
Annual Research Forum 2020 – Speaker information

Autoimmune psychosis – fact or fiction?

Abstract:

There are many lines of evidence to suggest that a proportion of psychosis has an autoimmune basis however there have not been any biomarkers to identify individuals that might benefit from immune modifying treatments. This has potentially changed with the discovery of neuronal cell surface antibodies over the last decade. These antibodies have been described in patients with limbic encephalitis, often with prominent psychiatric symptoms and they are recognized as pathogenic – removal of the antibody results in clinical improvement and usually remission. However the relevance of the same antibodies in patients with purely psychiatric presentations has been seen as controversial and screening for antibodies, and treatment when they are detected, is not readily available. I will discuss the current research that is trying to address these questions

Speaker bio:

Belinda Lennox is Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Oxford and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist in the Early Intervention in Psychosis service for Oxford Health NHS FT.

She trained in General Adult Psychiatry in Nottingham, Oxford and Cambridge. Her interests are in discovering the causes of and developing more effective treatments for those with psychosis and in implementing those discoveries into clinical practice. Her current research is in the autoimmune basis of psychosis and she runs a clinic, jointly with neurologists, to assess and treat people with autoimmune psychosis, as well as running a clinical trial to test out this new approach. www.sinapps.org.uk

Journeying through Dementia (JtD): A randomised controlled trial to evaluate the clinical and cost effectiveness of a psychosocial intervention with embedded fidelity assessment and qualitative sub-study

Abstract:

Approximately 82 million people globally are expected to be living with dementia by 2030. The consequences are therefore high for those living with the condition, their carers, and for services and economies worldwide. Finding interventions that are not only clinically and cost effective but also acceptable to people living with dementia is therefore a high priority. The proposed benefits of psychosocial interventions are now being recognised including increased self-efficacy to support independent living, improved physical and mental well-being, and increased engagement in meaningful activity. Journeying through Dementia (JtD) is a manualised psychosocial intervention designed to promote self-management, independence and self-efficacy in people with mild dementia. We conducted a pragmatic, parallel group, individually randomised controlled trial to evaluate the clinical and cost effectiveness of the JtD intervention. An embedded fidelity assessment and qualitative sub-study were also conducted to evaluate intervention delivery as intended and explore the experiences of those participating. Participants were randomly assigned to receive the intervention plus usual care or usual care alone. The primary endpoint was self-reported

Dementia Related Quality of Life (DEMQOL) at eight-months post randomisation. A cost-effectiveness analysis compared the two study arms and reported cost per quality adjusted life year (QALY) from a UK NHS and social care perspective.

Speaker bio:

Kirsty Sprange is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Trials at the University of Nottingham Clinical Trials Unit (NCTU), University of Nottingham. She has over 15 years' experience working in research including design and delivery of large multicentre randomised controlled trials, feasibility and pilot studies as well as qualitative methodology including interviews, focus groups, fidelity assessment and process evaluation. Her main research interest is in adult and child mental health in which she is currently a co-applicant on several large multi-centre NIHR HTA funded trials. She has a specific interest in older adults and dementia particularly complex psychosocial interventions exploring self-management for maintaining independent living as well as mental and physical wellbeing.



Psychological impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic: Insights from an international survey

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the health and lives of millions of people across the globe. The world as we have known has changed for every individual and may change further. While the current focus is rightly on preventing transmission of the virus and finding vaccines and a cure, the psychological impact, and aftermath of this crisis, specially for mental health and wellbeing and health care systems – not just in UK but globally – is and will be unprecedented.

We have conducted a cross-sectional survey, using a questionnaire based on published approaches to understand the psychological impact of COVID-19. A total of 29,134 participants completed the survey in the first three months across the UK.

Ref: Rathod et al, (2020) Psychological impact of COVID-19 pandemic: Protocol and results of first three weeks from an international cross-section survey - focus on health professionals. Journal of Affective Disorders Reports, Volume 1, December 2020, 100005

Speaker bio:

Prof Rathod is a Consultant Psychiatrist and Director of Research, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust. She is a visiting Professor to the University of Portsmouth and the mental health clinical lead for Wessex Clinical Research Network. She is also the trustee of The Centre for Applied Research and Evaluation International Foundation.

Following her postgraduate medical education, she has completed a doctorate in medicine, Certificate course in Managing health services with the Institute of health care management, acquired a certificate of Advance Medical leader with British Association of Medical Managers and Masters in Leadership. She has been a Fellow with the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence.

She has influenced national strategy through her leadership and research over the years and has held a number of leadership roles in the NHS in medical and clinical management. She has published books, book chapters, papers in peer reviewed journals and lectured extensively at national and international events.

Recent Awards:

- Excellence Award – PACT 2020
 - Excellence Award for Cultural Adaptation of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy – Pakistan Association of CBT, 2017
 - Outstanding Chief Investigator runner up – Clinical Research Network Wessex, 2017
 - The National Positive Practice in Mental Health Mindset Quality Improvement Award: Highly Commended, 2016
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Older peoples research opportunities in Leeds - present and future

Abstract:

This short presentation will provide an overview of recent projects focusing on older peoples mental health that have been completed in the trust. Providing a first look at the results from the national LPref65 study and dementia inpatient project, both of which are being run in the trust.

We will showcase ongoing studies where there is still an opportunity to get involved; including the trusts ECG study and the PATHFINDER trial.

Finally we will look at future opportunities for research in older peoples mental health in the trust. We will describe the studies currently in design, and ways to get involved.

Speaker bio:

George Crowther is a consultant in older peoples liaison psychiatry working at LYPFT. His clinical work focuses on the care of older peoples mental health while they are in general hospital.

George has been committed to using research to advance the care we are able provide to older people since he embarked on a career in psychiatry. Thanks to the local academic training programme here in Leeds he was able to nurture and advance his interest, obtaining his PhD 2017 and going on more recently to be one of the R&D clinical leads in the trust.

George's research focus is to improve the care of people with advanced dementia through improved education, care delivery systems and symptom recognition. He wants to make Leeds a national leader in this area.

COMIC studies

Abstract:

This talk will describe progress in the Child Oriented Mental health Intervention Centre (COMIC) which is a collaboration between LYPFT and University of York.

COMIC seeks to find and research child friendly, child oriented interventions for mental health problems.

The results of a recent systematic review of parent support interventions for parents of deaf babies and a study to validate new assessment tools for ASD in deaf children will be presented.

Results of autism assessment studies in Bradford will be presented as well as an update on three large clinical trials that are underway that seek to find child friendly ways of supporting children with mental health problems and neurodevelopmental disorders. The particular challenges faced in the midst of the current COVID pandemic will briefly be discussed.

Speaker bio

Barry Wright is a consultant in child psychiatry and has been an active clinician throughout his working life.

He has always recognised the power of research to change practice for the better and when he became Professor of Child Mental Health at the University of York he set up the Child Oriented Mental health Intervention Centre (COMIC) to bring together like minded people who wanted to make this a reality.



To the Dragons' Den & beyond

Abstract:

Have a research idea into the psycho-social work that you do? Want help getting your idea off the ground or defining your research question? Plan for the research forum 2021 when we will have a panel of experts to help you. In this ten minute slot Jo Ramsden – professional care group lead for psychology and psychotherapy – will introduce you to the Dragon's Den research forum and how we plan to adapt this next year....

Speaker bio:

Jo Ramsden – professional care group lead for psychology and psychotherapy.

What has the national Health and Wellbeing SMI study learned about local service users? An infographic presentation for the people of Yorkshire

Abstract:

The Health and Wellbeing Study explores health and lifestyle factors of people with severe mental ill health (SMI). Over the past five years the study has recruited over 10,000 people from across England who completed a survey about factors such as smoking, diet and physical activity.

How do health behaviours of those who access services in Leeds & York compare to the national average? Are there differences between those who access primary care compared to secondary care services? Researchers at the University of York have worked with LYPFT's research team and Physical Health Oversight Group to produce a series of infographics that visualise the data. We are excited to share pre-published findings with local Yorkshire folk and discuss the future of our health inequalities research for people with SMI.

Speaker bio:

Paul Heron is a Research Fellow at the University of York. Paul studied psychology and research methods at Coventry and Northumbria Universities before coordinating research in Kent & Medway NHS. Paul worked closely with service users to involve them in mental health research and took great interest in challenging the inequalities experienced by those with severe mental ill health. After working on the Health & Wellbeing Study from within the NHS he decided it was brilliant so he joined the



Health & Wellbeing Study team in the Mental Health and Addictions Group at the University of York. Paul has since been involved in a range of research, including student mental health, loneliness, asylum seekers, smoking and physical activity. Paul is interested in the use of graphical material to engage people in research and close the gap on health inequalities.

Results of the Reducing pathology in Alzheimer's Disease through Angiotensin TaRgeting (RADAR) Trial

Abstract:

The classical Renin Angiotensin System (cRAS) has now emerged as a possible therapeutic target for Alzheimer's disease (AD). Whilst cRAS is usually targeted to treat hypertension, a modifiable risk factor for dementia, considerable evidence now also implicates cRAS in AD through several non-blood pressure-related mechanisms, including altered cholinergic transmission, declining memory, inflammation and oxidative stress, as well as overarching neurodegeneration attributed to amyloid and tau neuropathology. Previous research into hypertension has yielded several ways to inhibit cRAS. These include 'sartans' that are angiotensin II type I receptor (AT1R) blockers and the prototype of which is losartan. This talk will present the background rationale for why interventions that can affect angiotensin II may serve to be of therapeutic benefit for the development and/or progression of AD. It will summarise the RADAR protocol and present the findings of this first study to investigate whether losartan could be repurposed as a treatment for AD. This is based on now numerous pre-clinical studies that have showed consistent evidence of intervention potential that have been regularly supported in human observational studies. The RADAR trial tested the therapeutic potential of losartan in mild-to-moderate Alzheimer's disease in a 12-month Phase II double-blinded randomised controlled trial.

Speaker bio:

Dr Pat Kehoe is the Gestetner Professor of Translational Dementia Research and Research Director of Bristol Medical School. He is a leading international name in the role of the classical renin angiotensin system (cRAS) in AD. Some of his research examines the imbalance in the activity of ACE1, relative to ACE2, and their combined contribution to net levels of angiotensin II. This has a bearing not only on hypertension associations in AD, but also mediates non-blood pressure-related effects that influence several damaging mechanisms known in AD. His previous laboratory-based research focussed on the impact of over-production of angiotensin II, which he has translated through to the Phase II RADAR trial. More recently his group uncovered how ACE2 is reduced in AD patients and how enhancement of ACE2, as an alternative way of reducing angiotensin II, may prove to be an even more valuable route to intervention in AD.

