the Sundarbans

As part of the INSPIRE project, funded by the British Council, Prof Sarker visited Khulna University, the Bangladeshi partner of this project, in December 2011. The visit was mainly aimed at collection of plant materials from the mangrove forest, the Sundarbans. Students and members of academic staff from the Pharmacy Discipline, and the Biotechnology and Genetic Disciplines of Khulna University joined Prof Sarker to his visit to the Sundarbans. A total of 15 different medicinal plants were collected. Selection of those plant materials were based on the information obtained from the interviews conducted with the people who have been using plant materials from the Sunderbans for the treatment of various ailments.

A part of the Sundarbans showing ‘Nipa Palm’ or ‘Gol Pata’ vegetation

Ms Edith U. Ofor, a PhD student from the Chemistry Department, University of Lagos Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria, is expected to visit UoW for the period of March-August 2012 to carry out some aspects of her PhD research under the supervision of Prof S Sarker. Her project will involve isolation and identification of bioactive principles from Nigerian medicinal plants.

Editors: Professor Satya Sarker (s.sarker@wlv.ac.uk) and Professor Rae Morgan (rae.morgan@wlv.ac.uk)
Prof Trevor M Jones CBE Presents in the Pharmacy Research Seminar

Prof Trevor M Jones CBE, a world-known pharmaceutical scientist, presented a fascinating talk in the Pharmacy Research Seminar in October 2011. The title of his presentation was ‘Medicines for Diseases of the Developing World’. His talk particularly focussed on malaria and antimalarial drug discovery and development.

Further Editorial Advisory Board Memberships for Prof Sarker

Prof Satyajit D Sarker has been appointed to the editorial advisory boards of ISRN Chromatography, which is an open access journal published by the Hindawi Publishing Corporation.

Mini Article

The Self-care Movement

Dr Paul Rutter

Self-care has been defined by The World Health Organisation as ‘the activities individuals, families and communities undertake with the intention of enhancing health, preventing disease, limiting illness, and restoring health’. This definition is intentionally broad and encompasses anything from nutrition (e.g. type and quality of food eaten) through to lifestyle (sporting activities, leisure etc.) and socioeconomic factors (e.g. income level, cultural beliefs). The necessity for Western governments to promote self-care is based on capacity, economics and patient empowerment. In the UK it has been estimated that 20-40% of GP consultations are for minor illness, which represents 100 to 150 million consultations per annum. Put another way, this equates to 1 hour a day of GP time. In financial terms this costs the NHS upwards of £2 billion a year. Obviously, if patients can be encouraged to exercise greater levels of self-care then this will save money and free up GP time. Not only this, it has been shown that those patients that take greater responsibility for their own health show better health outcomes.

Not surprisingly self-care is now a focus of UK healthcare policy with numerous White Papers detailing how it should be embedded into patient care pathways, with pharmacy specifically identified as a key resource in delivering this agenda. To facilitate patients ability to practice greater levels of self-care many more medicines have become available to sell over the counter and new government initiatives are promoting pharmacies as ‘healthy living centres’. This concept was trialed in 2009-10 in Portsmouth (which I was involved in the evaluation) and subsequently been rolled out across England under a national pilot.

The UK is not alone in adopting self-care – similar changes to healthcare policy can be seen in the US, Australia and New Zealand. Europe has been somewhat slower to fully embrace self-care, especially in utilizing pharmacy.

Italy collaboration 2012

At the end of 2011, Dr Paul Rutter was contacted by his book publisher, Elsevier, to discuss an Italian translation of his book. Subsequently, Dr Rutter was approached by an Italian pharmaceutical company, Apoteca Natura, to work with them to help community pharmacists deliver better quality pharmaceutical services.

Dr Rutter traveled to Italy twice in the last few months to discuss how he would work together. This so far has resulted in some ‘green form’ activity for the university but he is now looking toward developing an Erasmus grant to work with the company, Milan and Madrid Universities. The basic concept is to provide vocational training to community pharmacists to improve their diagnostic ability so that they can manage more patients without the need to involve the doctor. Dr Rutter hopes that 2012 will be the beginning of a long and fruitful partnership with Italy.

For further information about the company mentioned above, please visit http://www.apotecanatura.it/index.aspx

The next issue of PReN will be published in May 2012. Please send any news-worthy items, or mini articles directly to the editors by e-mail

Editors: Professor Satya Sarker (s.sarker@wlv.ac.uk) and Professor Rae Morgan (rae.morgan@wlv.ac.uk)
Publications from the PRG in 2011


Rutter, P. and Tsang, G. (2011). Nurse Independent Prescribers (NIPs) Views on recent and proposed medicine switches from prescription only medicines (POM) to Pharmacy (P) medicines. Nurse Prescribing 9, 195-199.


The above list is based on information on publications provided by the authors or by the Research Division Co-ordinators.