

**Centre for Reproduction Research Seminar Series  
Thursday 20 June 2024 12 noon – 13:30pm  
Edith Murphy House 4.10 De Montfort University, Leicester (in-person)**

**Professor Nici Mackintosh, University of Leicester**

**Making sense of pregnant bodies, health information and care processes: digital diagnostic and boundary work in the antenatal period**

Increasingly, global attention is shifting to risk management and digital self-care before, during and after pregnancy to reduce morbidity and mortality. Expectant parents routinely use websites, mobile phone apps, and social media platforms to learn about ‘normal’ pregnancy related changes and potential signs of a complication. This presentation draws on interview data from 30 participants exploring technology-in-use, drawn from a larger UK-based mixed-methods study. It focuses on (self)diagnosis during the antenatal period as a distributed, reflexive and collaborative activity. It also explores professional jurisdictions and staff responsibilities in relation to expectant parents’ online practices. It considers the implications of intersections between digitally mediated diagnosis, pregnant bodies and discourses of health and risk for pregnancy and childbirth, together with professional boundary work, amidst current media attention on safety in maternity care.

**Biography:**

Nici Mackintosh is a Professor in Social Science applied to Health. She has a background in critical care nursing, and is a graduate of King’s College London. Her research uses sociological theory and methods to bring new understandings to patient safety and improvement science research. Nici brings an extensive portfolio of experience in ethnographic research in emergency, critical, maternity and acute care. Her research has included the management of escalation of care in different settings, speaking up about healthcare quality and safety, the role of new digital technologies in shaping patient-provider roles, and safety culture tools in maternity. She is Research Group Lead for SAPHIRE (Social science APPLIED Healthcare and Improvement REsearch) at the University of Leicester. SAPHIRE is internationally renowned particularly for its use of ethnographic methods to generate novel insights into efforts to improve healthcare quality and safety.

**Registration instructions:**

To register to attend this in-person seminar please email [crr@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:crr@dmu.ac.uk)