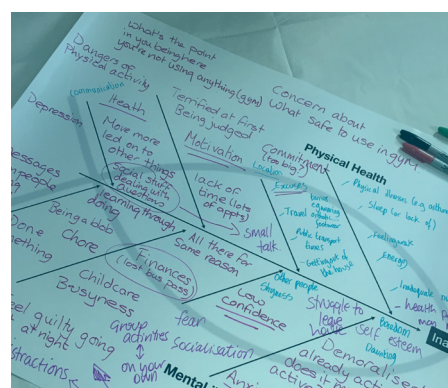
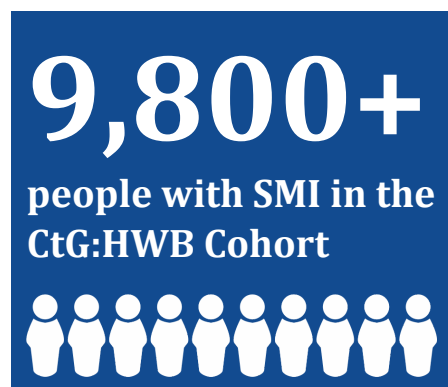
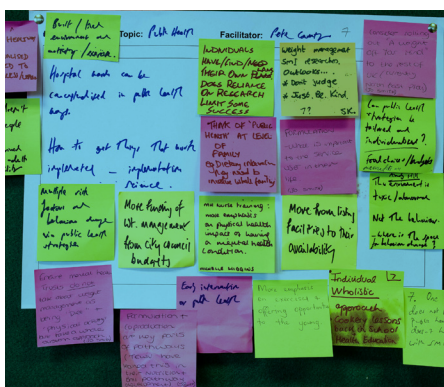




First year in review 2019/20



Foreword



“A first birthday is a time for celebration and we have much to be proud of.”

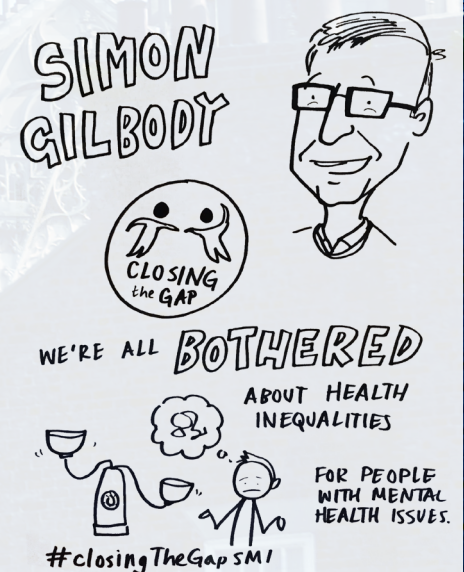
After one year of Network activity the sense of responsibility I have looms larger than ever. It is both a privilege and a huge responsibility to lead the Closing the Gap Network. The gap we have chosen to address - the poor physical health and reduced life expectancy of people with the most severe forms of mental ill health - is one of the great injustices of our time and our health services remain under immense pressure. We cannot lose momentum and lose sight of our vision to reduce the health inequalities for people with severe mental illness. It isn't enough to simply deliver on the new research projects and partnerships we have started in our first year we must continue to build and extend our Network's reach.

Simon Gilbody, CtG Network Director

About us

People with severe mental illness (SMI) such as schizophrenia and bipolar illness die on average 20-25 years earlier than those without such disorders. Services have failed in reducing health inequalities for people who use mental health services. Our vision is to bring together new knowledge and perspectives to address this mortality gap and other inequalities for SMI populations.

At the heart of the Closing the Gap (CtG) Network is a research-ready cohort of people with lived experience of SMI. The CtG Health and Wellbeing Cohort is an ongoing project which includes over 9,000 (and counting) people who have provided data on their health and lifestyle. This Cohort has already helped researchers to deliver large-scale trials of smoking cessation and diabetes management in SMI. Researchers who join the CtG Network will be able to work with and support this innovative cohort to deliver internationally-excellent and impactful research.



Funding round-up



Projects funded in 2019

- | | |
|--|--|
| ● Predictors of non-psychiatric hospital admissions | ● Outdoor benefits to mental health |
| ▲ The Mouth Matters Study | ▲ Improving diabetes care |
| ■ Preconception health indicators | ■ Digital technologies research advisors |

We are delighted that in autumn 2019 six projects were funded as part of our first CtG Network funding call. The projects cover a range of our Network research themes and involve partner organisations from around the UK and Europe. Read on for a summary of these exciting projects.

Patterns and predictors of non-psychiatric hospital admissions among people with severe mental illness in UK Biobank

Amount

£20,616

Partners

University of Glasgow
University of York
Mental Health Foundation
University of Amsterdam



Principal Investigator

Claire Niedzwiedz
(University of Glasgow)

Investigators

Daniel Smith
(University of Glasgow)

Rowena Jacobs
Maria Jose Aragon
Stephanie Prady
(University of York)

Josefien Breedvelt
(Mental Health Foundation,
University of Amsterdam)

People with severe mental illness (SMI), including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, have poor physical health and reduced life expectancy.

Existing research has focused on factors that increase the likelihood of being admitted to hospital for psychiatric illness. We aim to examine patterns and predictors of non-psychiatric hospital admissions for people with SMI using the vast range of data provided by UK Biobank. We will explore various biological, social and environmental factors related to hospitalisations for physical illness using innovative methods and be informed by lived experience, which will help to target policy and improve the health of people with SMI.



Mental Health
Foundation



University
of Glasgow



UNIVERSITY
of York



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Green and blue spaces – how being outdoors can benefit our mental health

Amount

£10,797

Partners

Queen's University Belfast
Mental Health Foundation
Praxis Care



This research will address two questions to assess the feasibility of a larger scale green and blue space intervention project:

1 How do people with serious and enduring mental illness (SMI) perceive, use and benefit from green and blue space?

2 Does the interaction with green and blue spaces differ between SMI and the general population?

Using an exploratory sequential mixed methods design, peer researchers will conduct qualitative interviews with mental health service users; these data will be used to design a quantitative survey to explore the relevant themes with a sub-sample of the CTG Health and Wellbeing Cohort and a general population sample.

Principal Investigator

Claire McCartan
(Queen's University Belfast)

Investigators

Gavin Davidson
(Queen's University Belfast)

Lee Knifton
Chris White
(Mental Health Foundation)

Paul Webb
(Praxis Care)

Liam Bradley
Katherine Greer
(Peer Researchers)



Preconception health indicators in women with severe mental illness



Amount

£23,691

Partners

King's College London
NIHR Maudsley

Principal Investigators

Louise Howard
Raquel Catalao
(King's College London)

Investigators

Michelle Pentecost
Sarah Dorrington
Mark Ashworth
(King's College London)

Robert Stewart
(NIHR Maudsley)

Health of women around the time of conception is a key determinant of pregnancy outcome and next generation health, and offers a unique opportunity to intervene.

Little is known about preconception health in women with mental disorders and which factors contribute to the increased risk of adverse outcomes, which disproportionately affect women of Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

We aim to investigate if preconception health indicators and level of multi-morbidity differ for women with severe mental illness (SMI) compared with those with a history of depression and those with no previous mental health history and explore ethnicity disparities in these indicators, using linked primary care and secondary care data from a deprived ethnically diverse inner London borough.

KING'S
College
LONDON

NIHR | Maudsley Biomedical
Research Centre

Improving diabetes care for people with severe mental illness (SMI): a longitudinal observational study in England



Amount
£25,402

Partners
University of York

Principal Investigator
Lu Han

Investigators
Najma Siddiqi
Rowena Jacobs
Tim Doran
Catherine Hewitt
Stephanie Prady

Diamonds Voice Patient and
Public Involvement Group

Diabetes significantly contributes to the poorer physical health and lower life expectancy of those with severe mental illness (SMI).

The quality of diabetes care for the general population in England has improved in the last fifteen years following the introduction of several national incentive schemes. However, there remain variations in the quality of care by patient demographics, socioeconomic status and co-morbidities such as SMI.

This study will analyse an electronic healthcare dataset in England to estimate: 1) inequality in diabetes care associated with SMI; and 2) the differential impact of care on health outcomes.

The causes and consequences of poor oral health in people with severe mental health difficulties: The Mouth Matters Study



Initial research indicates that people with psychosis or bipolar disorder are more likely to have decayed, missing or filled teeth, and experience severe gum disease.

Poor oral health can greatly impact on their lives. However, the quality of existing research is generally very poor. We want to perform the strongest research to date exploring this issue. We intend to analyse existing data from two large surveys in the UK and US. We will explore whether and why people with psychosis or bipolar disorder have worse oral health. We will also examine the factors affecting whether people receive dental care.



Amount

£8,331

Partners

University of Leeds
Lancaster University
University of York

Principal Investigator

Jing Kang
(University of Leeds)

Investigators

Jianhua Wu
Vishal Aggarwal
(University of Leeds)

Jasper Palmier-Claus
(Lancaster University)

Tim Doran
(University of York)

David Shiers
(Retired GP/Carer)

John*
(Lived experience carer)

*Pseudonym

Closing the Gap: Using digital technologies to promote and enhance participation of young people as research advisors



We are setting up the CtG Youth Study which uses a questionnaire about physical health and wellbeing in younger people with serious mental ill health.

We will have a group of young people who have used mental health services to advise us (CtG Youth Study Research Advisors). We want to find out if digital technologies (e.g. group chats, podcasts, visual storytelling) can help young people with mental ill health get involved with research as advisors. We will have two interactive workshops with young people to find out how to best use digital technologies to work effectively with our advisory group.

Amount
£5,587

Partners
University of York

Principal Investigator
Ruth Wadman

Investigators
Lina Gega

Network Impact: The SCIMITAR Trials

We developed a bespoke smoking cessation intervention to help people with serious mental ill health cut down or quit smoking.

People with severe mental illness (SMI) are three to four times more likely to smoke than people in the general population. Whilst smoking rates are falling in the general population, they have remained unchanged among people who use mental health service. For these reasons, it is clear that conventional approaches to smoking cessation might need to be tailored to people with SMI.

The trial

The team developed a bespoke smoking cessation (BSC) intervention to help people with SMI cut down or quit smoking. This intervention was tested in the SCIMITAR pilot trial which successfully recruited and followed up 97 participants and found that the BSC intervention was acceptable to people with SMI.

Following the pilot trial the SCIMITAR+ trial was conducted to evaluate the clinical effectiveness and the cost effectiveness of the SCIMITAR intervention. The SCIMITAR+ trial recruited 526 people who were randomly allocated to either the BSC intervention or usual smoking cessation services.

The SCIMITAR+ trial found that after six months, participants who received the bespoke intervention were twice as likely to have quit smoking than those who received usual care. The difference was still evident at 12 months, in a combined analysis of pilot and full trial data. The analysis gives the greatest level of statistical power to examine long term quit rates, which are important for individuals, policy makers and mental health services.

Partners

University of York
University of Manchester
University College London
University of Leeds

20 mental health secondary care trusts across England

CLAHRC Yorkshire and Humber
Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)
National Centre for Smoking Cessation Training (NCSCT)
Equally Well UK
Mental Health Foundation

Impact activity



1
webinar



2
podcasts



5
video stories

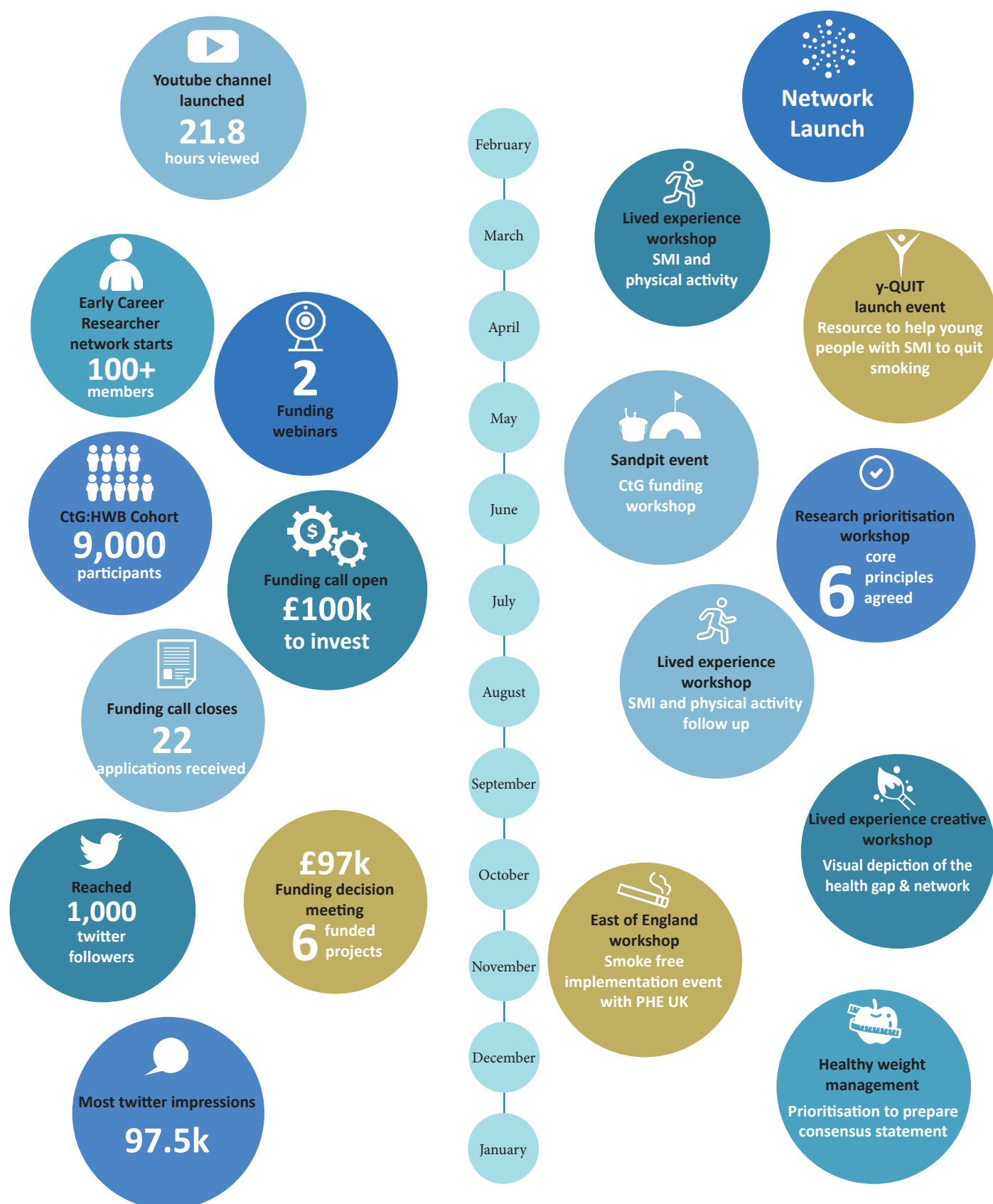
Key publication

Gilbody, S., et al. (2019). Smoking cessation in severe mental illness: Combined long-term quit rates from the UK SCIMITAR trials programme. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 1-3. doi:10.1192/bjp.2019.192



61
people
tweeting

Extending our reach



Year one of the CtG Network has been busy. Here is a sample of some of our Network activities as we celebrate our first birthday.

What's next?

"We are really looking forward to continuing to grow the Network. We made a lot of new friends in the last year and formed some exciting new collaborations."

In 2020, we aim to build on our new collaborations and continue to reach out to spread the word about our Network. In February, we are holding the first of 2020's CtG Roadshows in Stafford where we will be meeting colleagues from the Midlands. In 2019, we funded six new research projects and we are looking forward to seeing these develop as well as launching further funding calls later in the year. Importantly, we will continue to work with our lived experience colleagues to steer the course of the network and hope to hold more joint creative workshops. Finally, we are establishing a network of Early Career Researchers and plan to hold a joint event for Early Career Researchers in conjunction with the other seven UKRI funded mental health networks.

Emily Peckham, CtG Network Manager



Founding partners



UNIVERSITY
of York



Mental Health
Foundation



Cochrane
Common Mental
Disorders

Connect with us



Website

[york.ac.uk/healthsciences/
closing-the-gap](http://york.ac.uk/healthsciences/closing-the-gap)



Follow us

@CTGNetworkUK
@CTG_HWB_Cohort



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Watch our content

tiny.cc/WatchTheGap

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UK Research
and Innovation