



INSTITUTE OF HEALTH RESEARCH

**Joint Seminar with Heath Statistics Group (UEMS) and
Genetics Group**

S E M I N A R

**4th July 2018, 12.30-1.15pm
PMS lecture theatre, RILD Building**

Prof Stephen Senn
Professor of Statistics

**Don't take it personally: careful causal analysis of
claims for personalised medicine is long overdue**

From former prime-ministers to captains of industry, all are convinced of the great potential for personalising the treatments of patients based on more and more measurement. A premise of the argument is the evident variation of 'response' in clinical trials. I claim we know much less about true causal variation than we think we do and that there is a surprising culprit for our misunderstanding: the evidence based medicine movement and its obsession with numbers needed to treat. I consider what we need to do to understand variation better and what the implications are for public health.

Prof Senn has recently retired but has had a distinguished academic career as Professor of Statistics at the Luxembourg Institute of Health (2011-2018) the University of Glasgow (2003-2011) and University College London (1995-2003). In addition to working as an academic he has also worked for the pharmaceutical industry in Switzerland and the National Health Service in England. He is the author of three books, Cross-over Trials in Clinical Research (1993 & 2002), Statistical Issues in Drug Development (1997, 2007) and Dicing with Death (2003). His expertise is in statistical methods for drug development and statistical inference.

Please email Leala Watson if you require further information: l.k.watson@exeter.ac.uk