



## **Dr Kyla Thomas**

**MBBS(West Indies), MSc (Oxon), MSc Res(Oxon.), MFPH, PhD, FFPH**

Consultant Senior Lecturer in Public Health Medicine

### **Area of research**

Prescription opioid dependence, Pharmacoepidemiology, Safety of smoking cessation medicines, Mental Health

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### **Summary**

I am a Consultant Senior Lecturer in Public Health with interests in:

- pharmacoepidemiology, in particular psychiatric adverse drug reactions (depression, non-fatal self-harm and suicide) associated with varenicline, a smoking cessation medicine and antidepressants
- use of large primary care databases such as the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD) for observational research including novel study designs for dealing with confounding by indication such as instrumental variables and case only designs
- substance dependence and addiction (prescription opioid dependence)
- mental health research (suicide and self-harm) and suicide prevention
- trends in suicide in the UK and internationally

### **Biography**

I am currently a Consultant Senior Lecturer in Public Health Medicine based at the University of Bristol (0.6FTE) and South Gloucestershire Council (0.1 FTE). I started a National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Postdoctoral Fellowship in January 2018. I was appointed the [Clinical Director](#) for the NIHR West of England Clinical Research Network (CRN) in November 2018 (0.5 FTE). Prior to this I was employed as a Consultant in Public Health at South Gloucestershire Council (0.4 FTE); [Clinical Director Designate/ Clinical Co-Director](#) for the NIHR WOE CRN (0.2 FTE) and a Clinical Lecturer in Public Health Medicine at the University of Bristol (0.5 FTE).

I completed my NIHR Academic Clinical Lectureship in Public Health in October 2016 (50:50 service:academic post).

My three year NIHR Doctoral Research Fellowship (January 2011-December 2013) involved examining the association between specific prescribed drugs (smoking cessation medicines and antidepressants) and psychiatric adverse drug reactions (depression, non-fatal self-harm and suicide) using the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD), formerly known as the General Practice Research Database (GPRD). I was awarded a PhD with Commendation from the University of Bristol in March 2014.

I am a Fellow of the UK's Faculty of Public Health. In addition, I completed a Certificate in Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance with Distinction at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) in 2012.

I obtained my primary medical degree with Distinction from the University of the West Indies in 2003. Following this, I spent three years at Oxford University on a Commonwealth Caribbean Rhodes Scholarship before completing Foundation training in the Oxford Deanery. I joined the South West Public Health training scheme as an NIHR Academic Clinical Fellow in 2008.

I am currently an Assistant Editor with the Addiction journal.

## CURRENT GRANTS

-Kyla Thomas (PI)- Prescription opioid analgesics for chronic non-cancer pain. Developing a primary care-based intervention to prevent and reduce opioid dependence. **NIHR Postdoctoral Fellowship**. Amount £470,981. Awarded Jan 2018 for 60 months.

-Kyla Thomas (PI)- How do smoking cessation medicines compare with respect to their neuropsychiatric safety: a systematic review, network meta-analysis and cost effectiveness analysis. **NIHR HTA Evidence Synthesis**. Amount £380,000. Awarded Sep 2016 for 26 months.

- Kyla Thomas (PI), Rona Campbell, Matt Hickman, John Macleod, Tony Pickering. Evaluation of Year 1 of the South Gloucestershire Opioid Analgesics Dependency Pilot. **CLAHRC West Evaluation of Health Services Theme**. Awarded September 2016.

- Kyla Thomas-Use of novel case-only methods to investigate the neuropsychiatric and cardiovascular safety of varenicline in the UK Clinical Practice Research datalink. **Academy of Medical Sciences starter grant for clinical lecturers**. Amount £30,000 Awarded Jan 2015 until Dec 2018.

- Kyla Thomas (PI), David Gunnell, Christabel Owens, Lucy Biddle, Salena Williams, Naomi Salisbury. Engaging patients meaningfully in self harm research: Part I: appropriate outcomes and Part II: engagement. **CLAHRC West Public Health Research Theme** Awarded Dec 2014.

-Neil Davies (PI), Kyla Thomas, Amy Taylor, Gemma Taylor, Frank Windmeijer, Richard Martin, Marcus Munafo. What is the effectiveness of varenicline compared with nicotine replacement therapy for long term smoking cessation and clinically important outcomes such as mortality, myocardial infarction and frequency of service use? Evidence from the Clinical Practice Research Datalink. **NIHR HTA Efficient Study Designs** and MRC methodology bolt on. Amount £205,942 (and £99,000 for bolt on). Awarded Sep 2015 for 28 months.

## PREVIOUS GRANTS

- Kyla Thomas. The association of prescribed drugs with psychiatric adverse drug reactions. **NIHR Doctoral Fellowship**. January 2011- December 2013. Amount £250,000.

-Kyla Thomas. **Rhodes Scholarship** for the Commonwealth Caribbean. October 2003 - June 2006. Amount £100,000.

## PAST PROJECTS

- suicide trends and epidemiology (NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship)

- epidemiological investigations into cervical cancer as part of a MSc (Research) in Epidemiology at Oxford University (Rhodes Scholarship)

- methods of gestational age assessment in Karen newborns in Mae Sot, Thailand (dissertation for the MSc in Global health Science/MPH equivalent at Oxford, passed with Distinction- Rhodes Scholarship)

My **Google Scholar** page can be found [here](#).

## Teaching

I am currently Co-Unit Lead for the Public Health in Practice Unit for the new MSc Public Health (launched in September 2018).

I was Public Health champion for the Global and Public Health helical theme in the new medical undergraduate curriculum MB21 (launched in September 2017) from 2016 to 2018.

I was Public Health element lead for Community Oriented Medical Practice (COMP) for 4th year Bristol medical students from 2010-2012 and 2014-2015. I have previously taught Clinical Epidemiology to first year medical students.

I also participate in revision courses for public health registrars on the South West Public Health training scheme prior to the Part A examination.

I enjoy teaching undergraduate and postgraduate students.

## Keywords

- addiction
- drug safety
- suicide
- self-harm

## Skills

- prescription opioid dependence
- adverse drug reactions

- mental health

## Methodologies

- quantitative methods including systematic reviews and observational studies using large primary care databases such as the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD)
- qualitative methods

## Memberships

### Organisations

[Bristol Medical School \(PHS\)](#)

### Centres, collaborations and units

- [Centre for Academic Mental Health](#)
- [Centre for Public Health](#)

## Selected publications

- Eccleston, C, Fisher, E, Thomas, KH, Hearn, L, Derry, S, Stannard, C, Knaggs, R & Moore, RA, 2017, '[Interventions for the reduction of prescribed opioid use in chronic non-cancer pain](#)'. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*.
- Davies, NM, Taylor, GM, Taylor, AE, Jones, T, Martin, RM, Munafò, MR, Windmeijer, F & Thomas, KH, 2018, '[The effects of prescribing varenicline on two-year health outcomes: an observational cohort study using electronic medical records](#)'. *Addiction*, vol 113., pp. 1105-1116
- Taylor, G, Taylor, A, Thomas, K, Jones, T, Martin, R, Munafò, M, Windmeijer, F & Davies, N, 2017, '[The effectiveness of varenicline versus nicotine replacement therapy on long-term smoking cessation in primary care: a prospective cohort study of electronic medical records](#)'. *International Journal of Epidemiology*.
- Thomas, KH, Caldwell, D, Dalili, MN, Gunnell, D, Munafò, MR, Stevenson, M & Welton, NJ, 2017, '[How do smoking cessation medicines compare with respect to their neuropsychiatric safety? A protocol for a systematic review, network meta-analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis](#)'. *BMJ Open*, vol 7.
- Davies, N, Thomas, K, Taylor, A, Taylor, G, Martin, R, Munafò, M & Windmeijer, F, 2017, '[How to compare instrumental variable and conventional regression analyses using negative controls and bias plots](#)'. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, vol 46., pp. 2067-2077
- Mars, B, Heron, J, Gunnell, D, Martin, R, Thomas, K & Kessler, D, 2017, '[Prevalence and patterns of antidepressant switching amongst Primary Care patients in the UK](#)'. *Journal of Psychopharmacology*, vol 31., pp. 553-560
- Mars, B, Heron, J, Kessler, D, Davies, N, Martin, R, Thomas, K & Gunnell, D, 2017, '[Influences on antidepressant prescribing trends in the UK: 1995-2011](#)'. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, vol 52., pp. 193-200
- Davies, NM & Thomas, KH, 2017, '[The Food and Drug Administration and varenicline: should Risk Communication Be Improved?](#)'. *Addiction*, vol 112., pp. 555-558
- Taylor, A, Knipe, D & Thomas, K, 2016, '[Railway suicide in England and Wales 2000–2013: a time-trends analysis](#)'. *BMC Public Health*, vol 16.
- Cahill, K, Lindson-Hawley, N, Thomas, KH, Fanshawe, TR & Lancaster, T, 2016, '[Nicotine receptor partial agonists for smoking cessation](#)'. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*.
- Thomas, KH, Martin, RM, Knipe, DW, Higgins, JPT & Gunnell, D, 2015, '[Risk of neuropsychiatric adverse events associated with varenicline: systematic review and meta-analysis](#)'. *BMJ*, vol 350.
- Davies, NM, Taylor, GMJ, Taylor, AE, Thomas, KH, Windmeijer, F, Martin, RM & Munafò, MR, 2015, '[What are the effects of varenicline compared with nicotine replacement therapy on long-term smoking cessation and clinically important outcomes?: Protocol for a prospective cohort study](#)'. *BMJ Open*, vol 5.
- Thomas, KH, Martin, RM, Potokar, J, Pirmohamed, M & Gunnell, D, 2014, '[Reporting of drug induced depression and fatal and non-fatal suicidal behaviour in the UK from 1998 to 2011](#)'. *BMC Pharmacology and Toxicology*, vol 15., pp. 54
- Knipe, DW, Carroll, R, Thomas, KH, Pease, A, Gunnell, D & Metcalfe, C, 2015, '[Association of socio-economic position and suicide/attempted suicide in low and middle income countries in South and South-East Asia - a systematic review](#)'. *BMC Public Health*, vol 15., pp. 1-18
- Thomas, KH, Martin, RM, Davies, NM, Metcalfe, C, Windmeijer, F & Gunnell, D, 2013, '[Smoking cessation treatment and risk of depression, suicide, and self harm in the Clinical Practice Research Datalink: prospective cohort study](#)'. *BMJ*, vol 347., pp. f5704
- Davies, NM, Gunnell, D, Thomas, KH, Metcalfe, C, Windmeijer, F & Martin, RM, 2013, '[Physicians' prescribing preferences were a potential instrument for patients' actual prescriptions of antidepressants](#)'. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, vol 66., pp. 1386-1396
- Thomas, KH, Davies, N, Metcalfe, C, Windmeijer, F, Martin, RM & Gunnell, D, 2013, '[Validation of suicide and self-harm records in the Clinical Practice Research Datalink](#)'. *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology*, vol 76., pp. 145-157
- Thomas, K, Chang, S-S & Gunnell, D, 2011, '[Suicide epidemics: the impact of newly emerging methods on overall suicide rates- a time trends study](#)'. *BMC Public Health*, vol 11., pp. 314
- Thomas, KH, Beech, E & Gunnell, D, 2013, '[Changes in commonly used methods of suicide in England and Wales from 1901-1907 to 2001-2007](#)'. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, vol 144., pp. 235-239
- Thomas, K & Gunnell, D, 2010, '[Suicide In England and Wales 1861-2007: a time trends analysis](#)'. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, vol 39., pp. 1464 - 1475

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