

May 2007

# Society for Social Medicine Newsletter

**51<sup>st</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting  
Cork 2007  
12-14th September 2007**

## **REGISTRATION FOR ASM 2007 NOW OPEN**

You can now register for this year's joint meeting with IEA Europe. Visit <http://www.ucc.ie/academic/pubh/ssmiea/registration.html> for information on costs and to complete the online registration form. Payment can be made by cheque or electronic fund transfer. Book early to take advantage of the early-bird reduced registration fee (after 29<sup>th</sup> June an additional £30 will apply).

Accommodation is available in the Brookfield Student Complex situated next door to the conference venue. Rooms have shared bathrooms and kitchen facilities (4 sharing). A list of alternative accommodation can also be found on the conference website.

This year the Wednesday evening reception will be held at the Glucksman Gallery on the main university campus and Minister Michéal Martin, who introduced the workplace smoking ban to Ireland, will address delegates. On Thursday evening the conference dinner will be held at Oriel House and will feature traditional Irish dancing. As usual, there will be a selection of workshops and social trips taking place on the Thursday afternoon. Further information about these is available on the website.

Retired honorary members of the society are reminded that they can take advantage of a free place at the Annual Scientific Meeting (including registration fee, standard accommodation and a place at the conference dinner). This was a great success last year when many retired members joined in the celebrations of the 50th ASM and we hope to continue this at future meetings.

Any queries relating to the meeting and the registration process should be directed to Karen Mulcahy ([k.mulcahy@ucc.ie](mailto:k.mulcahy@ucc.ie); tel +353 21 4901573)

## **FREE STUDENT PLACES**

A number of free student places are available at the Annual Scientific Meeting. Please contact the Treasurer Aileen Clarke by 15<sup>th</sup> June 2007 (on [\\_socsocmed@gmail.com](mailto:_socsocmed@gmail.com)) with details about the student and a short paragraph about why they would benefit from attending the conference. Students may nominate themselves and the grant covers their conference fee/registration, standard accommodation, and standard class travel. In return, students should provide a brief report on their experience / reflections on the Meeting.

The nominees must be students or equivalent, (from any relevant discipline or profession) on a student stipend (or income below £14,000 pa). We need to know that applicants would benefit from the conference. In the event of too many people being nominated, two committee members of the society will select applicants based on the description of expected benefit. Please ensure that you include the applicant's name, address and contact details.

## Registering as an NGO with the European Commission and Council of Europe

Readers may recall that we have supported a proposal to collaborate, through our membership of the European Epidemiological Federation, in a European wide initiative to seek formal status of "NGO" in the European Union / Council of Europe, for a limited trial period. The first newsletter of the NGO, known as CORESE, (COMmittee on Regulation of Epidemiological RESearch in Europe) has just appeared (30 April). The newsletter ("CORESE Update") identifies three issues:

First a working document of the 'Article 29' data protection working party. This is seen as generally encouraging for epidemiological research in that there is a statement that data could be used for medical scientific research. The lawyers reading these documents on behalf of IEA Europe (and SSM) suggest that we respond positively - to register our 'arrival' as NGO and to make it easier to be critical, when we wish so to be. They have suggested ten possible points.

Second concerns the charter for patient rights, identifying particularly patient mobility (within Europe) which will be of relevance to health services research.

Third is a link or reference to "CIOMS", the international committee drafting updated ethical guidelines for epidemiological research (see adjacent column). Many researchers across Europe contributed suggestions.

Robert West will be happy to forward a copy of the newsletter to members of SSM who would like to read it and perhaps to help the lawyers drafting responses to EU ([westrr@cf.ac.uk](mailto:westrr@cf.ac.uk)).

## CIOMS and 'Special ethical considerations for epidemiological research'

The Council for International Organization of Medical Sciences (CIOMS) is established under the auspices of the World Health Organisation, Geneva. Following the Declaration of Helsinki (1964 and later revisions) this Council prepared 'International guidelines for biomedical research involving human subjects' in 1982. These guidelines were updated in 1991 and more recently in 2002.

While much epidemiological research may be classified under such a broad title, it was the view of some researchers that the guidelines did not satisfactorily address some issues specific to epidemiological study and health services research and that their interpretation for example in some European legislature could be unduly restrictive and stifle research, designed to improve public health. A sub-committee, including a past president of the International Epidemiological Association, prepared a 'supplement' on special ethical considerations for epidemiological research. This was presented as a draft for comment, via the WHO website, for a number of months.

The writing group has received some 500 comments from 30 institutions or individuals. A coordinating meeting is planned for 4-6 June, which Jorn Olsen, president of IEA, will attend. This will discuss and hopefully endorse the final guidelines. See <http://www.cioms.ch/>.

## One day meeting: Researching Symptoms: Past, Present And Future

Joint one-day meeting of:  
**SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL MEDICINE &  
SOCIETY FOR ACADEMIC PRIMARY  
CARE**  
at  
**Keele University, Staffordshire**  
**Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007**

The overall aim of this meeting is to describe the historical basis, current state and potential developments in the quantitative study of physical symptoms

### **This one-day meeting will cover:**

- The epidemiology of physical symptoms in the community
- The public health impact of physical symptoms
- Patterns and presentation of symptoms in primary care
- Methodological issues in studying recurrent and persistent symptoms

### **The meeting is aimed at:**

- Researchers
- Healthcare professionals
- Public health practitioners / public health trainees
- Policy makers

### **Cost including lunch:**

SSM / SAPC Members - £60, Non-members - £80,  
Full time students - £30

For up-to-date information and registration forms please visit:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/research/pchs/pcmrc/sympoms/symptoms.htm>

## SSM Newsletter

If you have any contributions to the newsletter please send them to: Laurence Moore, Cardiff Institute of Society, Health and Ethics, 53, Park Place, Cardiff CF10 3AT. Email:

[MooreL1@cf.ac.uk](mailto:MooreL1@cf.ac.uk)

## Short course

### **Molecular Epidemiology**

Biomarkers of exposure, susceptibility and disease

**September 10th to 14th 2007**

**Topics include:** Biomarkers and their validation \* Integration of biomarkers into the design of epidemiological studies \* Biomarkers of nutrition \* Proteomics \* Exposure assessment with biomarkers \* Genetic epidemiology \* Gene-environment interactions: theory and examples \* Biomarkers of genotoxicity \* Metabonomics \* Proteomics

The course faculty will include: Prof Paolo Vineis, Prof Chris Wild, Prof David Forman, Dr Jenny Barrett, Dr Michael Routledge, Dr David Lunn

**Course fees: Academic: £ 475 Industry: £ 700**

Fees include all course materials, lunch and coffee.

**For further information and registration contact:**

Mike Routledge, Molecular Epidemiology Unit, LIGHT Laboratories, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT

**Tel: 0113 3437763**

**e-mail: [medmnr@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:medmnr@leeds.ac.uk)**

## SSM Committee 2007

The membership of the SSM Committee for 2007 is as follows:

Robert West (Chair & IEA European Federation representative)

Ian Harvey (Past Chair)

Diana Kuh (Chair Elect)

Aileen Clarke (Honorary Treasurer and JECH editorial board rep)

Amy Downing (Honorary Secretary and JECH editorial board rep)

Roger Harrison (Ordinary Committee Member 2005-2007)

Laurence Moore (Ordinary Committee Member 2005-2007 & Newsletter Editor)

Kate Dunn (Ordinary Committee Member 2006-2008)

Stephanie Taylor (Ordinary Committee Member 2006-2008)

Cindy Cooper (Ordinary Committee Member 2007-2009)

Mark Gilthorpe (Ordinary Committee Member 2007-2009 & ASM Liaison Officer)

Steve Cummins (Co-opted: Ordinary Committee Member 2007)

Charles Florey (Co-opted: Website)

Alastair Leyland (Co-opted: EUPHA representative)

Ivan Perry (Co-opted: Member for ASM 2007)

## Nominations for election to SSM Committee for 2008-10

Nominations are invited for the position of Ordinary Committee Member. There are two places available from January 2008. Each member remains on the committee for three years and is involved in all aspects of running the society. It is expected that each committee member organises a one day meeting during their term of office. Those interested should complete the nomination form included with this mailing. Please note that you need to be proposed and seconded by existing SSM members. The deadline for nominations is Friday 22nd June.

## Physical activity, the built environment and obesity

**London, Tuesday July 3rd 2007, 1pm - 5:15pm**

The second seminar in the ESRC series 'Obesity-understanding the role of the social and physical environment' will include the following speakers and presentations:

**Dr Andy Jones** (University of East Anglia)

*Correlates and beyond - Unanswered questions*

**Prof Roger Mackett** (University College London)

*Understanding children's travel and activity behaviour in the local environment*

**Prof Rachel Davey** (Staffordshire University)

*Social ecological mapping of physical activity behaviours and health outcomes in deprived inner-city communities*

**Prof Catherine Ward-Thompson** (Edinburgh College of Art)

*Outdoor Environments and Healthy Activity.*

See [www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/obesity/seminar2.html](http://www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/obesity/seminar2.html) for further details.