

**Introduction**

Welcome to the first newsletter of the newly renamed Centre for Midwifery and Women's Health (CMWH). Why the name change? The new name, chosen by the Centre's members, reflects the broader, multidisciplinary focus of the research centre. On page 2 you will find a bit more about our history. We were honoured to have a keynote speech from Dame Professor Lesley Regan, the Women's Health Ambassador for England at our launch event that celebrated Women's Health in Dorset.

It has been a busy few months with lots to celebrate. We are delighted that the team has been awarded [Baby Friendly Initiative](#) (BFI) Gold status for the third year in a row. This award recognises the quality of BU's midwifery programme in embedding infant feeding and relationship building within the curriculum, ensuring that our graduates are equipped with the skills and knowledge to support families effectively.

We report on a number of awards: early career award for Malika Felton, poster award for Vanessa Bartholomew, and a doctoral college award for Rosie Harper. (page 3) We are particularly proud of our Bournemouth University educated midwife - Kirsty Arnold. Kirsty works as a midwife on the Isle of Wight and finished third in a competition to find the world's best birth workers (page 5), run by the website [Birth Becomes You](#). Well done Kirsty!

We welcome new members in education (page 4) and in practice (page 5). There's lots of research news too and a bumper crop of papers, many written with our students – check them out on page 8.

*Dominique, Edwin and Vanora*

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**CMWH aims**

We promote the health and wellbeing of women, babies and their families by enhancing practice through education, research and scholarship.

Our strategy is to develop nationally and internationally recognised research that:

- Promotes the health and well-being of women, babies and their families
- Underpins clinical midwifery practice
- Informs policy making in relation to maternity care
- Ensures relevance and impact by maximising service user/voluntary sector involvement and the dissemination of results to health and social care professionals, service users and the voluntary sector
- Undertakes work across a wide methodological range.

Our educational and research activity has gained national and international recognition for its contribution to the enhancement of professional practice and maternal and perinatal health.

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## Research in CMWH

### What's in a name?

The Centre for Midwifery & Women's Health, formerly the Centre for Midwifery, Maternal & Perinatal Health (CMMPH) has a long history of excellent research in relation to childbirth and newborn health. Over the years our work has expanded to include research into women's health across the lifespan. The new name, chosen by the Centre's members, reflects the broader, multidisciplinary focus of the research centre.

The Centre launched its new name with a special event on Women Health Research on the 14th July. This three-hour free symposium involved a keynote talk from [Dame Lesley Regan](#) (Women's Health Ambassador for England) and also showcased women's health post-graduate research at Bournemouth University.



### Women's Health Research in Dorset Symposium

The Women's Health Research in Dorset Symposium (see above) celebrated the new Centre for Midwifery and Women's Health at Bournemouth University. The symposium was opened by Susie Reynell, Professor Vanora Hundley, and Professor Carol Clark. The keynote speech from Dame Professor Lesley Regan- Women's Health Ambassador for England focused on the recently published [Women's Health Strategy for England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

The aim of the event was to provide an opportunity for researchers, academics, clinicians, and individuals from the third sector to brainstorm ideas, identify problems and develop solutions to improve women's health outcomes both locally and nationally. PhD students Rosie Harper, Dr Emma Thurston, Abier Hamidi and Kate Rattley presented their research at the symposium that directly address the priority areas in the strategy. The event was made possible through internal funding from the Women's Academic Network (WAN) and the Doctoral College.



The feedback from the event was incredibly positive and has enabled collaboration across sectors with the aims of improving healthcare delivery for women in the future in line with the women's health strategy 10-year ambition. For those interested in learning more about the event and women's health please listen to Professor Carol Clark's podcast episode with Tom Stone [Youtube](#).

### Understanding the impact of perineal tears on midwives

Severe perineal trauma, known as obstetric anal sphincter injuries (OASI), affects one in twenty women (RCOG 2015). This has a significant impact not only on women, but also on midwives (Stride et al 2022) as they can struggle to deal with feelings which can lead to thoughts of leaving the profession (McDaniel and Morris 2020).

#### FHSS Staff PRGR staff development funding 2023

Sara Stride, Lecturer in Midwifery, successfully gained funding from the staff development fund to progress her PhD studies in 2023. Sara's research explores factors that influence midwives' perineal practice at the time of birth. Focus group discussions have identified that midwives feel shame and stressed when women sustain severe perineal tears. The funding was used to explore the type of workplace support that is available to midwives by facilitating Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) discussions. As well as contacting Heads of Midwifery to ask what support is available to midwives when they have cared for women who have severe perineal tears.

### High altitude and its impact on health

In April, Dr Rebecca Neal from the Department of Rehabilitation & Sport Sciences visited Nepal for a second time this academic year, to teach the MSc Biochemistry students at Manmohan Institute of Health Sciences (MMIHS) in Kathmandu. Having previously published multidisciplinary research including physiological and biochemical techniques, she led two workshops that focused on developing the students' research proposals and applying quantitative statistical analysis techniques to their methodologies.

Rebecca also supported MMIHS Faculty and colleagues from Kathmandu University at Dhulikhel Hospital to explore PhD opportunities. Rebecca is supervising a MSc Public Health student from MMIHS, investigating occupational hazards including post-traumatic stress in high-altitude porters in Nepal.



## Research in CMWH

### Supporting women with visual impairment in Dorset

Congratulations to Megan Perkins who has been awarded an HEE SW Integrated Clinical Academic Internship to explore how women who are visually impaired experience maternity services, and to improve postnatal support for aspects such as breastfeeding. Research conducted by CMWH, funded through Birthrights charity, highlighted that disabled women are more likely to experience suboptimal care and feel that they were treated less favourably because of their disability. Women who are blind/visually impaired reported that breastfeeding support was particularly challenging and that midwives had no understanding of their specific needs. Megan will be supervised by Dr. Juliet Wood and Prof. Vanora Hundley.

### Malika Felton wins Early Career Researcher Award



Dr Malika Felton attended the WiSEAN (Women in Sport and Exercise Academic Network) conference in Liverpool in June and was awarded the Early Career Researcher Award. This award is for outstanding work in the field of women in sport and exercise science by an Early Career Researcher. The winner was selected by members of the WiSEAN scientific committee and fellow Early Career Researchers.

Malika presented her postdoc research from working with the Moving Through Motherhood research team, based at the University of Exeter and funded by the GW4 Alliance. The aim was to use co-design methodology to investigate the information and guidance provided to women regarding being physically active during and after pregnancy. Future funding is currently being sought to turn the ideas created by the stakeholders and pregnant women/new mothers into resources/services to increase physical activity during and after pregnancy.

### Social media

Abier Hamidi, PhD student at BU, knew that researching HIV awareness among women in Libya was going to be a challenge because of the stigma associated with HIV. By using anonymous, self-completed online questionnaires, she was able to eliminate the concerns regarding the lack of confidentiality and the fear of being stigmatised. She had hoped to call on personal connections, in Libya and abroad, to share the survey.

She said "what I didn't realise was that when discussing sensitive topics such as HIV, regardless of how large my network was, anonymity and confidentiality surpass cultural obligations. That's when I decided to use a Facebook-boosted post and in six months, I received over 1,000 completed questionnaires." Facebook provided anonymity to women as they didn't need to use their real names or photos in their profiles. The success of Facebook shouldn't only be measured by the number of responses received but also by the much-needed safe space, that was inadvertently created, for the women to discuss and gain knowledge about HIV. Abier is supervised by Dr. Pramod Regmi, Senior Lecturer in International Health and CMWH's Prof. Edwin van Teijlingen.



Social media now trumps traditional family networks in Libya – my Facebook survey reached 446,000 women

### International Early Labour Research Group

This has been a busy few months for the International Early Labour Research Group (IELRG), which comprises members from across the globe. We had the opportunity to get together at the International Labour and Birth Research Conference in Grange over Sands this month, where early labour was a strong theme. The IELRG held a workshop looking at how latent phase labour is defined. This was followed by a symposium on early labour with presentations from the USA and Europe.

The [Centre for Midwifery and Women's Health](#) at Bournemouth University was well represented. In addition to participating in the workshops, the team had a couple of posters. Vanessa Bartholomew, clinical academic doctoral midwife, presented her doctoral work on pain catastrophisation. Congratulations to Vanessa for winning both the daily and overall prize for Best Scientific Poster!

Vanora Hundley, Professor of Midwifery, presented a study looking at how perceptions of pain established prior to pregnancy can influence decisions about labour and birth.

The International Early Labour Research Group launched a special issue of [Women and Birth](#) in July.



## Education in CMWH

### Meet our new team

#### Kate Burgess

I came to the university at the start of December 2022 from a being a clinical midwife specialising in mental health. I am also a Professional Midwifery Advocate (PMA). I completed my midwifery training at King's College London and once qualified remained working in London as a midwife. I moved to Hampshire and was appointed in my role as mental health midwife. I started teaching our cohort of midwives at this point. I loved to teach. During this time, I started a project 'Time for Tea' to support the staff and their well-being. This has grown from strength and is being continued even after I have left the trust. Now, as a lecturer, I am looking forward to what my next challenge will be. Every day is something new and I am making exciting steps into the academic world. Everyone at the university has been so welcoming and supportive since I joined.

#### Julie Mills

I am a BU graduate having qualified as a midwife in the millennium year of 2000. I have worked clinically ever since at the Princess Anne in Southampton, at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital (now UHD) and at Dorset County Hospital. I have worked in all areas of midwifery including providing care in a stand alone birth centre, in obstetric units, working in an integrated team in Weymouth & Portland and as part of a well-established homebirth team covering West Dorset. I also worked as a Supervisor of Midwives before this role ceased.

I completed my Masters in Advanced Midwifery Practice in 2009 at BU and wrote my thesis on "waterbirth and the third stage of labour" as I had always been interested in the use of water in labour and birth; this was an educational project identifying knowledge gaps and then helping to support midwives to provide this aspect of care safely. As the mother of twins, my other interests are multiple pregnancy, homebirth, supporting midwives to provide care outside of clinical guidelines and helping women to get the individualised care that they need in the childbirth journey.

#### Dr Michelle Irving

I am returning to the university as a permanent member of the midwifery team, having left in 2020 to pursue personal projects, supporting women during their childbirth journeys. My clinical and academic work have always focused on promoting and protecting normality during the pregnancy continuum and exploring ways midwives can work with women to optimise health and wellbeing. My PhD research explored how Independent Midwives provide sustainable continuity of care that results in high rates of normal birth and low rates of complications for mothers and babies. My new interest, relating to this, is in the microbiome and the role it plays in pregnancy and how we can apply this exciting new knowledge to clinical practice. This will enable midwives to help women achieve or maintain good health by promoting the health of their microbiome. I am looking forward to exploring new challenges and working as part of the team at BU.



### Sara Stride shares a Presentation on Academic Integrity and Assessment

Sara Stride, Lecturer in Midwifery, presented on "Supporting student midwives to manage midwifery emergencies through simulation" at the Fusion Learning Conference in July. Her paper discussed how third year student midwives learnt to take the different roles that midwives are required to adopt during an emergency situation when caring for a woman experiencing a large blood loss after giving birth.

Peer assessment and feedback in a safe environment enabled the sharing of learning experiences in the skills labs, where resources and pregnant models were used in simulated practice. Students learnt how to critique the current research that guides professional practice, and to apply the findings to their actions in the simulations. Students identified their own strengths and areas to build on in relation to skills, techniques and communication skills, leading to increased knowledge, skills and self-confidence. All of these aspects being required by the Nursing Midwifery Council, as the professional regulator who set the standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives joining the Register.

All group assessments were completed successfully this year, which was a reflection of the student's engagement with learning and working collaboratively to succeed, supported by an enthusiastic teaching team.

Well done all. Sara Stride, Lecturer in Midwifery, Unit Lead for Midwifery Emergencies.



## Practice in CMWH

### BU trained midwife Kirsty Arnold is among world's best



Mum and dad, Charlotte and Marc Pugmire and Kirsty Arnold, centre, with baby Darcie. (Image: IW NHS Trust.) (Image: IW NHS Trust.)

An Isle of Wight midwife has finished third in the competition to find the world's best birth workers, run by the website [Birth Becomes You](#). Kirsty Arnold who trained at Bournemouth University finished with a well-deserved top three place. According to an article in the *Isle of Wight County Press*,

Kirsty was nominated by Isle of Wight mum, Charlotte Pugmire, who gave birth to her daughter, Darcie, this April. Charlotte is quoted as saying: "Kirsty was amazing, showing us everything and passing on all her knowledge to us, explaining what everything was and how it all works - it was incredible!"

### Celebrating BU's third year of BFI Gold status

We are celebrating Bournemouth University's BFI Gold Status for the third year in a row. This award recognises the quality of Bournemouth University's midwifery programme. The UNICEF [Baby Friendly Initiative](#) (BFI) supports the embedding of infant feeding and relationship building within the curriculum, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the skills and knowledge to support families effectively. We will be holding a celebration event in the near future - a date will be circulated soon. Watch this space!



### Quiet Leadership and Year 3 Midwifery Students

Final year midwifery students Shabana Rahman and Alice Whitney were invited by University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to attend their Quiet Leadership Day at Branksome Beach.



Shabana reported: 'We discussed aspects of different roles health care providers have in terms of 'power', how we experience it as individuals and how it affects the care we provide. I personally took home that we cannot provide efficient and effective care without working as equals in a team.'

Alice said: 'It was great to spend some time with the midwives and support workers outside placement and feel a valued member of the team! The day provided an opportunity to express gratitude to our colleagues and practice supervisors and highlighted the importance of doing so! Thank you to Jilly Ireland (Professional Midwifery Advocate) for organising the day for us all.'

### Two new consultant midwives for UHD

This August Poole Maternity Hospital (part of University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust) welcomed two new Consultant Midwives, namely Bernadette 'Bea' Chubb and Rebecca 'Becca' Savage.

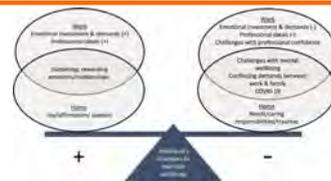


As part of their role they will be working with Bournemouth University to support midwifery education and the wider development of our midwifery students. Bea has completed an Masters in Advancing Professional Practice in Midwifery and she was a NHS Regional Clinical Leadership Fellow in 2022-2023. Becca has an MSc in Advanced Midwifery Practice, and she is currently also a PhD student with BU.

## Congratulations, news and events

### NHS maternity care appreciative inquiry paper

Congratulations to Dr. Rachel Arnold and her CMWH research team on the publication of their paper 'I might have cried in the changing room, but I still went to work'. Maternity staff balancing roles, responsibilities, and emotions of work and home during COVID-19: An appreciative inquiry. This paper in *Women & Birth* focuses on how to support staff and enhance their well-being in a small UK maternity service. The study used appreciative inquiry: interviews with 39 maternity staff and four groups exploring meaningful experiences, values and factors that helped their well-being. The findings are represented on a balance as positive and negative issues related to both work and home.



### Meeting one of WHO's top hundred midwives



Prof. Edwin van Teijlingen met with Rukumani Tripathi as part of a THET project. Rukumani is a Registered Nurse as well as one of the first Registered Midwives in Nepal. She works as a Midwife Officer at Paropakar Maternity and Women's Hospital, in Kathmandu. She is board member of the Midwifery Society of Nepal (MIDSON). Rukumani was recently recognised as one of the World Health Organization's 100+ Outstanding Women Nurses and Midwives 2020.



### New paper on Afghanistan

Former PhD student Dr. Shaqaeq Ashrafi Dost published a paper based on her research in Afghanistan prior to the Taliban takeover in August 2012. Shaqaeq's paper 'Management capacity in the Afghan Ministry of Public Health pre-Taliban: A mixed-methods study of political and socio-cultural issues' appeared in *Razi International Medical Journal*. Considering the abysmal treatment of women in Afghanistan it is not hard to understand the negative expectations of the authors on the impact of this research. In an understatement they conclude that there are currently limited options for reforms within the ministry.



### How to recover from childbirth—an expert guide



Congratulations to Rosie Harper and Dr Malika Felton on their publication in [The Conversation](#), which focused on the importance of caring for your pelvic floor after childbirth. The article was one of a series focusing on Women's Health.

### Doctoral College Outstanding Contribution Award -Rosie Ward

Rosie successfully organised the Women's Health Symposium on 14 July 2023, which has been well received by the PGR community. All of the reserved PGR spaces for the event were booked by PGR students and all the presentations in the afternoon were presented by PGRs. Thank you for enhancing the research culture.

### The Journal of Asian Midwives accepted by SCOPUS

Prof. Edwin van Teijlingen is co-editor of the *Journal of Asian Midwives*. In May the journal was accepted for inclusion by Scopus, the world's largest electronic database of peer-reviewed literature. The Scopus assessors were very complimentary noting that the *Journal of Asian Midwives*, "consistently includes articles that are academically sound and relevant to an international academic or professional audience in the field." The editors are very proud of this achievement and thank all supporters, especially library staff at The Aga Khan University in Pakistan, the reviewers, authors and of course, the readers! As an editor you know the peer-review process works properly, when a few years ago a paper on which he was a co-author was rejected by the journal after peer review!

### European award for midwifery excellence

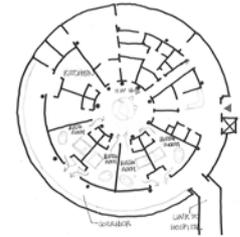
Congratulations to Vanora Hundley who has been recognised by Sigma for her outstanding career, expertise in midwifery, and her research examining the role of labour practices and their impact on maternal and neonatal outcomes, both in low income and high-income



## Featured publications and presentations

### The role of the birth environment

Congratulations to Dr. Laura Iannuzzi on her latest paper '[Exploring the Role of Birth Environment on Italian Mothers' Emotional Experience during Childbirth](#)' co-written with Italian architects and organisational psychologists. The research investigated mothers' perceptions of spatial-physical humanization, affective quality of place, and emotions during childbirth. To achieve this the team selected two birth environments (hospital and birth centre) with different degrees of humanization. Observations and a field survey explored the environmental quality of the spaces and the layout of the birth unit. A self-report questionnaire given to 66 low-risk women, choosing to give birth in hospital or a birth centre explored perceived environment, affective quality attributed to place, and delivery experience.



There was an enhanced perception of both the spatial-physical aspects and the social and functional aspects of the care unit among mothers who give birth at the birth centre. Women also reported a more positive perception of the childbirth experience.

### Global Consortium in Public Health



In June the University of Huddersfield invited Prof. Edwin van Teijlingen to speak at its Global Consortium in Public Health meeting. Edwin spoke about the importance of establishing international partnerships in public health research for REF 2028. The event brought together public health researchers/experts from the UK, the USA, Ghana, Nepal, India, Qatar and Brazil to discuss future collaborations. The Global Consortium in Public Health uses and supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to provide a platform for expanding existing collaborations and building new ones.

### International Labour and Birth Research Conference

Based in Cumbria, the International Labour and Birth Research Conference, previously known as the Normal Birth Conference, has been a highlight in the midwifery calendar for over two decades. The theme for this year's interdisciplinary conference was 'evidence knowledge and creativity; optimising safety and personalisation in maternity care'.

Several midwives from the [Centre for Midwifery and Women's Health](#) at Bournemouth University presented their work. Dr Laura Iannuzzi presented under the title 'Co-designing respectful maternity care in a slum



area: methodological considerations from an international multidisciplinary research in Nairobi'. Dr Juliet Wood & Dr Jane Fry shared their work, 'Understanding concepts of normal/physiological labour and birth – evidence from a thematic analysis of the views of student midwives across the globe'.

Prof Vanora Hundley and Anna Marsh, [clinical academic midwife](#), hosted the workshop 'Dissemination and impact: policy makers & the media'. The team also participated as members of the International Early Labour Research Group in a workshop and symposium.

### 33rd International Triennial Congress of ICM



The pandemic meant a long wait to bring together the world's midwives, but it was worth it. Tagged '*Together again; from evidence to reality*' the Congress brought together 2600 midwives from 130 countries to learn, network and exchange ideas in Indonesia.

CMWH had good representation with presentations from Dr Juliet Wood, Anna Marsh and Prof Vanora Hundley.



**New publications** –since Spring newsletter

- Arnold R, Way S, Mahato P, van Teijlingen E** (2023) "I might have cried in the changing room, but I still went to work". Maternity staff managing roles, responsibilities, and emotions of work and home during COVID-19: an Appreciative Inquiry, *Women & Birth* (accepted) <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1871519223002299>
- ✓ **Clark CJ, Bartholomew V, Mylod D., Hundley V** (2023) The importance of pain histories for latent phase labour. *MIDIRS Midwifery Digest* 33:2:160-164
- Dhital R, Yoeli H, Adhikari A, Luitel NP, Nadkarni A, **van Teijlingen E**, Sin, J. (2023) Participatory asset mapping and photovoice interviews to scope cultural and community resources to reduce alcohol harm in Chitwan, Nepal, *Perspectives in Public Health*. 2023;0(0). doi:10.1177/17579139231180744
- ✓ **Dost S, Arnold R, van Teijlingen E** (2023) Management capacity in the Afghan Ministry of Public Health pre-Taliban: mixed-methods study of political & socio-cultural issues, *Razi Int Med J*. 3(1): 9-18 <https://doi.org/10.56101/rimj.v3i1.67>
- ✓ **Edwards R, Way S, Hundley V** (2023) Let's Talk Early Labour: The L-TEL Randomised Controlled Trial. *Women & Birth* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wombi.2023.07.132>
- Grylka-Baeschlin S, **Hundley V**, Cheyne H et al (2023) Early labour: an under-recognised opportunity for improving the experiences of women, families and maternity professionals *Women & Birth* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wombi.2023.09.004>
- ✓ **Gutierrez B, Hundley V, Way S.** (2023) The experience of women from underrepresented groups with urinary incontinence: a systematic review. *J Transcultural Nurs* <https://doi.org/10.1177/10436596231172205>
- ✓ **Hamidi A, Regmi P., van Teijlingen E.** (2023) Facilitators and barriers to condom use in Middle East and North Africa: a systematic review, *J Public Health*, (accepted)
- ✓ **Hundley V** and Marsh A (2023) It's time for healthcare professionals to engage with social media. *Evidence Based Nursing* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/ebnurs-2023-103738>
- ✓ **Jadzinski M. White, S., Way, S, Mylod, D.** (2023) How are Fitness to Practise processes applied in UK Higher Education Institutions? – A systematic review. *Nurse Educ Pract* 71: 103691. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2023.103691>
- Khanal, SP, Budhathok CB, Okan O, van Teijlingen, E. et al.** (2023) Systematic Review of Health Literacy and Health Promotion in School-aged Adolescents, *J Educ Community Health* 10(1): 49-57. doi: [10.34172/jech.2023.1982](https://doi.org/10.34172/jech.2023.1982)
- ✓ **Marsh A, Lowry D** (2023) The TikTik Labour and Delivery Nurse—A Case Study. All4 Maternity. <https://www.all4maternity.com/the-tiktok-labour-and-delivery-nurse-a-case-study/>
- ✓ **Marsh A, Hundley V, Luce A., Richens Y** (2023) The perfect birth: A content analysis of midwives' posts about birth on Instagram. *BMC Pregnancy & Childbirth* 23:422 <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-023-05706-2>
- ✓ **Marsh A, Hundley V, Luce A., Richens Y** (2023) What are UK nurses and midwives' views and experiences of using social media within their role? A review. *MIDIRS (in press)*
- Migliorini L, Setola N, Naldi E, Rompianesi MC, Iannuzzi L, Cardinali P** (2023) Exploring the Role of Birth Environment on Italian Mothers' Emotional Experience during Childbirth. *Int J Environ Res Public Health* 20(15), 6529; <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20156529>
- Sigdel, A., Bista, A., Sapkota, H., van Teijlingen, E.** (2023) Barriers in accessing family planning services in Nepal during the COVID-19 pandemic: A qualitative study, *PLOS ONE* (accepted)
- ✓ **Sherriff B, Clark C, Killingback C, Newell D.** (2023) Musculoskeletal practitioners' perceptions of contextual factors that may influence chronic low back pain outcomes: a modified Delphi study. *Chiropractic & Manual Therapies*, 31 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12998-023-00482-4>

Thank you to all contributors. If you have a story linked to CMWH you want to share in the next edition, or would like to be on our mailing list please email: [HSSFacultySupportAdministrator@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:HSSFacultySupportAdministrator@bournemouth.ac.uk)