

A program of the Center for Health Humanities and Ethics

University of Virginia School of Medicine

Provided by the University of Virginia School of Medicine and School of Nursing

Wednesday, 15 February 2023

12:00-1:00 p.m. (EST)

**Zoom Webinar:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84058180402>

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*2023 Jessie Stewart Richardson Memorial Lecture in Patient Quality and Safety*

**Something in the Air? Hospital Infection Control Policies and the Crisis in Evidence-Based Medicine**

Professor Trish Greenhalgh OBE FMedSci

Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford

Justin Mutter MD, Moderator

Center for Health Humanities and Ethics

Division of General, Geriatric, Hospital & Palliative Medicine, UVA

To cure sometimes; to relieve often; to comfort always. This is what we expect of our hospitals, but hospital-acquired infections and other nosocomial harms have been with us for as long as hospitals have existed.  My grandmother died in in 1931 of hospital-acquired childbed fever; my mother died in 2020 of hospital-acquired covid-19. In both cases, hospital staff were devotedly providing what they believed to be best, evidence-based care. In both cases, the care they gave was based on flawed mental models of how the pathogen was transmitted.  This lecture will use three historical examples of contagious diseases: cholera and childbed fever (both spread primarily by contact and droplets, but initially assumed to spread through the air as ‘miasmas’) and covid-19 (spread primarily through the air but initially assumed to be spread exclusively by contact and droplets).  The paradigm shift that occurred (slowly and reluctantly) from ‘miasma theory’ to ‘germ theory’ in the 19th century has some famous heroes (Ignaz Semmelweiss and John Snow for example) who were denounced and disparaged by mainstream voices at the time. There are uncomfortable parallels in modern-day policies on covid-19, with the denouncement and dismissal of the work of aerosol scientists who have called for a paradigm shift from handwashing and other ‘droplet rituals’ to systematic attention to the quality of indoor air. This lecture will ask hard questions about what we mean by ‘high-quality’ evidence and about the links between knowledge and power.

**Accreditation & Designation Statements**

In support of improving patient care, the University of Virginia School of Medicine and School of Nursing is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

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**Disclosure(s):**

Prof. Greenhalgh is a member of Independent SAGE, an unpaid role to present covid-19 science to the lay public, and also an unpaid member of a research advisory group to the philanthropic fund BALVI) and consent to film. The following speakers and planning committee have no personal or professional financial relationships with a commercial entity producing healthcare goods and/or services. Planning Committee: M.D. Jim Childress, PhD; Marcia Childress, PhD; R.J. Bonnie LLB; R. Carpenter DrNP; Mary Faith Marshall, PhD; Justin Mutter, MD MA; Kathryn Reid PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, CNL; Lois Shepherd, JD.

**Disclosure of faculty financial affiliations**

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All individuals involved in the development and delivery of content for an accredited CE/IPCE activity are expected to disclose relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies occurring within the past 24 months (such as grants or research support, employee, consultant, stock holder, member of speakers bureau, etc.). The University of Virginia School of Medicine and School of Nursing employ appropriate mechanisms to resolve potential conflicts of interest and ensure the educational design reflects content validity, scientific rigor and balance for participants. Questions about specific strategies can be directed to the University of Virginia School of Medicine and School of Nursing of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

The faculty, staff, CE Advisory Committee and planning committee engaged in the development and/or peer review of this CE/IPCE activity in the Joint Accreditation CE Office of the School of Medicine and School of Nursing have no financial affiliations to disclose.

**Disclosure of discussion of non-FDA approved uses for pharmaceutical products and/or medical devices**

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**Trish Greenhalgh** is Professor of Primary Care Health Sciences and Fellow of Green Templeton College at the University of Oxford. She studied Medical, Social and Political Sciences at Cambridge and Clinical Medicine at Oxford before training first as a diabetologist and later as an academic general practitioner. She has a doctorate in diabetes care and an MBA in Higher Education Management. She leads a programme of research at the interface between the social sciences and medicine, working across primary and secondary care.

Her work seeks to celebrate and retain the traditional and the humanistic aspects of medicine and healthcare while also embracing the exceptional opportunities of contemporary science and technology to improve health outcomes and relieve suffering. Three particular interests are the health needs and illness narratives of minority and disadvantaged groups; the introduction of technology-based innovations in healthcare; and the complex links (philosophical and empirical) between research, policy and practice. She has brought this interdisciplinary perspective to bear on the research response to the Covid-19 pandemic, looking at diverse themes including clinical assessment of the deteriorating patient by phone and video, the science and anthropology of face coverings, and policy decision-making in conditions of uncertainty. She is a member of Independent SAGE, an interdisciplinary academic team established to provide independent advice on the pandemic direct to the lay public.

Trish is the author of over 400 peer-reviewed publications and 16 textbooks. She was awarded the OBE for Services to Medicine by Her Majesty the Queen in 2001 and made a Fellow of the UK Academy of Medical Sciences in 2014. She is also a Fellow of the UK Royal College of Physicians, Royal College of General Practitioners, Faculty of Clinical Informatics and Faculty of Public Health. In 2021 she was elected to the Fellowship of United States National Academy of Medicine for "major contributions to the study of innovation and knowledge translation and work to raise the profile of qualitative social sciences"

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