

TOP 10 RESEARCH PRIORITIES: Improving the health of people with mental and physical health issues.

Coordination of Care and Access to Services

1. Some people are living with mental health issues and long-term physical health conditions. How can:

- Mental and physical health services best work together to coordinate their care and support?
- The challenges of navigating several different health services e.g. dealing with multiple appointments and information requests, be reduced or made easier?
- Their conditions be cared for and treated together rather than each one being addressed separately?

2. How can people with mental and physical health issues, including people in vulnerable groups (e.g. those who are homeless, those in disadvantaged communities), be supported to look after their mental and physical health when they face high levels of deprivation and poor access to services?

3. Would specialist services for people living with severe mental health ill health and long-term physical health conditions make a difference to their overall health? What can we learn from current 'best practice' about how to organise and deliver specialist services?

Understanding the Link Between Mental and Physical Health

4. How can a better understanding of mental health issues be created in physical health services and a better understanding of physical health problems be created in mental health services?

5. How can conversations between GP's and people living with mental health issues (including annual Health Checks) be improved when discussing their physical health?

6. How can patients and their friends or family carers be supported in their understanding of how mental health issues can impact physical health issues and how physical health issues can impact mental health issues?

7. Can effective pain management improve peoples' mental health?

TOP RESEARCH PRIORITIES: Improving the health of people with mental and physical health issues.

Managing Medication

8. The side effects of medications and the interaction between medications are a major concern for people living with mental health issues and long-term physical health conditions. How can:

- Side effects linked to mental health medication (e.g. weight gain, dry mouth/dental problems) be reduced or avoided?
- Over-prescribing of medications and prescribing medications that react negatively with one another be reduced or eliminated?

Health Promotion

9. Can providing healthy meals (e.g. meals on wheels) and/or supporting people to cook healthy meals (e.g. cooking coaching; access to low cost cooking equipment) help people with severe mental illness manage their weight and related physical health conditions (e.g. diabetes) in the long term?

10. People living with mental and physical health issues often find it hard to keep physically active. How can we:

- Better understand the barriers to people using schemes to help with physical health issues (e.g. leisure cards, social prescribing, gym prescriptions)?
- Identify the most effective and ongoing ways to support people to be more active (e.g. support from a health and wellbeing coach, peer support and group sessions, making use of green spaces)?

This priority setting work was done as part of the Yorkshire and Humber ARC mental and physical multi-morbidity theme. For more information please contact olivia.taylor@york.ac.uk