Dear all

I hope you’ve had a good week and those involved in writing week have been particularly productive.  Can I thank Sarah Cockayne and the team leaders for pulling this together.  Sally has asked me to remind you about annual leave. I appreciate at the moment we are unable to do what we would normally do when we consider taking time off work.  I know some members of staff feel that they have benefitted from taking time out -  I have been furiously digging in my garden to combat weeds (especially the dreaded horse tail).   As you know, only 10 days of leave can be carried over to the next holiday year, therefore I would encourage you to take some annual leave over the coming months.

My latest hobby is revolving around hedgehog care – so I have now got a wildlife camera to monitor my ‘adopted pet’ (see attached) and a hedgehog house is on order!  As the voting for the best pet has opened I attach a short video of my pet (not so as to influence your votes of course – but to show how lovely she is!).  Mind you we now have hedgehog food on the weekly shop!  Now she’s getting regular feeds this has been getting around the hedgehog community and now there are at least two of them tucking in each night.  Although last night there was a bit of a punch up over the food bowl – but as far as I could see no one got hurt.  Also a trick is not to put too much food out as they don’t eat that much and you end up feeding the magpies.  Plus I want them to eat the slugs from my vegetable patch and if they are filled up with food there is less incentive for them to so their night shift among the vegetables.  Our mornings have now changed where the first order of the business before breakfast is to examine the latest Hog videos – which the Helpful Son is now posting on his Facebook page (which takes sufficient time for him to avoid doing the washing up etc).

Turning to grant applications there seems to have been a surge of calls for studies that have quick deadlines, so for instance a Leeds collaborator is keen for help for a study in August, whilst we’ve put in a grant with IPSOS MORI to do a RCT of social workers based in schools – again would be starting in August/September – these are in addition to the routine NIHR calls.  Therefore, if people think that they have some capacity to contribute to rapid calls let your line manager know.

May I remind you again  to all vote in the pet competition – I have and it was a tough choice. ( <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScNOXUm1_ZFOwRcn1iXvNCFuk96us65rM2mOylywPOjcPeD_g/viewform?usp=sf_link>)

Enjoy the weekend

David