

NIHR Academy Public Health Researcher Event

Speaker Biographies



Professor Linda Bauld returned is the Usher Professor of Public Health at the University of Edinburgh and Chief Social Policy Adviser to the Scottish Government. Professor Bauld's research focuses on the prevention of non-communicable diseases and how research evidence informs policy. Much of her research has focused on nicotine and tobacco – including conducting the first study of the UK's stop smoking services and more recently prospective studies and randomised controlled trials examining the effectiveness of smokefree legislation, financial incentives, e-cigarettes, pharmacotherapy and behavioural support; as well as broader foci on health inequalities and the wider determinants of health. In 2021 she was awarded an OBE by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for her services to guiding public health responses to, and public understanding of, Covid-19.



Professor Helena Legido-Quigley is Editor-in-Chief of BMJ Public Health and the Journal of Migration and Health. She is a Professor of Health Systems Science at The George Institute for Global Health UK, and the School of Public Health at Imperial College London. Professor Legido-Quigley also holds an Associate Professorship in Health Systems at Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, National University of Singapore, is an Associate Fellow of Chatham House, and a member of the Council of the World Economic Forum. She is also a member of Women in Global Health, Spain, a role reflective of her commitment to redistributing power in global health, and of her broader emphasis on championing the next generation of global health researchers through mentorship and teaching.



Professor Nisreen Alwan is a Professor of Public Health at the University of Southampton and an Honorary Consultant in Public Health at University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust. She does research around how to prevent disease and optimise the wellbeing of young families leading to better long-term health and focusing on narrowing health inequalities. Prof Alwan has contributed to the public health response to the pandemic, particularly focusing on the recognition and the quantification of morbidity from COVID19, having initiated the call to Count 'Long COVID'. She was awarded an MBE for services to Medicine and Public Health during the COVID19 pandemic in the Queen's New Year Honours 2021. She was also named amongst other inspiring and influential women from around the world in the BBC 100 Women 2020 list.



Professor Krishnarajah (Krish) Nirantharakumar is Clinical Professor of Public Health and Health Data Science at King's College London, having recently moved from his previous position as Professor in Health Data Science and Public Health at the Institute of Applied Health Research, University of Birmingham. Krish has pioneered the use of innovative automated methodological approaches for clinical epidemiology research, and has made significant achievements in three main research domains: 1) developing, implementing and evaluating digital technologies for learning health systems and real-world evidence research; 2) clinical and public health themes relating to diabetes epidemiology, women's health and multimorbidity; and 3) global health. He is passionate about supporting junior staff, particularly from under-represented backgrounds to develop into self-sustaining leaders. His contribution was recognised and highlighted in BMJ as a role model.



Professor Laura Shallcross is an NIHR Professor in Public Health & Translational Data Science, and Institute Director of the Institute of Health Informatics at UCL. Her research uses routine data combined with interdisciplinary methods (qualitative research, basic science, coproduction) to develop interventions and policies to reduce the impact of infection and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) on health and social care. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she took on a national public health leadership role through by establishing the VIVALDI study, the largest study of COVID-19

in care homes in the UK. Research findings from VIVALDI have had a major impact on national care home COVID-19 testing policy. She was awarded an MBE for services to Adult Social Care during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2021.



Professor Martin White is Professor of Population Health Research at, and Deputy Director of, the MRC Epidemiology Unit at the University of Cambridge. His research focuses on generating knowledge to better understand and inform change in the commercial food system in the interests of population and planetary health. He holds grants from BBSRC, MRC, ESRC, and NIHR and is a Principal Investigator in the NIHR SPHR. In 2024 he was an expert adviser to the House of Lords Committee on Food, Det and Obesity, and has been an expert adviser to The Food Foundation since 2015.

During his career, he has also served as Director of NIHR's Public Health Research Programme and President of the Society for Social Medicine and UK Society for Behavioural Medicine.



Simon Cain, owner of Westbourne Training & Consulting, has supported over 400 people to prepare to pitch in front of a funding panel. Over the past 25 years, he has delivered workshops on pitching / presenting to a wide range of organisations within health and research including the NIHR, Academy of Medical Sciences, Royal Society, Royal College of Psychiatrists, Royal College of Surgeons, MRC, Royal College of GPs, Cancer Research UK, Health Education England, and numerous NHS Trusts. His techniques are focused on capturing and holding the ear of an audience who expect a shorter but more dynamic presentation style, and this session will help you design and deliver a high impact pitch at your next interview.



Professor Ashley Adamson is Professor of Public Health Nutrition and NIHR Senior Investigator at Newcastle University. Professor Adamson is National Director of the NIHR School for Public Health Research; Chair of the NIHR Local Authority, Social Care and Public Health Postdoctoral Award Funding Committee; and Director of the NIHR Research Support Service based at Newcastle University. From 2014 to 2024, she was Director of the Fuse Centre for Translational Research in Public Health.



Dr Adam Briggs is Deputy Director of Public Health in Oxfordshire, Senior Policy Fellow at the Health Foundation, and Deputy Director of the NIHR Research Support Service Specialist Centre for Public Health delivered by the University of Southampton and partners. He will take over as Director of the Public Health Research (PHR) Programme from July 2025, replacing Professor Brian Ferguson who is stepping down after leading the programme since 2020. He will be leaving the Health Foundation to take up his new role, alongside becoming a Professor of Public Health at the University of Southampton. His work includes various areas of public health policy, risk factors for ill health and community involvement in research.



Dr Sophie Hyndman is Deputy Director of the NIHR Research Support Service delivered by the University of Southampton and Partners. She has a long history in research support, having been instrumental in setting up the Oxford Research Development Support Group in 1997. She was involved in the various incarnations of this, including the Research Design Service South Central where she was a senior advisor (2009-13) and deputy director (2018-23) before taking on her current role in the new RSS.



Dr Sarah Sowden is a Senior Clinical Lecturer at Newcastle University, a Consultant in Public Health in the Office for Health Improvement & Disparities in the North East of England, and Deputy Director of the NIHR Research Support Service Specialist Centre for Public Health delivered by Newcastle University and partners. Her research aims to enable the NHS, local government and wider system partners to better promote health equity and reduce inequalities in health and care access, experience and outcome.



Richard Stephens has so far survived two cancers and a heart emergency and has participated in four interventional trials and several other studies. He Chairs both *use MY data* and the UK's Cancer Research Advocates Forum (formerly the NCRI Consumer Forum). He is the founding co-Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Research Involvement and Engagement, and a visiting Lecturer in PPIE at KCL. In Europe he is a EUPATI Fellow, Vice-Chair of CanSERV, and past Chair of BBMRI-ERIC's Stakeholder Forum.

In his 30 years in PPIE Richard has been a patient partner on over 50 academic and industry research studies and programmes. He has served on all CRUK's funding committees, many of NIHR's, and several others in UK and abroad, and has contributed to many of NIHR's PPIE initiatives.