

## Wellcome Trust Director Sir Mark Walport opens our new building

# New move marks an exciting new era for ALSPAC

The depth and breadth of data available together with recent developments in modern study techniques puts ALSPAC in a unique and powerful position, says Wellcome Trust Director, Sir Mark Walport.

Speaking to the study families and staff at our new centre, he gave a ringing endorsement to the project when he travelled to Bristol to officially open our spacious new building in Clifton.

Together with the University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Eric Thomas, he took the opportunity to meet some of the young study participants before sitting in on some of the testing and measuring sessions.

Praising the dedication of the study families, he highlighted the value of their ongoing commitment, saying they had made a 'major contribution' to health research.

"ALSPAC is now world-famous," he said. Stressing

the importance of the project to researchers, he added, "so if you are interested in knowing about how children grow up, how the environment and your genes influence them, then ALSPAC is absolutely the word on everyone's lips."

He also addressed the young people directly, saying, "You have made a major contri-

**'ALSPAC is now world-famous'**

- Sir Mark Walport, Wellcome Trust Director



**Official opening**

but ion to our knowledge about how people vary in health and in illness."

As part of his visit, Sir Mark Walport also toured the rest of the building (see below) and gave a one-hour seminar to staff when he recognised that, like the young people in our study, ALSPAC is at a crucial and exciting stage of development.

Sir Mark Walport (above) officially opening the new ALSPAC building in December. During the visit he met with many of the young people and parents in the study, including: The mother of one of the first ALSPAC babies born in April 1991 and members of our Teenage Advisory Panel (see article inside). Other study 'stars' included a 17-year-old rap artist, who recently won the title "Britain's Next Urban Superstar" and the very first 'Children of the 90s' study participant to go to university.

◆ **INSIDE >>> turn the page for news of new research and our exciting plans for the future...**

## State of the art facilities

Our new building also has state of the art laboratories equipped for high through-put robotic cell culture, DNA and biosample processing and storage facilities.

As part of their visit, Sir Mark Walport and Bristol University Vice-Chancellor Professor Eric Thomas had the opportunity to see one of our robots in action.

Speaking on the day, Professor Thomas said, "I'd like to thank the

MRC and Wellcome for their consistent support over the years which has helped us plan for the future.

"ALSPAC is a phenomenon that's going to produce very important information for decades upon decades and it's been able to grasp the modern technologies to increase its capacity to provide new knowledge."

He also added his thanks to the participants stressing that their involvement had "helped create an absolutely unique data base."



**Dr Sue Ring demonstrates one of our laboratory robots to University Vice-Chancellor Professor Eric Thomas and Sir Mark Walport**

# ALPAC in action...

## Mums helping to find the answer to heart disease



Our new building in Oakfield Grove, Clifton, in Bristol

### New centre brings experts together

ALSPAC's new home shares a building with the MRC Centre for Causal Analyses in Translational Epidemiology (CAiTE). We also 'share' ALSPAC's Scientific Director, Professor George Davey Smith who is also the Director of CAiTE.

The Bristol-based CAiTE is one of several MRC centres around the country and its aim is to apply knowledge from genetic analyses to large-scale studies of the health of the population. These investigations will aim to find the factors that are causing disease, which can then be influenced to reduce risk.

Establishing links between risk factors and the development or progression of diseases determines the best ways to prevent and treat them.



◆ Professor George Davey Smith

The strong affiliation between ALSPAC and CAiTE is, says Professor George Davey Smith, of benefit to both. "It means that ALSPAC is now sharing a centre with some of the people who will actually be using the data."

He added, "Conventional study of patterns of disease has made important contributions to understanding their causes. A notable example is the work pioneered by Sir Richard Doll that identified the link between cigarette smoking and lung cancer, heart disease and other health problems. Those findings have already saved millions of lives. The CAiTE centre aims to take this type of work into the 21st century, making full use of the wealth of data and methods we now have at our fingertips."

**A** LSPAC researchers have won a £900,000 grant to test the theory that routine measurements taken during antenatal care and labour can be used to identify women who are at greater risk of having diabetes, heart disease and other problems in later life.

The pioneering new study will invite over 10,000 of the ALSPAC mothers, who are still involved with the project to come into clinic for a range of tests. These will be compared to the information collected about them during their pregnancies in 1991 and 1992.

Leading the research is Professor Debbie Lawlor who explains the theory behind the project, "Pregnancy has been described as a 'vascular and metabolic stress test' because when women become pregnant they become temporarily insulin resistant (a state like early diabetes) and their arteries change.

"For some women these pregnancy changes are extreme and things may not go back completely to normal at the end of the pregnancy.

"It has been suggested that such women are already predisposed to future health problems before they go into their pregnancy and that the extreme or lasting changes during pregnancy could be used to identify those at risk. By doing so it might be possible to reduce risk in those at increased risk of future heart disease and diabetes. Up until

"There's a lot of evidence to suggest that hormonal changes during pregnancy and the menopause are related to heart disease"

now there has not been a sufficiently large enough study with detailed measurements to properly test this hypothesis.

"That's where the ALSPAC mothers will prove so important. We already have information on what happened to them during their pregnancy and also genetic and other information provided in questionnaires over the last 16 or 17 years."

The clinic, which opened four months ago, will take two years to complete. At the clinic fasting blood samples are taken for glucose, insulin and lipids to be assayed. In addition, the women have a DXA scan to measure fat and lean

mass, and bone density, an ultrasound scan of their carotid arteries to measure intima media thickness and plaques and measurements of their height, weight, waist circumference and blood pressure. Researchers will relate pregnancy factors to these clinic measurements to test whether it is possible to identify women, at the time of pregnancy, who are at increased risk of heart disease and diabetes in the future.

Professor Lawlor will be working with a number of other experts in Bristol, Glasgow and London to use this clinic follow-up to answer important questions about other major health problems for women including questions about the causes of osteoporosis and breast cancer.

● The grant was awarded by the British Heart Foundation (website - [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk))



◆ Professor Lawlor meets one of the very first participants in the new Mothers' study. Participants are asked for a fasting blood sample, as well as completing a DXA scan of bone health and body composition and a scan of arteries in the neck.

## Cutting-edge research at 17+ Clinic

In the UK today, young people face substantial problems of rising rates of obesity alongside continued problems related to drug use, sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancy.

That's why the tests we carry out on the young people in our study – including many 'repeat measures' carried out at earlier clinics – provide vital information on both physical and mental health.

Cohort members come into clinic at around age 17 years and six months and new measures introduced this time around include:-

- A session looking at risk-taking behaviours.
- Scan of arteries in the neck – all part of cutting-edge research into the workings of the

heart and blood vessels.

- Test for signs of chlamydia.
- We also have a new-style activity monitor which participants wear for a few days. Results are compare with information from DXA scans, to see what sort of exercise builds strong bones.

Repeat measures include:-

- A full-body DXA scan.
- A fasting blood sample to be tested for glucose and insulin
- Height, weight and blood pressure measures.
- Face to face interview - psychology questions on moods and feelings.

- Computer session - including questions on drugs, cigarette and alcohol use. As with all sessions confidentiality of data is assured.



The cafe in our new building

# Research hits the headlines



## Multidisciplinary approach proves key to success

### Genetic links to obesity and increased appetite

ALSPAC has made a key contribution to cutting edge genetic research - providing information and samples to uncover evidence of the FTO 'obesity gene' which is associated with increased appetite.

Collaborating scientists from several universities worked together to discover that more than half the population carry the FTO gene.

When people had inherited two copies of this gene - one from each parent - they had a 70 % higher risk of being obese than those with none. On average, those with two copies of the FTO gene are 3kg heavier than someone similar who does not have it.

The research was a collaboration between scientists from the Peninsula Medical School, Exeter, and the University of Oxford who first identified a genetic link to obesity working with 2,000 people who had type 2 diabetes and a 3,000-strong control group. Researchers then tested a further 37,000 samples for the gene. ALSPAC contributed to this work - providing a good proportion of the samples.

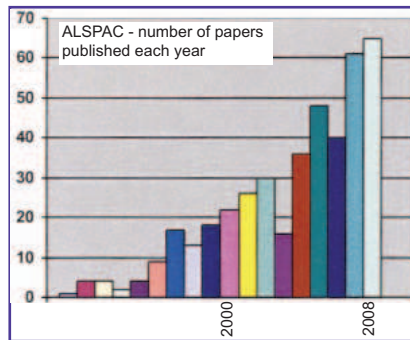
Following on from this, ALSPAC scientists carried out further research, published in October, to show that the FTO gene is also associated with



**A**LSPAC has become a mine of information used by scientists world-wide.

In 2008 alone our researchers have published 62 peer-reviewed papers, demonstrating the depth and breadth of data available and establishing the project as one of the most comprehensive studies of early childhood. We also marked an important milestone in October when our 400th paper was published.

Our multidisciplinary approach has been one of our key strengths, and this will allow us to tease out the antecedents of major health concerns such as obesity. ALSPAC also contributed to cutting edge genetic re-



◆ In 2007 and 2008 61 and then 62 papers were published.

group of experts from the University of Bristol who, together with researchers from both London and abroad, will in the years ahead be helping us to answer some of the important questions about the social determinants of development, behaviour and disease.

search (see left).

Our links with social scientists have also been strengthened since the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) awarded a £4 million grant in 2007. This brought with it the finance and the opportunity for us to work with a wide-ranging team of researchers.

These include a core

“Most interestingly,” says Scientific Director Professor George Davey Smith, “They will be able to investigate how these ‘life outcomes’ relate to the factors such as the socio-economic status of parents, the role of peer-groups, neighbourhoods and schools, as well as psychological motivations and gene-environment interactions.”

increased appetite.

This indicated that children with the FTO gene variant consume more calories, particularly from fatty foods.

● SOURCE: A common variant in the FTO gene region is associated with body mass index in the general population and predisposes to adult and childhood obesity by Frayling, T. et al; Science, 2007 316:889-94.

● SOURCE: Timpson NJ, Emmett PM, Frayling TM, Rogers I et al. The FTO- or obesity-associated locus and dietary intake in children. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2008; 88:971-8

### Genetics and reading ability

Working with data from over 6,000 ALSPAC participants, research scientists found that a gene thought to be associated with dyslexia is also connected with reading ability in the general population.

The study, published in the American Journal of Psychiatry in October indicated that a common variant of this gene KIAA0319, carried by more than one in 7 people, is associated with poor reading ability.

Researchers looked at the association between this particular haplotype, which is carried by 15% of the population, and general reading ability.

◆ SOURCE: Paracchini, S. et al. The KIAA0319 dyslexia susceptibility gene is associated with reading skills in the general population. American Journal of Psychiatry; December 2008.

“On average, people carrying this common genetic variant tended to perform poorly on tests of reading ability,” says Dr Silvia Paracchini from the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, lead author of the study.

### Sun in pregnancy builds stronger bones

RESULTS from DXA scans on nearly 7,000 ALSPAC children shows that those born in late summer and early autumn are slightly taller and have wider bones than children born in winter and spring.

The scans, which determine bone density, were measured at age 10 and researchers also studied meteorological data to determine their mothers' likely sun exposure in their last three months of pregnancy.

Those children born to mothers with the highest sun exposure were 1/2 cm taller on average, and had 12.75 cm<sup>2</sup> extra bone area due to in-

creases in bone width, compared with children born in the darkest months.

Taller people tend to have wider bones, but these children had increased bone width over and above that accounted for by their extra height.

The researchers believe that this increase in bone mass is attributable to Vitamin D levels. Sunlight on the skin generates Vitamin D, which works together with calcium to build bones. For most people, sunlight is their main source of Vitamin D.

ALSPAC'S research indicates that Vitamin D is important for bone-build-

ing even in the womb.

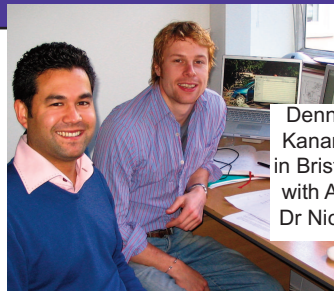
In addition to studying the meteorological data, the researchers measured Vitamin D levels in the blood of 350 of the mothers in the 37th week of pregnancy, and results closely mirrored levels of sun exposure.

Professor Jon Tobias, lead researcher on the project, says:

“Wider bones are thought to be stronger and less prone to breaking as a result of osteoporosis in later life, so anything that affects early bone development is significant.



● SOURCE: Estimated maternal ultraviolet B exposure levels in pregnancy influence skeletal development of the child. Sayers A, Tobias JH. Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism 2008 Dec 30



Dennis Mook-Kanamori (left) in Bristol to work with ALSPAC's Dr Nic Timpson

## Collaboration points the way ahead

Cross-cohort collaboration is the way forward when it comes to genetic research says Dr Dennis Mook-Kanamori from Rotterdam's Generation R project who spent a week at ALSPAC in November working with Dr Nic Timpson.

"One of the shifts in the genetic world is that you have to work together. If you really want to find things you need 20,000, 30,000, 40,000 people – collaboration is the only way to produce what you want," says Dennis.

The Generation R study, like ALSPAC, started in pregnancy and has a cohort of nearly 10,000 children now aged between 3 and 7.

"We are working on the FTO gene – modelling BMI during the growing period time over several paediatric studies. Research has shown there is an effect from the FTO gene in childhood - but we want to see if that effect increases as they become adults."

Other cohort studies closely linked with ALSPAC include the Birth to 20 study from South Africa. Based in Johannesburg and Soweto, they were recently funded by the Royal Society to visit ALSPAC. Formed in 1990, they have a cohort of 3,500 and are interested in collaborative research related to factors influencing IQ.

# Activity levels linked to both weight gain and asthma

ALSPAC researchers uncovered the major role activity plays in the battle to keep obesity at bay.

Matching results from DXA scans against readings from an accelerometer, which records intensity and frequency of physical activity, revealed 15 minutes a day of moderate exercise lowered a child's chances of being obese by almost 50%.

Researchers monitored 5,500 ALSPAC 12-year-olds measuring their activity levels against body fat, measured using a very low dose X-ray emission scanner.

Results suggest that making even small increases to a daily exercise routine - just as long as the extra 15 minutes of activity was enough to make the child out of breath - could have dramatic long-term benefits.

ALSPAC co-director Professor Andy Ness said, "The association between physical activity and obesity we observed was strong. These associations suggest that modest increases in physical activity could lead to important reductions in childhood obesity."

YOUNG children who spend more than 2 hours watching TV every day (used as a proxy measure of inactivity) double their subsequent risk of developing asthma.

The findings are based on more than 3,000 ALSPAC children whose respiratory health was tracked from birth to

11.5 years of age with children's TV viewing habits assessed from the age of 3½.

Parents were also quizzed annually on symptoms of wheezing among their offspring and whether a doctor had diagnosed asthma in their child by the time they were 7½ & 11½ years old.

The amount of time spent watching TV was used because personal computers and games consoles were not in widespread use at the time (mid-1990s).

Professor Andy Ness comments that the relationship between physical activity, sedentary behaviour and asthma is complex.

But he adds that recent research has suggested that breathing patterns in children may be associated with sedentary behaviour, sparking developmental changes in the lungs and subsequent wheezing.

◆ SOURCE: - Objectively Measured Physical Activity and Fat Mass in a Large Cohort of Children. Ness A R, Leary S D, Mattocks C, Blair S N, Reilly J J, Wells J, Ingle S, Tilling K, Davey Smith G, Riddoch C. *Journal PLoS Med* 2007; 4 (3): e97

◆ SOURCE: Association of duration of television viewing in early childhood with the subsequent development of asthma. Sherriff A, Anirban M, Ness AR, Mattocks C, Riddoch C, Reilly JJ, Paton JY, Henderson AJ. *Online First Thorax* 2009 doi 10.1136/thx.2008.104406



ALSPAC works hard to retain the interest and participation of the young people in the cohort.

Key to this approach has been the establishment of our Teenage Advisory Panel (TAP), drawn from a cross-section of 20 young members of the cohort who are now aged 17.

These young people assist the ALSPAC management team with planning as well as looking at ways that might make ALSPAC more appealing to the young people participating in the study.

In the last two years, they have had substantial input into the content of questionnaires, have contributed to the decision-making on important ethical issues and have helped by advising ALSPAC staff on the best ways to communicate with young adults.

To reflect that the Advisory Panel are now adults we have encouraged them to become more self governing, and have stepped back to provide just support, mostly in the form of facilitation and advice. They

## Advisory Panel - our secret weapon...



● Professor Simon Burgess answers questions and explains his research to a member of the Advisory Panel

have elected amongst themselves a chair and a secretary and have begun to bring their own items to the agenda.

In order to revitalise the Advisory Panel, and encourage a fresh and more diverse mix to the Panel, we recently held a participation day. This was advertised to the entire cohort and around 50 young people attended the participation day workshop where the current

Panel acted as facilitators and, as a group, we chose additional new Panel members.

The Advisory Panel are now in the early stages of applying for grants and writing up their formation and achievements for academic papers. They have examined and modified a number of questionnaires and research proposals in 2008, and it was after discussions with the Advisory Panel that we have chosen

to work together with the national screening programme for chlamydia as part of the 17+ clinic.

Before this, the TAP were at the forefront with regards to giving advice on the content, communication and approach for participation projects designed to boost attendance, and representation at the 15 year clinic. This allowed us to tailor our approach to specifically try to engage as many young people as possible.

Some members of the Advisory Panel gave a presentation at a symposium for the retiring chair of the ALSPAC Law and Ethics committee and participated in a debate about representation.

They have also spoken at a number of other events, including topics about record linkage, young people and participation. They also have two places on the ALSPAC Law and Ethics committee so that young people have a direct influence over discussions about themselves and their peers.

## Power and importance of 3-generational research



Some fathers have already taken part in some of our sessions. Here one prepares to take a DXA scan

**A**LSPAC has created a unique, two-generational resource – enabling our scientists to study the genetic and environmental determinants of development and health.

Now, with 10,000 young people still taking part as they enter adulthood and begin having children of their own, plans to research the third generation will be key to our future.

Our executive team is currently working on our core renewal grant which aims to raise nearly £10 million to fund a further five years of research from 2011 onwards.

This will allow us to maintain and further extend the ALSPAC resource to make it even more valuable.

### Plans include:-

- Recruiting the fathers of the study participants in their own right. We are currently looking at sending a questionnaire direct to fathers and collecting samples for DNA from willing participants who have not given previously.

This will be invaluable as the effect of genes can be altered depending on whether they come from either the mother or the father – particularly crucial when investigating the causes of complex diseases such as asthma and diabetes.

DNA collection from mothers and partners will make the best use of the information already collected from parents and enable the study of the effects of genetic

variation on a large group of adults in middle life.

- Plans to research the third generation. We aim to set up a pilot to study 100 babies/young children born to our study young people.
- ALSPAC hopes to play a significant role in plans for a brand new 'nationwide' birth cohort due to begin in 2012. The aim is to recruit 60,000 mothers from across the UK. It's hoped that Bristol will be one of the participating centres and ALSPAC has the knowledge and resources to lead this.
- Development of a Clinic that would allow us to collect new data from participants at age 20/21.

## Babies will help us take the next step

**I**nformation from study participants Zara and Josie Ball and their toddlers will help take ALSPAC into a whole new era.

The twins, who will be 18 in April, have been regular Children of the 90s attendees since the beginning. Now, with children of their own, they are keen for us to begin studying their young children, which would give us the ability to hold data from three generations.

Their mum, Esther, says she is proud of how her daughter's have coped - they are both great parents and have worked hard to continue their college education.

Says Esther "I hope you do get the funding to start studying the children's children. To have that information would be such a unique opportunity."

This is backed up by ALSPAC Co-Director, Professor Andy Ness who says, "We know that a lot of ill-health among adults is a consequence of things that happened very early in life – even in the womb. Subtle things that happen to the mother may have profound effects on her child many years later.

"This is the value of third generational research. We already have detailed information on our young people and their mothers – from the time of their pregnancy onwards. Adding more information on

their fathers – plus, beginning to look at their own offspring increases the power of the data immeasurably, providing a unique and valuable resource."



● Josie, with her partner Chris, who is also a member of Children of the 90s and their son, Coby. Her sister Zara and her partner, Dane, have daughter Scarlett

## New five year project into eating disorders

Dr Nadia Micali, is being funded by an NIHR (National Institute for Health Research) Clinician Scientist Award to carry out a five year research project into the causes of eating disorders.

Starting in March 2009, the project will be seeking to identify genetic and environmental risk factors that contribute to the development of disordered eating behaviour in early and mid-adolescence.

Dr Micali, will also be trying to find out if there are differences in risk factors for the young person if their mother had experience of an eating disorder. With many eating disorders – from binge eating, dieting through to unhealthy weight control strategies – often starting in adolescence, understanding more about the causes will help develop early intervention services.

Originally from Sicily, Dr Micali works in the eating disorders research team and the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department at the Institute of Psychiatry, London.

She will be analysing information from 8,000 of the ALSPAC cohort at the ages of 14 and 16. The study will include genotyping of DNA samples given by ALSPAC participants, looking at candidate genes that researchers think could make people more susceptible to developing eating disorders.

## Information... it's all on the web

The ALSPAC web site is an important resource for scientists and has recently been relaunched to add a wealth of information invaluable to collaborators. Our 'Welcome Page' can be reached by going direct to [www.alspac.bris.ac.uk/](http://www.alspac.bris.ac.uk/)

From there, you can click onto the 'Scientific Community' which contains links to the collaboration policy, questionnaires and publications.

In future we will include any other news and details important to our researchers - including news of new research that has been press released. This is obviously a faster way to get the information to you - so this will be the last 'scientific newsletter' we will print separately.

We will, however, continue to mail 'Parent newsletters' direct to our families - these are also published on-line in the 'Participants' section.



# FUTURE CHALLENGES

The biggest challenge facing ALSPAC over the coming years will undoubtedly be to keep our cohort members engaged and involved.

Young people communicate in very different ways from their parents, and as the cohort enter adulthood and start to disperse, we must be creative in our methods of communication. Electronic media are developing rapidly, and we need to exploit the opportunities.

Currently our cohort members are aged 16 and 17, and we are making use of texting, YouTube, Facebook and other social networking sites. At this age, we have found that

## Staying in touch

teenagers rarely check emails.

This will change soon, however. For those that go on to higher or further education, their college email addresses will be key. Over 3 or 4 years, students often move many times and get through several mobile phones, but their college emails will remain the same, and could prove a lifeline for maintaining contact.

Filling in questionnaires online may also be the way forward, and we are conducting a pilot over the next few months with a questionnaire on

eating disorders for mothers. Participants will be given the option of replying on paper or on-line, and we will monitor the response.

The electronic landscape is changing constantly, new opportunities will arise all the time, and we are determined to make good use of them.



Our study participants believe that being part of ALSPAC means...

**'You're helping research and people in the future...'**

## Joined-up thinking

Collecting data from the young people in the ALSPAC study will become harder as they leave home and find it more difficult to attend clinics. One way to tackle this in the long term is to make links with data collected by the NHS and other agencies such as the Department of Work and Pensions.

To use one simple example: if we are not able to take blood pressure readings in person at our clinic, we may be able to access this information from GP records.

Dr John Macleod and the ALSPAC team have recently been awarded £1.7 million by the Wellcome Trust to conduct a study which, it is hoped, will enable ALSPAC researchers to collect information on study members through linking to NHS and other records.

Gaining informed consent from cohort members and safeguarding their confidentiality are essential, and our study participants will be closely involved with the design of this exercise.

In the first few months of the study, specially trained researchers will be conducting in-depth interviews with around 50 families to explore their views and feelings on data linkage.

We will also seek advice from the Teenage Advisory Panel and the appropriate Ethics committees, and consult with health professionals such

as GPs and representatives of all the bodies which might be involved.

A consent process will be then designed, and permission will be sought from every member of the cohort. Consent is entirely optional, and can be withdrawn at any time.

All information, from whichever source, will be anonymised and controlled securely within the ALSPAC research community. The Wellcome Trust grant allows for the appointment of a security consultant to reinforce still further ALSPAC's robust data protection systems.

Dr John Macleod, who is a GP himself, says: "I think our families know they can trust ALSPAC to protect their confidentiality. The flow of information will be strictly 'one way'. For example, GPs will not

be able to access any information supplied by families to ALSPAC.

"The general principle that researchers working with ALSPAC only use anonymised data will apply to the new information obtained through linkage. Researchers will not be able to discover new sensitive information from health or other official records about any named individuals.

"Our families have given so much time and effort to the study over the years. I think they will appreciate the fact that data linkage means that the information they have given us can continue to be of value to medical research throughout their lives, even if they are no longer able to take an active part in the study."



Dr John Macleod

**'I think our families know they can trust ALSPAC to protect their confidentiality'**

## Widening the use of data

ALSPAC holds a vast bank of information and biological samples collected from thousands of young people and their families from before birth until the beginning of adulthood.

This is an invaluable resource for researchers all over the world, and our policy is to make it as widely used as possible, and forge closer links with other cohort studies in order to share expertise.

Dr Paul Snell, ALSPAC's Head of Data says: "We are aiming to make use of our data as easy as possible for both research and teaching purposes, without betraying confidentiality or ethical considerations."

Paul and his team are working hard to make it simpler and quicker for potential collaborators to gain access to ALSPAC data. The whole process is being streamlined, and the

number of stages applicants need to go through is being reduced.

On a wider stage, ALSPAC is contributing to a pilot study for the new MRC Data Sharing Service. ALSPAC is one of 6 example studies – the others range from the British 1946 Birth Cohort to the MRC-funded unit in The Gambia. The aim is to make summaries of the data available to the widest possible research community so that they can easily locate studies that might provide data they could use in their research.

On the social science side, ALSPAC is contributing to the ESRC UK Data Archive. We are preparing six topic-based data sets – on subjects ranging from housing to child development – for the Archive. These will be made available to all bona fide researchers, and also for teaching purposes.



Dr Paul Snell



◆ PLEASE NOTE: ALSPAC has moved and our new POSTAL ADDRESS is:-

◆ Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC),  
Can be contacted at:- Oakfield House, 15-23 Oakfield Grove,  
Clifton, Bristol BS8 2BN Telephone : 0117 331 0074  
*email: [alspac-project@bris.ac.uk](mailto:alspac-project@bris.ac.uk)*

◆ For more information, our website address is:- [www.alspac.bris.ac.uk](http://www.alspac.bris.ac.uk)



University of  
**BRISTOL**