

## Newsletter - December 2016

### **The Million Women Study- the first 20 years**

In September we hosted collaborators and friends for the Million Women Study 20th anniversary celebrations. Talks by Cancer Epidemiology Unit and external researchers featured new results from the study and developments in breast cancer screening and treatments. The event also included an extended talk by Professor Dame Valerie Beral about AgeX, a randomised trial investigating the effect of adding an additional breast screen, either at age 47-49 or at 71-73 to the existing 7 invitations routinely offered at ages 50-70. So far 3 million women have been randomised, making this the largest randomised controlled trial ever undertaken.



Valerie Beral, Emily Banks and Julietta Patnick as they appeared on the front page of The Times when the Million Women Study was launched 20 years ago...



and at the 20th anniversary event in 2016.

### **Some Million Women Study results published since October 2015**

#### **Does happiness itself directly affect mortality?**

Poor health can cause unhappiness. After allowing for this, and for lifestyle and behavioural factors which affect health, happiness and related measures of wellbeing do not appear to have any direct effect on mortality.

*Liu et al. Lancet 2016; 387:874-81*

#### **Smoking, obesity increase risk of cataract**

Using linked hospital admissions data, diabetes, smoking, and obesity were risk factors for cataract surgery in women in our study. Alcohol use, physical activity, and use of HRT were not associated with cataract surgery risk.

*Floud et al. Ophthalmology 2016;123:1704-10*

#### **Tubal ligation (sterilisation) reduces risk of ovarian and other cancers**

Women who have had their Fallopian tubes tied to prevent pregnancy have a reduced risk of developing cancers of the ovary and of the peritoneum lining the pelvis, as well as of the Fallopian tubes themselves. This may be because tying the tubes interrupts the passage of cancer-related cells or chemicals.

*Gaitskell et al, Br J Cancer 2016;114:1033-7*

#### **Night shift work does not affect breast cancer risk**

It has been suggested that working at night may affect the risk of breast cancer – but with substantial additional evidence from the Million Women Study and other UK studies we found no change in risk, once other factors (such as

obesity) have been taken into account.

*Travis et al, J Natl Cancer Inst. 2016;108(12).pii: djw169*

For more about study results as they emerge, you can go to the study progress section of our web site: [www.millionwomenstudy.org](http://www.millionwomenstudy.org)

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact [lynden.guiver@ceu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:lynden.guiver@ceu.ox.ac.uk)