

WORKING GROUP INFORMATIONS

1. Members of the Working Group

Please complete / modify these information if appropriate

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2. Please, enter the name of the person you have appointed as local head of the working group:

(First Name, Name) Carsten Timmermann

3. Working Plan

Please, complete/modify or add if appropriate:

Autumn 2009

Workshop Objects 3: DRUGS, STANDARDS, AND CHRONIC ILLNESS (Organization: Timmermann; Quirke / Place Manchester, UK)

Topic: Non-communicable illnesses such as cancer or heart disease have long been feared. Having previously been conceived of as ‘diseases of civilization’ or ‘degenerative diseases’, in the twentieth century, when the threats posed especially by tuberculosis declined in the industrialised world, these illnesses turned into major issues for policy makers and public health experts, pharmaceutical companies and an anxious public. Cancer and cardiovascular disease and the role that the development and marketing of treatments for chronic illness have played in the broader history of standardization in medicine will be the central theme of this workshop.

The histories of cancer, cardiovascular disease and other non-communicable illnesses have much in common, but there are important differences between them that are worth

exploring. Many of the blockbuster drugs of the last 50 years have been developed for the treatment of cardiovascular disorders. In the course of this development, some illnesses have been transformed from acute to chronic (e.g. malignant hypertension) and it has become acceptable to treat physiological parameters that do not cause symptoms but are statistically associated with illness later in life (e.g. mild hypertension or hypercholesterolaemia). In contrast, and with few exceptions, cancer drugs have often been used to treat what might otherwise be considered as orphan diseases and have rarely been as commercially profitable as cardiovascular drugs. Nevertheless, cancer has been central to the development of many of the practices, such as testing, clinical research, and standardization, which are increasingly applied to other fields of medicine, above all the multi-centre randomised clinical trial.

We have especially encouraged contributions that are in themselves comparative or invite comparisons, between different illnesses (for example heart disease and cancer) or across different national contexts.

Co-Financing by the University of Manchester

Referents (inter alia): R Aronowitz, I Baszanger, C Bonah, J Cenit, N David, E Giroux, N Henckes, J. Greene, T Koenig, G Oppenheimer, T Pieters, M Smith, J Szabo, G Weisz,

4. Last publications in the field

Please complete / modify these information if appropriate

(citation in Harvard-Style would be great. Example: V. E. Kinsey et al., 'Cooperative study of retrolental fibroplasia and the use of oxygen', *Archives of Ophthalmology*, 56 (1956), 481–543.)

F Condrau, 'Standardising Infection Control: Antibiotics and hospital governance in Britain 1948-1960', in: C Bonah, A Rasmussen, C Masutti (eds), *Harmonizing 20th Century Drugs: Standards in Pharmaceutical History* (Paris: Glyphe, 2009).

RGW Kirk "'Wanted - Standard Guinea Pigs": Standardization and the experimental animal market in Britain c1919-1947', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 39 (2008), 280-291.

JT Macfarlane, M Worboys, 'The Changing Management of Acute Bronchitis in Britain, 1940–1970: The impact of antibiotics', *Medical History*, 52 (2008), 47-72.

JV Pickstone, 'Contested Cumulations: Configurations of cancer treatments through the twentieth century', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 81 (2007), 164-196.

C Timmermann, 'How does a drug become medicine? Hexamethonium and the treatment of high blood pressure, 1940s-1950s', in J-P Gaudilliere and V Hess (eds), *Ways of Standardizing: Therapeutic Agents between Plants, Shops and Consulting Rooms*, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science Preprint 363 (Berlin: MPIWG, 2008)

C Timmermann, 'As Depressing as it was Predictable? Lung cancer, clinical trials, and the Medical Research Council in postwar Britain', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 81

(2007), 312-334.

H Valier, C Timmermann, 'Clinical Trials and the Reorganisation of Medical Research in Post-World War II Britain', *Medical History*, 52 (2008), 493-510.

M Worboys, 'Vaccines: conquering untreatable diseases', *British Medical Journal*, 334 (2007) S19.

5. New fundings (third party) in relation to DRUGS

Please complete / modify these information if appropriate

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6. Special resources and facilities

Please complete / modify these information if appropriate

<p>We are a Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine and happy to help with any projects involving UK perspectives or UK archives. We have our own departmental library holding mostly secondary literature in the history of science, technology and medicine, and an excellent University Library (with special collections). We can provide visitors (long-term and short-term) with desk space and computers.</p>
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