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Dr Karen Lillycrop is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Southampton.

Karen obtained her first degree in Chemistry and Biochemistry at Imperial College, London followed by her doctorate in Biochemistry at the University of Leicester. She then undertook post-doctoral research at University College London in Professor David Latchman's laboratory where she studied gene regulation and the role of transcription factors in disease. In 1995 Karen moved to Southampton to take up a lectureship in Molecular Biology at the University of Southampton.

Karen's current research is focused on how early life environment influences the epigenetic regulation of genes and the development of human disease. She in collaboration with Dr Graham Burdge (Institute of Human Nutrition, University of Southampton) was the first to demonstrate that maternal diet can alter the epigenetic regulation of key transcription factors within the fetus.

Karen has been awarded a number of research prizes including the Nick Hales Award 2007 for outstanding contribution into the developmental origins of health and disease. She collaborates extensively with research groups within Southampton as well as with groups in the Netherlands, Singapore and Auckland. The group is funded by project grants from BBSRC and EU and is part of the Epigen Research Consortium.