



Senate

Paper Title	WIPH Proposal for New Centre Structure
Outcome requested	<p>Senate is asked to approve the creation of a sixth centre and to rename an existing centre within the Wolfson Institute of Population Health (WIPH).</p> <p>The proposed new WIPH centre structure is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis • Centre for Evaluation and Methods • Centre for Preventive Neurology • Centre for Primary Care • Centre for Psychiatry and Mental Health • Centre for Public Health and Policy
Points for Senate members to note and further information	<p>The WIPH recently appointed Professor Peter Sasieni, a renowned expert in cancer screening, prevention and clinical trials and his large group of 50 staff. This will increase the WIPH headcount to c450 staff, 100 PhD students and ~500 PGT students.</p> <p>Offers to opportunity to create a globally leading centre for early cancer detection and diagnosis at the WIPH.</p> <p>Recognises the rapidly growing national and international reputation of the preventive neurology team who are achieving significant impact with their work.</p> <p>This change will not result in any redundancies and no additional funding is being requested.</p>
Questions for Senate to consider	<p>In accordance with point 5. of Ordinance A12, Senate are requested to approve the formation of an additional centre within the WIPH and the renaming of an existing centre, the administrative home of which will be within the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.</p> <p>The proposal was approved by SET in August 2023.</p>
Regulatory/statutory reference points	N/A
Strategy and risk	N/A
Reporting/consideration route	Senate to approve before publication.

for the paper	
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Sponsor	Professor Sir Mark Caulfield, VP Health, FMD

Wolfson Institute of Population Health

Author: Fiona Walter, Wolfson Institute of Population Health

SET Sponsor: Mark Caulfield, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

Summary Request

The recent appointment of Professor Peter Sasieni, an internationally renowned expert in cancer prevention, clinical trials and cancer screening, offers the opportunity to combine our extant international strengths in cancer and create a globally leading Centre for Early Cancer Detection at the Wolfson Institute of Population Health (WIPH). Professor Sasieni will be bringing with him a group of 50 research and clinical trial staff. The WIPH will increase to approximately 450 staff, with more than 100 PhD students and about 500 postgraduate taught students. Our existing Centre for Prevention, Detection and Diagnosis will become oversized. Within this existing Centre is the Preventive Neurology Unit, founded in 2017 following strategic investment by Barts Charity, and demonstrating rapid growth and quality outputs.

Approval is therefore requested to create a sixth centre within the WIPH and to revise the named existing Centre to accommodate this exciting and prestigious recruitment. This change will not result in any redundancies and no additional funding is being requested. In particular, there is sufficient administrative support in the budget for a new Centre.

The current WIPH centre structure is:

- Centre for Evaluation and Methods
- **Centre for Prevention, Detection and Diagnosis**
- Centre for Primary Care
- Centre for Psychiatry and Mental Health
- Centre for Public Health and Policy

The proposed new WIPH centre structure (see Appendix A) is:

- **Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis** (renamed from Centre for Prevention, Detection and Diagnosis)
- Centre for Evaluation and Methods
- **Centre for Preventive Neurology** (new)
- Centre for Primary Care
- Centre for Psychiatry and Mental Health
- Centre for Public Health and Policy

Introduction

The Wolfson Institute of Population Health (WIPH) was formed in 2021, merging the former Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine and the Institute of Population Health Sciences. WIPH is part of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry and delivers internationally recognised research and teaching in population health, mental health, primary care and preventive medicine.

The health of populations around the globe has steadily improved over the last century; however, health systems face growing challenges in delivering better health. Climate change, environmental degradation, poverty, inequality, ageing populations, urbanisation, political upheaval, migration on an unprecedented scale, and more recently, the COVID pandemic, combine to exacerbate existing and create new needs. The Institute is a grouping of scientists and educators in applied health sciences, including public and global health, health services and primary care research, clinical trials, health policy and economics, health data science, behavioural and social sciences, epidemiology, biostatistics, translational and implementation science.

The Vision

QMUL's Strategy 2030 focuses on excellence in education and research. The Institute brings together researchers and educators active in the field of population health, primary care and prevention who, with others in the FMD and the wider university, demonstrates to funding, Government, national and global health bodies the commitment by Queen Mary to develop research-informed policy responses to the population health, public health, primary care and prevention agenda.

The Institute's strategic aims over the next five years are to:

- Enhance the recognition of the Institute as a centre of excellence for the study and advancement of population health, prevention, primary care and public health at a local, national and global level;
- Provide an intellectually stimulating and diverse environment for the development of talented staff and high-quality training of postgraduate students;
- Provide the highest calibre education in public health, primary care and prevention;
- Achieve the highest impact from our research through influencing, developing and implementing and evaluating new health policies and clinical practices.

Rationale

WIPH currently comprises five Centres including the Centre for Prevention, Detection & Diagnosis. We propose renaming this Centre and creating a sixth Centre.

(A) Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis

We propose to integrate the Sasieni Group (moving from Kings College London on 1st September 2023) within the existing Cancer Prevention Unit and Cancer Detection and Diagnosis Unit in the Centre for Prevention, Detection & Diagnosis into a new Centre for Cancer Screening, Prevention and Early Diagnosis, which will be jointly led by Professor Sasieni and Duffy.

Integrating the Sasieni group will bring immediate and immense benefits to the University. We envisage delivering an international centre of excellence in translational cancer screening, prevention and early diagnosis that will conduct practice changing research and teaching for at least the next two decades. Our vision is to transform cancer detection in the UK so that the NHS leads the world. This will be attained through raising cancer awareness, increasing early cancer diagnosis, and improving access to and outcomes from cancer screening. Working with and for patients and the public, we will provide evidence to enable the government and the NHS to make good policy decisions and to reduce inequalities in cancer outcomes. The academic staff will include epidemiologists, statisticians, GPs and other clinicians, plus psychologists and other behavioural scientists. The centre will also include a specialist clinical trials unit, currently among the leading cancer trials units in the country (one of only seven to receive CRUK funding) attracting grants to deliver the largest and most influential trials in the field internationally. Of note is the NHS-Galleri Trial, a ground-breaking large (140,000

randomised) study to see how well a new blood test (that can detect signs of many different types of cancer in a blood sample) would work in an NHS screening programme. The aim of the trial is to see if using the Galleri test alongside existing cancer screening can help to find cancer early when it is usually easier to treat and thereby prevent advanced cancer.

The Centre also focus on national and international capacity building, linking with Walter's Cancer Research UK-funded annual CanTest International School for Cancer Detection Research in Primary Care. It will harness **teaching** expertise to contribute modules in research methods, epidemiology, biostatistics, diagnostics, qualitative research, and clinical trials methodology to new and existing education offerings.

The move to Queen Mary will also facilitate **succession planning** for Professor Sasieni's retirement as Professor Gabe (Professor of Biostatistics and Clinical Trials) is well placed to take over as Director. There will also be a need to identify a new Deputy Director from oncology or cancer surgery at Barts Health NHS Trust. This is an opportunity to build closer collaborations within FMD between the WIPH and Barts Cancer Institute (BCI).

(B) Centre for Preventive Neurology

We propose to transition the Preventive Neurology Unit (PNU), currently part of the Centre for Prevention, Detection and Diagnosis, into a new **Centre for Preventive Neurology**. The Preventive Neurology Unit was founded in 2017 following strategic investment by Barts Charity. Its overall goal is to challenge the belief that diseases of the brain are incurable and cannot be prevented through research and, ultimately, intervention and policy change. Early detection can slow the disease process and improve support for people with the conditions. The group's **research** is focused on risk factors for neurological disease, early detection, clinical cohort creation, resource generation, clinical trials (drug and non-drug), biomarkers, use of routinely collected health care data, research in under-represented populations, influencing policy, and PPIE.

The core themes of Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis and dementia are led by Professor Alastair Noyce, Dr Ruth Dobson and Dr Charles Marshall respectively. The academic staff include clinicians, statisticians, epidemiologists, health psychologists, with strong public and patient engagement. The group has a headcount of ~65 individuals working in or affiliated with the team; approximately half are research focused, 10 are postgraduate students, and 7 are professional services staff. Fifteen planned posts will bring our total number to ~80. The group has nurtured collaborations across the WIPH with the cancer, psychiatry and primary care teams, health psychologists and epidemiologists, leading to collaborative grant applications and awards.

The proposed transition to Centre status is reflective of their rapidly growing reputation as national and international leaders in their respective fields, across both academic and clinical arenas. The group has seen a year-on-year increase in grant income. The current total grant income of >£12m is generated from a range of major UK funders (NIHR, MRC, Innovate UK), charities (Parkinson's UK, Michael J Fox Foundation, Cure Parkinson's, MS Society, NMSS, BMA Foundation) and industry (Alchemab, Charco Neurotech, Biogen, Merck). The group has published >200 articles, including in the New England Journal of Medicine, Nature Genetics, Lancet Neurology, JAMA Neurology, Brain, Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry, Annals and Neurology, and their research regularly features in mainstream news on the television, radio and print media. Their impact is rising, and several projects have been prioritised for the upcoming REF cycle.

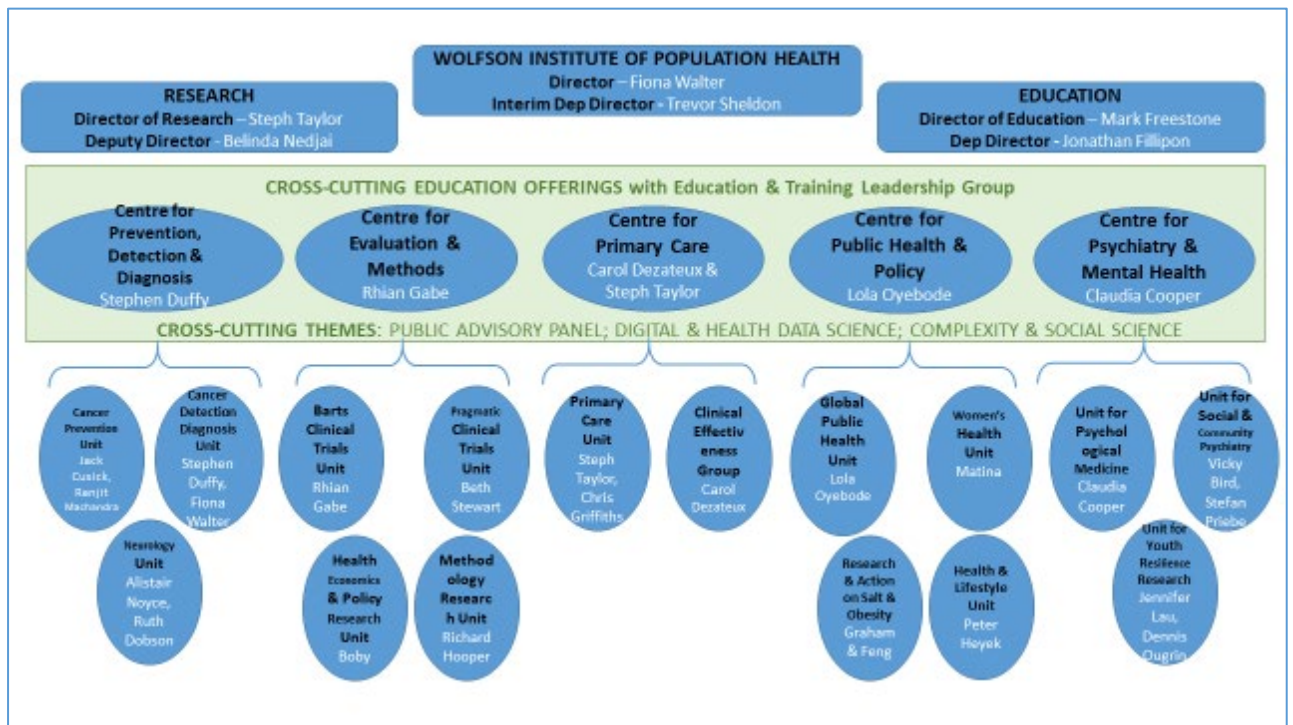
The Centre will continue to take an active role in undergraduate and postgraduate **teaching**. The groups are currently contributing to the year 2 module Human Science and Public Health and leading the year 3 module Public Health for the MBBS programme. The Centre will develop a module in

neurology and contribute to modules in epidemiology, global health, preventive medicine, methodology and engagement for new and existing postgraduate education offerings.

Patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) is central to the Preventive Neurology Unit's work. The group actively engage with those affected by the research through various means: each disease area has dedicated advisory groups that guide research direction, patients are integrated into both undergraduate and postgraduate education, and the groups explore health challenges with co-researchers. Through all of this, the groups prioritise representation and inclusivity, ensuring these groups represent our patient populations and communities. Alongside a dedicated working group to uphold PPIE across the groups, preventive neurology researchers also explore the theoretical implications of PPIE as a research theme, contributing to Institute (WIPH Public Advisory Panel) and University participatory practices (through links with the CPE). The group is pursuing innovative PPIE approaches through collaborations with the Drama department and the QM Arts and Health Network.

Appendix A

WIPH Current structure



WIPH proposed future structure

