

Newsletter

Issue 12: Winter 2020



diamonds.

Improving diabetes outcomes for people with severe mental illness.

this issue:

Award Winners!

DIAMONDS 2020 Reflections

IMPACT Update

New Team members

Diamonds Voice Memories



WELL DONE! Award Winners!

Involvement work recognised

We are pleased to announce that the **DIAMONDS** Research Team, are 'the runners up' in the National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network (NIHR CRN), **McPin Foundation** and **MQ Service User and Carer Involvement Awards**.

Our congratulations go out to the winners, 'EFFIP support for families and friends' based in South London. The awards aim to recognise the achievements of researchers who involve service users, carers and the public in each stage of the research process; from initial design and participation, to the evaluation of outcomes.

Thomas Kabir, Head of Public Involvement at McPin, said: "The McPin Foundation offers our congratulations to everyone involved in the **EFFIP Project Reference Group** and the **DIAMONDS** studies. The service user and carer involvement in both these studies has been and continues to be exceptional. We hope that many others will follow their good example."

I was particularly delighted to hear the news, as the award acknowledges and celebrates the commitment and involvement of our service user and carer group **DIAMONDS Voice**. They have played an immense part in developing the various stages of the **DIAMONDS** Programme over the past 5 years. Equally, members have found the experience satisfying and they feel that their input is utilised in helping to make a difference to mental health research and the future improvements of health care for both service users and carers.

Sally Carling, a long standing member of the group and co-applicant, commented, "I was really proud when the **DIAMONDS** team were nominated, as the project gives us a real voice. We are listened to, and our experiences are valued. Good service user carer involvement is important because we live it, our views need the platform to change for the future, and through the work of **DIAMONDS** we can have a joined up health care system for all."



Angie Ross



For more information,
visit us online:

<https://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/research/mental-health/projects/diamonds/>



@Diamonds_NIHR



Bradford District Care
NHS Foundation Trust



Leeds and York Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust



UNIVERSITY
of York

DIAMONDS: 2020 REFLECTIONS

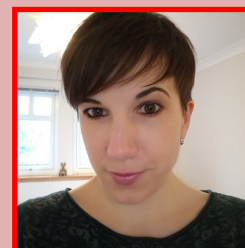
2020 has been full of reminders of what we do best on **DIAMONDS**: We support each other, we look after ourselves and each other, and we work together to find solutions and stay positive. Working with all stakeholders across **DIAMONDS**, including our Management Team and Steering Committee, as well as **DIAMONDS Voice**, and our external collaborators, I have been impressed and inspired by our ability to work with the challenges this year has presented: remote working, getting used to Zoom, home-schooling, travel restrictions, health worries, and, of course, the impact COVID-19 has had on our research.

Together, we have been able to find a solution for how to go ahead with the feasibility study of our **DIAMONDS** intervention in a Covid-secure way. Taking on board important insights from across the **DIAMONDS** team, we are now planning a non-randomised feasibility study to test the acceptability and deliverability of our supported self-management intervention with approximately 30 participants and up to ten intervention facilitators (**DIAMONDS** Coaches). We are working closely with our local Clinical Research Network and potential study sites to ensure we're ready to go in April 2021. We have our fingers crossed that participants will be able to meet their Coach in person but where this is not possible or appropriate we have plans in place for sessions to be delivered on the phone or through a video call. We are also exploring novel ways of data collection that don't exclusively rely on face-to-face meetings.

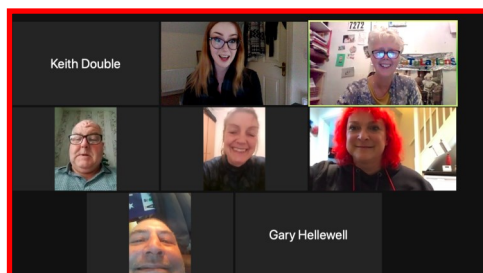


diamonds.

Improving diabetes self-management
for people with severe mental illness.



Jen Brown



One of the great joys of this year was to see **DIAMONDS Voice** continuing to go strong despite everything that was - and still is - going on around us. I consider myself very lucky indeed to be able to work with such a kind, generous, informed, and passionate group of people and I am forever grateful for the many ways **DIAMONDS Voice** helps us do better research. I know we all miss meeting in person and sharing a lunch but we have worked together to find new ways to keep in touch. From zoom and email to phone calls and paper copies

sent in the mail, we are doing what we can to (try and) ensure everyone has a chance to contribute. Some things have taken longer and not everything has worked brilliantly but, together, we are figuring it out.

In the early summer, we found out that we have been successful with our application to the **Mentally Fit York Fund** at the University of York for funding to support the development of a new and improved website for the **DIAMONDS** project. **The Mentally Fit York Fund** was set up to support mental health initiatives and research and we are absolutely delighted to have been awarded the money to work with **DIAMONDS Voice** to create a new, accessible, and interactive website for our work. To make sure the new website looks smart and is easy to use, we have started working with the wonderful Laura Evans of Nifty Fox Creative who has lots of fantastic ideas and is a super talented graphic designer. We can't wait to share our new page with you when it goes live in the year.

The biggest news of the year, however, arrived in the autumn: **DIAMONDS** finished runner up in the CRN MQ McPin awards for service user and carer involvement in mental health research. The application was co-produced by the research team and **DIAMONDS Voice** and it's a wonderful celebration of all the hard work that has gone into **DIAMONDS** over the years. We're so proud of all the team and everything we have achieved together.

As we head full steam towards the end of this year and into the next, many challenges will continue well into 2021. I am confident, though, that if we continue to be there for each other, to listen, and to collaborate, we will continue to do great things together. Here's to a great 2020 and an even better **2021!**



The **IMPACT** South Asia programme is a NIHR funded Global Health Research project, fostering collaborations between the University of York and several renowned academic and research based non-governmental organizations situated in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and the UK.

The COVID-19 pandemic and related regulations in the study countries since March 2020, has led the **IMPACT** programme to look for contingency strategies to carry out the project activities. These Covid friendly alterations in original study plans are designed in consultations with the country study-teams and the members from the patient-public-involvement (PPI) groups. This has helped **IMPACT** adapt both the study interventions (e.g. smoking cessation and brief talking therapy), so that they are suited to the mode of telephone delivery. Intervention-delivery through telephone if found feasible in the country contexts, will allow the programme to make pragmatic suggestions on newer intervention delivery approaches and will help overcome several practical access barriers found at present. In this challenging time of COVID-19 pandemic the **IMPACT** programme is committed to ensure researchers' safety under each of its activities and is carrying out comprehensive risk-assessments on a regular basis. The research Ethics committees of the respective countries and the University of York is updated time-to-time about any changes to plans. Following the important focus of the **IMPACT** programme on building research capacity among its researchers, number of webinars and online training sessions are undertaken regularly. The **IMPACT** South Asia group is maximising the present opportunity of this multi-country and inter-disciplinary research platform, committed to benefit the vulnerable population suffering the disproportionate burden of mental and physical health problems.



Papiya Mazumdar



Gerardo Zavala

Introducing New Members to the **DIAMONDS** Team



I am **Claire Carswell**, the new **DIAMONDS** Research Fellow, I joined the team in September 2020. I have joined remotely from Belfast, Northern Ireland, and while it's an unusual way to start a new post, technology, and a wonderful team, has made it a lot easier. I look forward to moving to York and meeting everyone in person once the pandemic allows. I am a registered mental health nurse and recently completed my PhD in Nursing, which involved developing a complex arts-based intervention to improve mental health and wellbeing in patients with end-stage kidney disease. I am particularly interested in using research to bridge the gap between mental and physical health, and am very excited to be working on **DIAMONDS**.



'My name is **Laura Evans** and I am the founder of **Nifty Fox Creative**, a design agency that specialises in helping academic researchers communicate their projects in accessible way to lay audiences. I used to be a social researcher for ten years and grew frustrated with the poor communications between universities and the rest of the world! I'm working with the **DIAMONDS** team to put together a new **DIAMONDS** website and a workbook for the Change One Thing trial in 2021. I've loved working with the research and **DIAMONDS Voice** team so far!'

We bid farewell and all the best to...



Dr Charlotte Kitchen, who has now left the team to pursue her own research. We wish her all the best in this new exciting endeavour. We thank her for the outstanding work in developing parts of the **DIAMONDS** programme and **EMERALD** Study over the past couple of years. Thank you for all your support with **DIAMONDS Voice** too!



diamonds voice.

Putting the public voice at the heart of DIAMONDS research

Thank You !

To all of you who have been involved and supported the **DIAMONDS** Programme over the past five years. In that time we have helped to develop grant applications, methods, and data collection tools, as well as take an active role in promoting the projects and research activities at NHS Trust events and Service User Groups. Currently, we are working with the team on developing the workbook for the forthcoming Feasibility Trial next year. Here are some of our memories captured below...



Interested? We are always looking for new members, who have lived experience of severe mental illness and diabetes.

Contact: **Angie Ross**

Tel: 07588 329185

Email: ppihealthresearch@gmail.com

Ways to get Involved...

DIAMONDS Voice Meetings : We meet 3-4 times a year. We provide input into all aspects of the research programme. During the meetings researchers give us an update of the progress of research and we undertake research activities. All out of pocket expenses are reimbursed. Also, we network with other service user groups, attend workshops and conferences. Our members advise, co-design projects, and sit on the Research Steering Groups, and Committees.

FUNDED BY

NIHR | National Institute
for Health Research

This newsletter presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) under its Programme Grants for Applied Research (PGfAR) Programme (Grant Reference Number RP-PG-1016-20003) and its Health Services and Delivery Research (HS&DR) Programme (Grant Reference number 15/70/26). The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NIHR or the Department of Health.