News from IMAN members - February 2019

IMAN members have been involved in a number of activities over the past year including:

ECDC visit to HPSC - report from Suzanne Cotter

Medical anthropologists visit Ireland on EU funded project to identify good practices on national and regional response to VTEC outbreaks.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) has initiated a number of case studies within EU/EEA countries to investigate the best practice between public institutions (both health- and non-health related) tasked with preparing for and responding to emerging infectious disease threats and the communities affected by them. There is increased recognition within public health bodies that affected communities have a key role to play during public health emergencies, and that the concerns and experience of ordinary people should be harnessed as an important part of the response.

In recent years ECDC has employed the skills of anthropologists on other projects to identify best practices on how public health institutions can work more effectively with communities on emerging threat pathogens in Europe (e.g. Tick-borne encephalitis - Spain and the Netherlands).1

In November 2018, a team of experts from the European Centres for Disease Control and prevention together with two anthropologists visited Ireland to undertake a qualitative case study to identify good practices within the Irish services related to community preparedness for outbreaks associated with vero-toxin producing E. coli (VTEC) disease. Ireland has a high incidence of VTEC and outbreaks are commonly reported among crèches. The consequences of VTEC disease on those affected can be very serious. Some children require prolonged hospitalisation due to complications, such as severe anaemia and renal failure which may require dialysis. Upon identification of an outbreak in a crèche children are asked to provide stool samples to check if the VTEC organism is present. If VTEC is in the stool the child is excluded from the crèche until the infection has cleared. This can have serious impact on the parents/caregivers who have to take time off work for a prolonged period of time and also negatively impacts on the crèche, with many crèches having to close temporarily.

The visit was coordinated by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) in collaboration with other key players. During their time in Dublin (five days), the team met with HSE departments at national and regional level, with the Department of Agriculture and community groups in order to gain insight in to the communications and relationship between public services and the communities (businesses and individuals affected) when a VTEC outbreak occurs and control measures are put in place.

The anthropologists conducted focus groups and interviews with the various groups/individuals affected by two outbreaks in the Dublin and Northeast regions of the country. The aim was to capture the engagement and role of communities during the pre-incident, incident and post-incident phases of these two recent
outbreaks that were selected with a view to identifying good practices which other EU member states could apply to similar situations in their own countries.

A technical report describing the engagement and the role of communities will be prepared and published on the ECDC website in early 2019, at https://ecdc.europa.eu/.


Publications by IMAN members:

- Kearney, P. 2018. "Healing Rites of Passage". Salutogenesis in Serious Fun Camps. Routledge: London. Peter Kearney is Emeritus Professor of Paediatrics and Occasional Lecturer in Sociology at University College Cork. The book examines the role of ‘fun camps’ for children recovering from life-threatening illnesses exploring how the camp experience helps to bring about healing by employing concepts from sociology and anthropology. See attachment for further details.
- Saris, AJ. Under Review (with John-Paul Byrne, Robert Power, Colin Doherty, Victoria Lambert, Emma Heffernan and Mary Fitzsimons) "Between Policy and Practice: What Patient-Centered Care Means for People With Epilepsy". Qualitative Health Research

Poster by Emma Heffernan

- 'Hearing the patient’s voice: Establishing a PPI (public patient involvement) patient panel in a national longitudinal study on men with prostate cancer’. Heffernan, E., Hope, T., McGarvey, C., Donnelly, C., O’Connor, M., Murphy, A. & Galvin, D. presented at the IAUN conference, Limerick, 18 January 2019

Presentations by Jamie Saris:

- “The wisdom of patients, clients and users: making and re-making knowledge and expertise in emerging ecologies of care”. European Association of Social Anthropology (EASA). Session: Making knowledge mobile: knowledge production and transfer in/to/across/between anthropology’s actors, locations, and performances. Stockholm, Sweden. August 2018
- “Legitimacy, Expertise and Scandal: Considering Professionalism in Medicine and Beyond”. Session: New Anthropologies of Global Health. San Jose, CA, USA. November 2018

Other news:

- Celebrating Fiona Larkan.
  
  On 5th April 2018 a celebration of Fiona’s life and contribution to anthropology and Global Health was held in Trinity Long Room. Tributes were also paid to Fiona as a teacher and researcher in Maynooth and to her contribution to the Anthropological Association of Ireland and to IMAN.

- A new MA Anthropology course
  
  has been established at University College Cork. The MA Anthropology is interdisciplinary and emphasises ethnographic training combined with theoretical grounding which represent the strengths of the two research centres within which it is based: the Moral Foundations of Economy and Society Research Centre (MFES) and the Marginalised and Endangered Worldviews Study Centre (MEWSC), both based at UCC. The programme will employ conventional classroom teaching combined with options for attending summer school (Italy/Ireland) or winter schools (India) and fieldwork placements with global partner institutions (Latin America, Europe). A bursary is available to students to avail of one of these options. See attachment for further details.

- PREPARE (Platform for European Preparedness Against (Re-)emerging Epidemics)
  
  - This EU funded project has been extended for a further 2 years and is now due for completion by the end of 2020.
o Prasanth Sukumar has recently submitted his PhD thesis to the School of Medicine, University College Dublin. His PhD thesis was associated with PREPARE and explores the problems and issues in obtaining ethical and regulatory approvals for clinical trials in different European Union Member States. Prasanth now works in the Clinical Research Centre, University College Dublin.

• **Ronnie Moore** has been made the first full professor of anthropology at Nazarayev University in Kazakhstan.

**Upcoming conferences:**

• The ICMAGH 2019 International Conference on Medical Anthropology and Global Health will be held April 11th-12th in Venice.

**Upcoming meetings:**

• The next IMAN meeting will be held on **Wednesday 6 March 2019, 6.30 – 8pm** in the conference room, Centre for Global Health, Trinity College Dublin, 7-9 Leinster Street South, Dublin 2.
• ‘BethAnn Roch will talk about her PhD on ‘Folk medicine and faith healing in northern Ireland” and Emma Heffernan will present a paper “Austerity and crisis: the impact of austerity on vulnerable females in Dublin, Ireland’.

Please let us know of any presentations, publications or upcoming events you would like us to circulate to IMAN members, or if you would like to present your work at at upcoming meeting, please get in touch.

Best wishes for 2019,

*BethAnn Roch*

*Emma Heffernan*

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