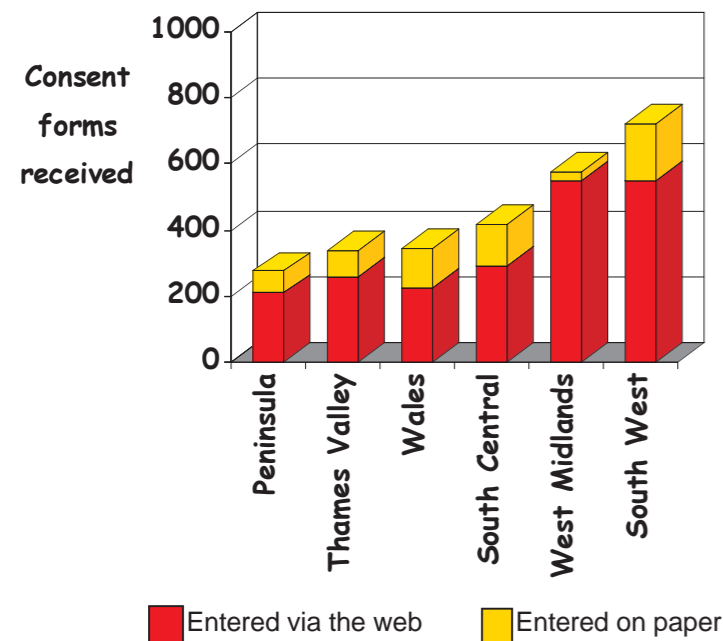


# Recruitment progress



Recruitment for each region has got off to a very good start thanks to all your hard work. We need to recruit 3,000 patients per region in order to reach our target of 18,000 patients overall, so there is still some way to go.

We are already seeing recruitment picking up speed as we get further into winter which is great news as this is our only full winter season for recruitment. We hope that by spring 2008 we will be getting close to our targets.

Remember there is no upper limit to how many patients each individual or practice can recruit – many contributors have already received sizeable payments for their efforts!

## Follow up

Follow up depends on patient notes review to document severe/prolonged symptoms and complications. So, as much as possible, please record the following preferred details if patients return following their initial sore throat consultation.

### Otitis media

duration of pain, degree of inflammation, evidence of fluid

### Quinsy

admission and treatment

### Cellulitis or Impetigo

diameter of the spreading erythema, systemic upset, any impetigo

### Sinusitis

duration, purulence, lateral prominence (i.e. if worse on one side) of pain or discharge, 'second sickening'

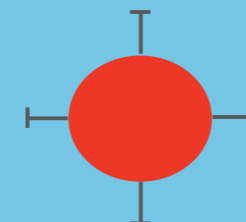
## Using the web?

Around two thirds of you are recruiting patients via the website and we are very pleased to hear that, aside from occasional hiccups, it is proving easy to use. The automatic summary of the clinical information for copying to clinical notes seems to be popular and it's great to know that we can make your participation in research as convenient as possible.

Should you encounter problems using the website please contact the Study Manager, Dr Paula Barratt (see contact details below), and, until the problem is resolved, use one of the spare paper proformas from your GP/nurse file.



From left:  
Mr Hardeep Sandhar  
and  
Mr Darren Douglas  
(DESCARTE website  
developers, based  
at Birmingham  
University)



# DESCARTE

The Sore Throat Symptom and Complication Study



Newsletter, December 2007

## Letter from Professor Paul Little, Chief Investigator



Dear Professionals

This study will answer one of the commonest questions in everyday practice: who gets complications or suffers prolonged illness following presentation to primary care with sore throat, pharyngitis or tonsillitis. We will develop a decision rule to help us target antibiotics more effectively when treating sore throats. This will improve patient care and help us to manage our resources more efficiently as every prescription increases the reconsultation rate by 40%.

I am very grateful to you for fitting research into your busy schedules and the response to participate in this study has been overwhelming with over **900 GPs and nurses** registering their interest in taking part. As you will see recruitment is going very well and between us we have already recruited **2,673 patients**, a very sizeable cohort.

The study team need your help now to get closer to our target of **18,000 patients**. We have a great opportunity to show what an outstanding contribution Primary Care can make to UK research.

This winter is our main opportunity to recruit patients for DESCARTE so please keep going - we really can't do it without you.

Yours faithfully

If you would like to get involved with the study or have any questions please contact the Study Manager, Dr Paula Barratt, Phone 023 8024 1076, E-mail p.barratt@soton.ac.uk

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[www.descarte.org](http://www.descarte.org)

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# Local News

So far 137 GPs and nurses are taking part in the South Central region including practices from Hampshire, Southampton City, Portsmouth, Isle of Wight, Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole and West Sussex. We are delighted that so many of you want to be involved in research!

We would especially like to thank our top recruiting doctors and nurses Dr Tracey Ryan and Dr Tim Tayler (Brook Lane Surgery), Dr Simon Fowler (Forest Gate Surgery), Nurse Practitioner Noreen Ashton (The Rooksdown Practice), Dr Jeremy Ferguson (Corbin Avenue Surgery), Dr Christopher Wallis (The Andover Health Centre), Nurse Practitioner Denise Nason (Eastleigh Health Centre) and Dr Alan Ward (Liphook Village Surgery).

A very big thank you to everyone who has recruited a patient – we can't do it without you so please keep going!

## South Central Main Study Centre at the University of Southampton



From left: Dr Mike Moore (Principal Investigator), Mrs Karen Middleton (Study Secretary), Prof Paul Little (Chief Investigator), Dr Ian Williamson (Principal Investigator), Dr Paula Barratt (Study Manager).

## Thames Valley Coordinating Centre at the University of Oxford



From left: Dr Caroline Wilson (Study Coordinator), Dr Lucy Wright (Research Manager). Also on the team, but not pictured Prof David Mant (Principal Investigator) and Dr Sue Smith (who recently handed over the study coordinator role to Caroline Wilson)

We have been working very closely with the Thames Valley Primary Care Research Network led by Dr Lucy Wright. Her team of research facilitators are Mary Selwood (Oxfordshire), Diane Coulson (Berkshire) and Bobbie Sanghera (Buckinghamshire) who have been recruiting GPs and Practice Nurses to the study and providing advice and support. Bobbie's secondment to the team is now over and Lucy is acting facilitator for Bucks.

We would like to thank all the GPs and nurses who have recruited patients and especially the efforts of Dr Michael Thomas and his colleagues at Wellington House Surgery, Princes Risborough who have so far recruited 45 patients. A special mention also for Dr Martin Kittel at Forest End Medical Centre, Bracknell who has recruited 19 patients and the staff of Meadowcroft surgery in Aylesbury who have recruited 18.

## Peninsula Coordinating Centre at Peninsula Medical School



From left: Mrs Joy Choules (Study Coordinator), Prof John Campbell (Principal Investigator)

In the Peninsula region, up to September 2007, we have had input from more than 60 GPs and nurses into the DESCARTE study. These colleagues are distributed over the whole of the peninsula from Cornwall, Plymouth, North Devon, East Devon and Exeter.

Honiton Surgery are still our best recruiters overall but we have several new practices on board for this winter; in particular St Neots Surgery in Plymouth and Pool Health Centre in Redruth – both recruiting well in August and September. Well done to you all.

Please keep up the good work!

73 practices are taking part from all over Wales, So far 160 GPs and nurses are participating in our region and their contribution has been outstanding.

We would particularly like to thank Dr Jerrett of Newpark Surgery, Dr Mohammed of St Thomas Surgery, and Dr Jegasothy of Nelson Surgery who are our top recruiters.

The team would like to say a huge thank you for your continuing support and commitment. Please keep up the good work!

Mae'r tîm am ddiolch yn fawr iawn i chi gyd and am eich ymrwymiad cyson ach cefnogaeth barhaus. Cynhaliwch y gwaith called!

## Wales Coordinating Centre at Cardiff University



From left: Miss Amanda Iles (Study Coordinator), Dr Kerry Hood (Research Manager). Also on the team but not pictured Prof Chris Butler (Principal Investigator) and Dr Eleri Owen-Jones (Study Coordinator).

So far 92 GPs and nurses have recruited one or more patients in our region and their contribution is very much appreciated. Surgeries are taking part from all over the area including Cheltenham, Bristol, Gloucester, Clevedon, Wiltshire, Somerset, Swindon, Bath and Nailsea. We would especially like to thank The Surgery, Glebe Farm and Horfield Health Centre who have each recruited over 100 patients.

Practices that have recruited between 20 and 40 patients include The North Swindon Practice, The Hanham Surgery, The Longlevens Surgery, The Clevedon Riverside Group, Portishead Health Centre and The Lennard Surgery. We also have some clinicians who, working alone, have recruited more than 10 patients at the Yorkley Health Centre, The Medical Centre at Lawrence Weston, The Dunster Surgery and The Tolsey Surgery.

Well done to you all and please, continue recruiting!

## South West Coordinating Centre at the University of Bristol



From left: Dr Alastair Hay (Principal Investigator), Ms Catherine Derrick (Study Coordinator, having recently taken over the role from Simone Angel)

## West Midlands Coordinating Centre at the University of Birmingham



From left: Ms Razia Meer-Baloch (Study Coordinator), Ms Ros Salter (R&D Manager), Ms Beth Hinks (Study Administrator). Also on the team, but not pictured, Prof Brendan Delaney (Principal Investigator) and Prof Richard Hobbs (Principal Investigator).

The West Midlands team would personally like to thank all their GPs, recruiting from 41 practices in the region, for their hard work and continuing support of the study. A further boost to recruitment in the West Midlands is expected with the addition of some new recruiting practices. The team are grateful to all the GPs for their contribution, but a special mention should go to our top recruiters who are: Dr Jassell, 578 Stratford Road (64 patients), Dr Jheeta, Sheldon Medical Centre (52 patients), Dr Bleby, Arden Medical Centre (35 patients), Dr Stokes-Lampard, Cloisters Medical Centre (33 patients).

Thank you very much, and please KEEP GOING, your support is very much appreciated.