

Report from South Coast MedSoc Regional Group Activities in 2016

The group was founded in 2014 and had its first events in 2015. We have more than 50 people on our mailing list from across the South East Coast, including Brighton, Sussex and Southampton, and a few other universities. As reported in 2016, we have not gathered data on whether they are BSA members or not, seeking to have an open approach to membership and encouraging attendance from across our universities and beyond. All events continue to be advertised through the BSA website, medsocnews jiscmail list and social media.

The group aims to foster medical sociology research, debate and collaboration across the south east coast and to raise awareness of medical sociology in related fields including public health, health psychology, innovation studies and health service research.

We are most grateful for the support from the BSA which makes it possible to invite speakers from other universities and make our events accessible to all.

We held the following 2 events in 2016:

10th May - Talk by Dr Sujatha Raman.

This was organized in collaboration with the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme and held at Sussex University.

Sujatha is Deputy Director of the Leverhulme 'Making Science Public' Research Programme and Co-Director of Research at the Institute of Science and Society in Nottingham.

ABSTRACT: Environmental Dimensions of a Public Health Crisis: Knowledge, Interpretation and Governance of Antimicrobial Resistance

What can the interpretive social sciences contribute to research on antimicrobial resistance (AMR)? One way into this question is to look at how AMR has been conceptualised in environmental terms in scientific, public health and selected other literature, and consider the resources we might bring to the table in this light. In this talk, I focus on the neglected epistemic dimension of AMR and insights from environmental science and technology studies (STS) in order to explore the following questions. Who knows what about AMR and the impacts of antimicrobial use in diverse settings? How will disparate forms of knowledge be translated as evidence for purposes of governance? What kinds of knowledge do we need for public and policy engagement? Predictive methods of risk assessment are becoming an important part of the landscape of investigating AMR in the real world where antibiotics and other antimicrobials might be seen as a form of pollution. How might this way of knowing AMR in open systems connect with AMR as a phenomenon needing management by curbing overconsumption of antibiotics in clinical (and in some accounts, agricultural) settings? I explore this question in terms of the politics of uncertainty, unknowability and governance as developed in environmental STS. In conclusion, I briefly outline how AMR and antimicrobials might help reframe wider debates on justice in the context of environmental change and human health.

4th July – Themed event: Patients, participation and recruitment

Held at Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Southampton

This event included 2 paper presentations and also short (10 min) presentations from Postgraduate or early career researchers.

Dr Julia Frost - Do our answers fit their questions? Critical humility in patient led research.

Abstract: While much attention has been given to how patients can participate in research design generally, less has been given to their role in the analysis of qualitative data. In our patient led project about agenda setting in medical consultations we explored techniques to enhance meaningful participation in data analysis. Our paper suggests that a critical humility is required in order for academics to challenge and deconstruct our own qualitative practices to enable patients to participate in the interpretation of data and knowledge production.

Dr Graham Brennan - Making sense of recruitment in public health: is it method or methods or pasta sauce?

Abstract: Received wisdom tells us that recruitment of participants is challenging. "Challenging" is often an acronym for difficult/frustrating/unsuccessful/heart breaking, but the question is why? While it is true to say that most trials currently fail to recruit successfully, it is difficult to understand why, when there is a lack of data and information which tells the story of what we do as recruiters. This data and information is a mine field for learning and this paper presents a methodology for recruitment with some examples of its application. The methodology is evidence based and is presented with a view to stimulate discussion and debate.

About the speakers:

Julia Frost is Lecturer in Health Services Research at the University of Exeter Medical School. She is a sociologist with interests in social theory and qualitative methods.

Dr Graham Brennan holds a PhD in recruitment of participants to public health interventions. His postdoctoral work has included study evaluations for Macmillan Cancer Support and project management for the Football Fans in Training programme. He currently works as a consultant, advisor and trainer in recruitment of participants to public health interventions.

**Catherine Will, Flis Henwood and Catherine Pope (Co-Convenors)
February 16th 2017**