An Interdisciplinary Approach to Investigating the Presence of Non-Adults in English Medieval Hospital Cemeteries (AD.1050-1600).

Over 800 hospitals were founded in England during the medieval period (AD.1050-1600), providing refuge for pilgrims, the elderly, the sick, and the poor. Historical documentation survives for some hospital sites, providing information on patrons, land holdings, and occasionally, admission criteria. Archaeological excavations of hospital cemeteries are revealing new information about hospital inmates, who were rarely documented. This current research was initiated following the excavation of the medieval hospital of St John the Baptist, Lichfield (Staffs.). The hospital cemetery had a high proportion of juveniles and adolescents compared to contemporary sites. Osteology, archaeology and historic documentation are being used to investigate the demographics of hospital cemeteries and by implication, hospital inhabitants. This presentation will give an overview of the resources used in this research and provide a synopsis of the results to date. It is hoped that this will highlight the importance of medieval hospitals, especially for non-adults during this period.