

# Research Blog

## “Defining autoimmune aspects of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME)”

### A Study Update

Posted by: Katharine Seton Post

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With regards to the human study being undertaken at the Quadram Institute, “Defining autoimmune aspects of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome” progress has been made, despite hold ups.

50% of the target number of patients have volunteered to participate in the study.

The main study obstacle was identifying a trained person for blood sample collection.

A trained person has been identified at the Quadram Institute to take blood.

An amendment application and approval from the Health Research Authority has been obtained, and a contract delegating study responsibilities between the University of East Anglia and the Quadram Institute is underway.

Once this is in place, home visits and sample collection can commence.

Despite not being able to collect samples yet, major progress in method development and optimisation has been made.

This was done using banked samples from Daniel Vipond’s PhD.

Between Fiona Newberry, Shen-Yuan Hsieh and myself we have optimised the following: isolation of virus particles from stool samples, viral identification based on unique sequences, and a method to screen for antibody responses to gut microbes.

I have recently had a review with my PhD supervisors, the purpose of which is to identify how much progress has been made.

I received positive comments that have given me some added motivation:

“The quality of the work undertaken to date is also very good with considerable careful and detailed effort being put into evaluating multiple experimental variables to optimise the assay”.

Looking forward, the next couple of months entail home visits, sample collection and sample processing, all of which take a considerable amount of time.

While this is occurring, method development will be continued and progressed.

In addition, we have also been very kindly invited to give a presentation at the Shropshire ME Group Conference in May.

This is a great opportunity to communicate our research to the public, and to engage with the public to hear their thoughts.

The move in date to the new Quadram Institute building is now August 2018. This provides us with plenty of time to do the first round of sample collection.

On a finishing note, I would really appreciate those who received a study invitation, and are interested in participating in the study to please contact myself soon to register your interest.

Bye for now –

Katharine

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