



**Research
Centre**
Part of St Andrew's Healthcare

Research

Report 2019/20



Transforming lives through research

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Our mission

To improve the lives of people who experience severe mental ill-health, through the design and delivery of collaborative, patient-driven research that advances mental health practices, treatments and environments.

Our goal is to identify and address the obstacles preventing people, detained in secure hospital settings, from moving to the most appropriate, least restrictive setting – and back into society, wherever possible – in a safe and sustainable way.

Chair's introduction

I am pleased to present the second annual report since taking the Chair of the Research Committee in 2018. Research was one of the three founding principles of St Andrew's when it was formed in 1838 and, despite many changes in the intervening 180 plus years, it remains a key strategic goal for the charity.

This report outlines our achievements in advancing research for the benefit of patients, over the past year. Research is very much a team enterprise and I would like to offer my thanks to all those involved in helping us to deliver our ambitions.

We have achieved much on a number of new fronts, from initiating new research projects to supporting and nurturing research at all levels across our hospitals. The beginning of the year saw the launch of two new research programmes: the first, using virtual reality to treat social avoidance: a frequent and transdiagnostic issue for many of our patients; the second, focussed on developmental and complex trauma: adverse experiences that result in extremely negative outcomes for the individual, including premature death. We report on these and a number of other projects in the following pages. It is also exciting to note that the pilot recruitment phase for the important multi-centre randomised controlled CALMED trial (looking at the use of clozapine to treat borderline personality disorder), which was featured in last year's report, began in Autumn 2019 as scheduled, with St Andrew's currently the top recruitment site.

Delivering a portfolio of patient-focussed clinical research to improve patient recovery and wellbeing, and speed up the recovery journey for the patients in our care, and more widely, remains our key priority.



Sir Peter Ellwood
Research Committee Chair

Research at St Andrew's – year two

We know more about our patients, and hold more information on them, than at any time in the past; yet, advances in new therapies and treatments are still painfully slow, with many treatments in mental health no more advanced than they were 30 years ago.

We also know it is highly improbable that a single project or individual research team will beat mental ill-health on its own. Its complex and idiosyncratic nature, alone, means that a multi-disciplinary, innovative and person-centred approach is essential.

It is for this reason that we are committed to collaborating with all of those who share our goals – be this the wider research community, the NHS, industry partners, other charities or people and families affected by the challenges of mental ill-health. This year we have developed a number of new partnerships, and continue to work with patients and carers to ensure that our research is relevant and focussed. Ultimately, we want to change the life course of those experiencing mental ill-health, so that they can, wherever possible, lead an active and meaningful life.



Dr Sanjith Kamath
Executive Medical Director

The three biggest challenges we face are allocating clinical time for research, in the face of high service demand; funding, at a time when resources are under constant pressure and the quality and consistency of our data. Despite this, there are exciting opportunities, and a real sense of hope and optimism about the benefits research will bring to people's lives, today. A clear set of priorities is essential and it is important that we use the limited resources available to us in a cost effective and focussed way.

Spotlight on projects

oxfordvr
Immersive technology for mental health

Virtual Reality (VR) and Social Avoidance

We believe VR-based therapy may present a unique opportunity for patients cared for in a secure setting, who are unable to benefit from conventional treatments because of structural barriers and safety concerns that limit their access to real-life situations.

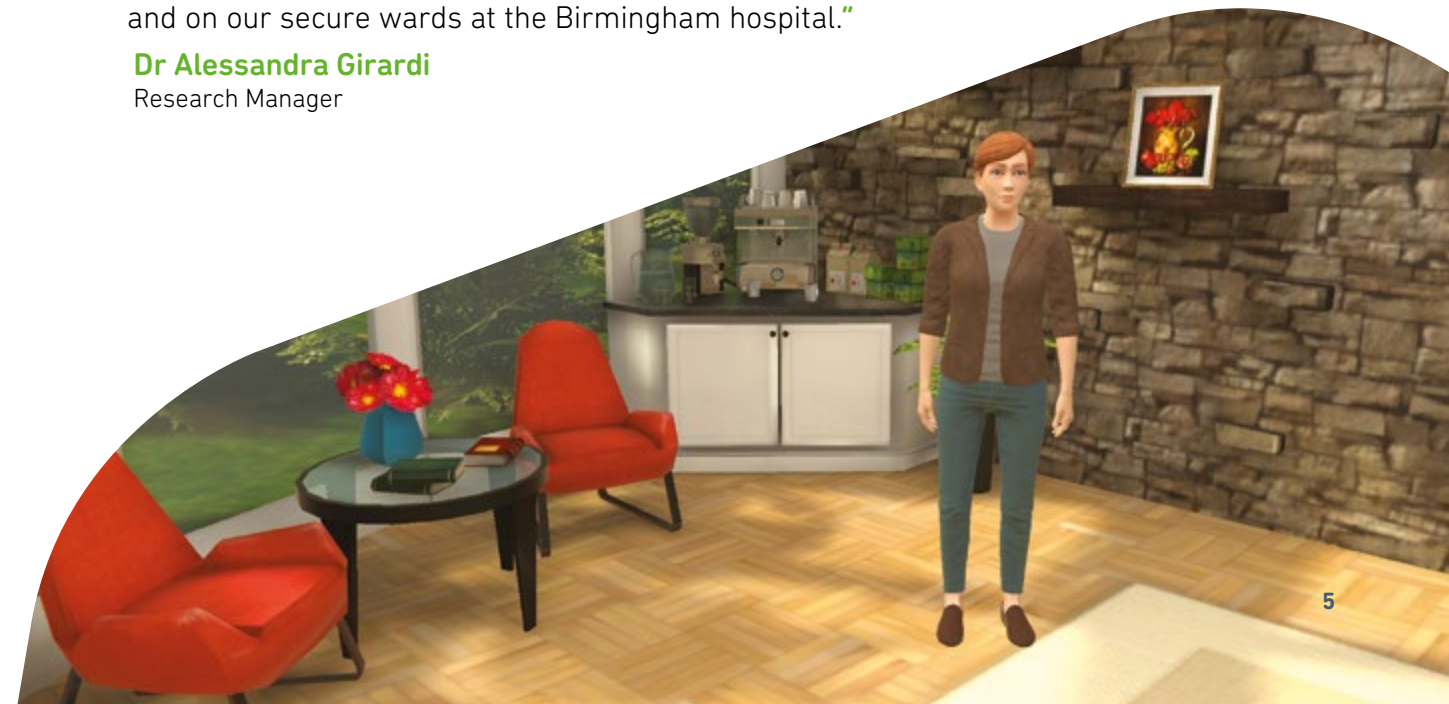
The aim of the project is to assess whether psychological therapy, delivered in a virtual environment, could significantly improve the recovery of people experiencing severe mental ill-health, who are treated in a secure psychiatric setting. The researchers believe that VR technology may be able to transform the provision of psychological therapy in the UK.

VR is being increasingly used in mental health settings to treat different conditions, such as fear, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and autism. The virtual setting is engaging, supports treatment adherence and elicits responses similar to those experienced in real life, but without the stress and fear triggered by real-life events.

We are working with Daniel Freeman, Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Oxford, and Oxford VR, to bring to our patients a new intervention, specifically developed to help them overcome their fear of social interactions. During treatment, a virtual coach will guide participants through six immersive social scenarios: a café, a pub, a shop, a doctor's waiting room, a street and a bus. In each scenario, the number of avatars (electronic visualisations of people) will gradually increase. The programme will help patients test out their beliefs in a safe environment and see that no harm will occur to them when they remain in the feared situation.

"Our researchers, clinical psychologists and assistant psychologists closely collaborated to develop a three-phase programme to implement and maximise the benefits of this intervention. The first study will be launched in Northampton (with both adult mental health patients, adolescents and those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis) and on our secure wards at the Birmingham hospital."

Dr Alessandra Girardi
Research Manager





Collaboration between
12 clinicians, from six
services, at St Andrew's,
four external collaborators,
four volunteers and two
student placements

Developmental and Complex Trauma Research Programme

Developmental and complex trauma are life-limiting experiences that have a significant impact on the individual. People exposed to repeated adversity, both in child and adulthood, experience greater levels of psychopathology, have lower educational achievements and employment outcomes, and have poorer physical health outcomes, including premature mortality.

The individual, social and economic costs of supporting those exposed to psychological trauma are significant and remain a growing public health concern.

Our Developmental and Complex Trauma Research Programme has been developed in collaboration with members of the multi-disciplinary care team, the NHS and leading academics in the USA and Scotland. Four main areas of investigation have been developed, within a lifespan approach:

- 1** **Developmental trauma**
prevalence and clinical needs
- 2** **Complex trauma**
prevalence, clinical needs
and treatment outcomes
- 3** **Resilience**
its relationship to trauma
and outcomes
- 4** **Auto-induced post-traumatic
stress disorder (PTSD)**
developing a coherent
clinical approach



"The ultimate aim of this programme is to increase our understanding of the different types of trauma and their relation to wider clinical needs, with the intention of improving assessments, treatments and outcomes for patients, and reducing length of stay in secure care. The programme has already produced one published paper and five conference submissions."

Dr Deborah Morris
Consultant Clinical Psychologist

Does the Health of the Nation Outcome Scale (HoNOS) predict a patient's journey?

Professor Bradley Love and Dr Maarten Speekenbrink of University College London (UCL) have been working with us to assess whether HoNOS scores can be used to accurately predict a patient's journey through secure care. The HoNOS was developed by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, in 1993, to measure the health and social functioning of people with severe mental illness.

Dr Speekenbrink has used mathematical approaches to analyse an anonymous dataset of retrospective HoNOS scores, for hundreds of St Andrew's past and current patients.

Initial analysis has identified 23 'mental-health states' of patients, based on how specific components of their individual scores change over time. This suggests that it may be possible to group patients according to these states.

The next stage will be to consult a clinical working group to assess whether the progression trends, identified by the UCL team, actually reflects the clinical situation.

The aim of the project is to support clinical decision-making about care planning and treatment options, based on a patient's current 'mental-health state', as identified by changes in their HoNOS scores. The ultimate goal being to reduce length of stay, through the informed implementation of treatment earlier in the patient's care. In addition, a validated indicator, such as this, will serve to provide a more accurate projection of a patient's recovery, at the start of their journey – something of great interest to patients, families and carers, as well as service providers.



Dr Maarten Speekenbrink
Senior Lecturer,
Experimental Psychology
University College London

The European study on VIOlence Risk and Mental Disorders (EU-VIORMED)

The aim of EU-VIORMED is to support the harmonisation of forensic psychiatric care pathways and treatments across Europe, in order to improve the quality of forensic psychiatric care across the continent.

The project will assess the diverse pathways for forensic psychiatric care in different European countries, identify risk factors for violence and self-harm in people with schizophrenia spectrum disorders (SSD), evaluate tools that can predict the risk of violence and self-harm and assess the current evidence supporting treatments for people with SSD in forensic services. The UK-arm of the project is managed by Dr Marco Picchioni of Kings College London; formerly, a clinician at St Andrew's.

The study will explore the risk factors for violence risk to self and others in patients with SSD and asks how the performance compares for two risk assessment tools – furthering our understanding of the link between schizophrenia and violence.

Rebecca Ruiz, a researcher at Kings College London, has recruited six patients from St Andrew's Healthcare, since May 2019. The wider UK trial has recruited an additional 44 cases, with recruitment due to complete at the end of March 2020.



Rebecca Ruiz
Research Assistant
Kings College London

Supporting the national agenda

As well as initiating and supporting research within our services, a key role of the Research Centre is to work with our NHS colleagues to help shape the future of mental health provision, as part of the wider national agenda.



Introducing new services and therapies costs money, so it is vital that they are evaluated and assessed, using a rigorous analytical approach, to ensure that they deliver the expected improvements for patients and the health service. Listed below are two examples where the skills of the research team are being deployed in this national arena.

Blended Ward project

There is evidence that people experience stress when moving to a different ward, due to the disruption and change of environment: unfamiliar staff, patients and ward routine. The same is true, even when a move is to the less restrictive environment of a lower security ward. The anxiety experienced during these, currently necessary, transitions can stall a patient's recovery and lead to a delay in their discharge from our care.

To tackle this, with the aim of reducing the length of stay by an average of 15 months, St Andrew's is leading on a continued NHS initiative to provide care for both medium and low secure patients on a 'blended' ward. In collaboration with NHS Trusts in Birmingham and Manchester, we have obtained NHS England funding to trial and determine the effectiveness of this blended approach, with a view to wider implementation. In particular, we will determine whether it will improve the quality of our care and decrease the length of stay at St Andrew's. The project was co-produced with patients and carers, and the Research Centre will evaluate its success in reducing length of stay and clinical benefit.

New Care Model (NCM), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), East Midlands

NHS England has established Provider Collaboratives as a way of developing New Care Models. The overall aim of a Provider Collaborative is to work with other healthcare organisations to provide better coordinated specialised commissioning of health services, whilst ensuring the best experience for patients and the best value for money. New Care Models provide opportunities for healthcare providers to work in collaboration to tackle long-standing challenges and create new opportunities. The East Midlands Provider Collaborative is made up of eight partners working together on further developing CAMHS Tier 4 services* across the region. In October, the Research Centre was tasked with leading the evaluation of the East Midlands NCM pilot in CAMHS. An evaluation committee has been created in collaboration with patients, carers and clinicians to ensure that the new model is providing the best possible care for our young people.

*Tier four services treat patients with more complex needs usually requiring inpatient treatment.

Dr Kieran Breen
Head of Research & Innovation



Working with others

26
projects conducted
in collaboration
with partners

Forming meaningful collaborations with expert partners is key to our success and we have established good local and national partnerships (as detailed in our portfolio page, over).

We are also pursuing engagement with international academics and clinicians, as detailed here.

UConn
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

As part of the Developmental and Complex Trauma Research Programme, the Research Centre is collaborating with one of the world's leading researchers in this area, Dr Julian Ford.

Dr Ford is Professor of Psychiatry and Law at the University of Connecticut's School of Medicine. His expertise will be used on a number of studies, including the exploration of the validity of the intellectual disability diagnosis for people who have experienced severe developmental trauma.



Yale SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



Our research on the assessment for risk of violence in patients with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis drew the attention of lead researchers from Yale University.

Dr Alexander Westphal, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Yale, School of Medicine, visited St Andrew's in July in order to get a better understanding of our research programme and the clinical service we provide for patients with ASD.



One of the outcomes from his visit was an invitation to Dr Alessandra Girardi (Research Manager) and Peter Ford (Clinical Lead in ASD) to deliver a one-week training course at Yale University. Opportunities to collaborate and future research will be high on their agenda to discuss during their visit.






Our portfolio







Supporting the national agenda

-  **Blended Wards Evaluation** is a crucial assessment of NHS England's novel approach to improve transition through the development of the blended wards programme. *St Andrew's led project, in collaboration with NHS England*
-  **CAMHS New Care Model (NCM) Evaluation** is the next important step in ensuring that the best possible care is given to young people. *St Andrew's led project, in collaboration with NHS England*



Technology

-  **VR and Social Avoidance** explores the feasibility and benefits of a virtual intervention to promote social engagement to patients with a range of diagnoses. *St Andrew's led project, in collaboration with Oxford VR*
-  **Memjo** is a collaboration with the developer of an electronic memory journal for people with dementia. This tech-themed project explores whether digital journals are a feasible approach to reminiscence therapy for our dementia patients. *St Andrew's led project, in collaboration with Memjo*
-  **Personalised VR in dementia** aims to co-design and test a system allowing patients to generate personalised VR images. *Joint-funded PhD, in collaboration with the University of Kent*



Physical health

-  **Physical Activity Intervention** will result in a psychologically informed intervention, which provides guidance for healthcare assistants to help them support patients to increase their physical activity. *Collaborative PhD, in collaboration with Loughborough University*
-  **Physical Activity Promotion in Adolescents' Secure Settings (PAPASS)** is a second Loughborough collaboration in our "Physical health and sleep" strand. With a similar theme to the above project, this research is taking place in our Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service. *Joint-funded PhD, in collaboration with Loughborough University*
-  **Physical Health Needs in Psychiatric Intensive Care Units (PICU)** aims to give a better understanding of the physical health needs of our patients and the relationship to psychiatric illnesses. *St Andrew's led project, in collaboration with the University of Cambridge and NHS England*
-  **Sleep Disorder Assessment** explores sleep – vital to recovery and wellbeing – in an inpatient setting, and investigates the association between sleep and inpatient violence. Findings will inform the development of a sleep guideline. *Joint-funded PhD, in collaboration with Loughborough University*







Predicting treatment and recovery

-  **Predictive Value of HoNOS** (Health of the Nation Outcome Scale) is explored through the analysis of HoNOS scores for past and present St Andrew's patients. *Collaboration with University College London*
-  **START Predictive** aims to determine the predictive validity of the professional judgement scheme: the Short-Term Assessment of Risk and Treatability (START). *Led by St Andrew's*






National and international

-  **CALMED** examines the effectiveness of clozapine for inpatients with borderline personality disorder. This exciting NIHR-funded trial is due to complete in 2022. *Led by Imperial College London*
-  **The EUropean study on VIolence Risk and MEntal Disorders (EU-VIORMED)** is an EU-funded project that aims to improve the quality of forensic psychiatric care in Europe. *Led by Kings College London* <http://www.eu-viormed.eu/>

Postgraduate

-  **Personal Responsibility** is informed by clinicians and patients, in order to develop a tool to measure personal responsibility in offender rehabilitation. *Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClin), University of Birmingham*
-  **Experiences of Huntington's disease (HD)** focuses on improving the experiences of those with HD, their families and staff in a secure setting. *DClin, University of Birmingham*
-  **Forensic Histories and Experiences of Stigma** investigates the experiences of stigma and discrimination amongst people with forensic histories and mental health difficulties. *DClin, University of Birmingham*
-  **Offenders Guilt and Shame** considers the impact of guilt and shame on forensic patients' motivation to change, in a secure psychiatric setting. *DClin, University of Nottingham*
-  **Management of Closeness and Conflict** explores staff-child relationships and factors that influence staff's ability to care for young people with challenging behaviour. *DClin, University of Birmingham*
-  **Firesetters with Intellectual Development Disorder (IDD)** assesses the treatment of adult firesetters with IDD. *PhD, University of Kent*
-  **Therapists' Views** explores the views and experiences of therapists practicing in secure and non-secure settings. *MSc, Dublin City University*

Trauma informed care

-  **CAMHS Developmental Disorders** strand comprises six studies exploring the prevalence and clinical correlates of developmental trauma. *Led by St Andrew's*
-  **Women's DBT** strand has three projects exploring trauma and its relationship to engagement and outcomes of dialectical behavioural therapy. *University of Birmingham & St Andrew's collaboration*
-  The **PICU** strand has two projects designed to improve the trauma focus in our psychiatric intensive care unit. *Led by St Andrew's*
-  **Women's PTSD** strand explores trauma arising from your own actions. *Led by St Andrew's*
-  The **Intellectual disability (ID)** strand is in development with Dr Claudia Camden Smith, Consultant Psychiatrist. *Oxford Health NHSFT and St Andrew's collaboration*



Our students' projects

We are supporting four PhD studentships – three of which will be co-funded and co-supervised by the Research Centre.

Two of the co-supervised projects are being conducted in collaboration with the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences at Loughborough University. Despite the physical and psychological benefits of exercise, individuals with serious mental illness remain amongst the most inactive populations in society. The effect of inactivity is magnified within secure settings, where the challenges experienced by people with mental ill-health are at their severest, and structural barriers can deter them from engaging in physical activity. Adolescents have much to gain from an active lifestyle, particularly if they are encouraged to continue that engagement through into adulthood. There is an urgent need for research to support sustainable behaviour change to improve the physical health landscape in secure mental health care.

A second programme of work is focussed on sleep; poor sleep quality has been identified as a significant clinical issue in secure psychiatric units. The prevalence of sleep disorders and insomnia is much higher in people with mental health problems, compared to the general population. Consequences of sleep disorders include reduced daytime function, poor concentration and engagement with treatment, increased anxiety and distress, and delayed recovery.

A third programme aims to improve patients' wellbeing through the use of virtual reality. This research project will develop a system to create, implement and assess the benefit of personalised virtual content to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of individuals living with dementia.

"My second year working at St Andrew's was a challenging but productive and rewarding one! I have built good working relationships, both with patients and staff. During this time, I have conducted interviews, explored patient experiences of exercise, barriers and things that help, and published a paper. We are now working towards developing an intervention to support our patients to engage in more activity. I am excited by the prospect of my work having a positive impact on patients' wellbeing and recovery journey."

Eva Rogers

PhD student, Loughborough University



Left to right
Ethan Cheung (Kent), Justine Anthony,
Poppy Gardiner and Eva Rogers
(Loughborough) at the Psychology
Profession Day in December 2019,
where they presented posters on
their respective projects

Inspiring clinicians of the future

26
postgraduate
student projects
at St Andrew's

From placements working with the research team, to supporting PhD students develop protocols for their projects, the Research Centre supports students to conduct their studies at St Andrew's.



"I have been working with Dr Deborah Morris to shape and develop my systematic review research project, which is focused on complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Over the next year, I will assist with a trauma-related research project within one of the specialist therapy women's wards and will have the opportunity to shadow clinicians within this service. Working in the Research Centre has provided me with an insight into the importance of clinical research in understanding mental illness. Being able to develop my research skills has also been a highly valuable experience for both my professional and personal development, as an aspiring clinical psychologist."

Amy Lunn MRes, University of Birmingham, student placement



"My research aims to investigate how the emotions of guilt and shame affect a patient's motivation to engage with treatment, in a forensic setting for men. The research team gave me valuable support when I was developing my proposal and helped me navigate the ethics approval process. I am now collecting data from the Northampton, Birmingham and Essex hospital sites. I am so grateful to St Andrew's for creating an environment in which treatment and research can be integrated to facilitate my professional development. Research plays a key part in developing the profession of psychology and improving the treatment available for patients, and it is vital that we continue to make meaningful contributions to the evidence base."

Vicky Joy PhD, University of Nottingham, Trainee Forensic Psychologist

Nurturing talent



Volunteering in research

With limited resources, our research volunteer programme provides essential support in our endeavour to initiate new projects and deliver translational research programmes.

The Research Centre oversees and delivers a range of projects; extra help, from conducting a literature review to collecting and analysing data, helps to increase the amount of research carried out at St Andrew's. From the volunteer's perspective, the opportunity helps those with a research interest to develop their careers, by gaining

first-hand experience and learning new skills from senior researchers. This year, a number of volunteers have helped progress two projects that are exploring violence and risk assessment in secure care. Volunteer support has also been a key resource for our Developmental and Complex Trauma Research Programme.



"Being part of the research team has made me feel integral to St Andrew's Healthcare. I am motivated by the opportunity to help patients, through research, and the experience I have gained by volunteering is vital in my career progression. Volunteering is definitely one of the best decisions I have made, post-graduation."

Irvine Mangawa WorkChoice Healthcare Assistant

Irvine Mangawa, WorkChoice Healthcare Assistant, has been leading a service delivery evaluation of dialectical behavioural therapy (DBT) in the Women's DBT service. He has had access to various databases for the literature review and has learnt the new statistical package, "R".



"Volunteering can be a challenge, as I have to use my time effectively, alongside working full time as an HCA; however, the experience has been fantastic. I am able to be part of a team who are improving patients' quality of life through research; it is hugely satisfying to be a part of this."

Kristina Kocmalova Healthcare Assistant,
Women's Mental Health and Personality Disorder service

Kristina Kocmalova, Healthcare Assistant in Women's Mental Health and Personality Disorder service, is involved in a pilot study that aims to explore the association between self-harm, enhanced support and START, one of the risk assessment tools that allows clinicians to identify any critical vulnerabilities and key strengths that patients may hold.

Improving patient and public involvement (PPI)

St Andrew's is a strong advocate for the patient voice, and PPI is built into our research and innovation policy.

Our best research takes patient and carer perspectives into account, and it's important for researchers to consider when planning their studies: from the co-creation of ideas to the development of protocols.

We actively engage with patients and carers, so that the outcomes that matter most to them are factored in during project development. Their insight and lived-experience is key to delivering translational research and meaningful impact. This has to start at the top and we have recruited patient and carer representatives to our Research Committee, who provide strategic leadership and direction to the Research Centre, in support of the charity's research strategy.

Case studies

To raise awareness and engagement with our VR research, we arranged a drop-in session for staff and patients who were interested in learning more about the potential benefits and treatment development. All attendees had the opportunity to experience the VR environment and ask questions of the research team and Oxford VR. Those attending included consultant psychiatrists, psychologists, HCAs, support staff and patients.

We are currently collaborating with Memjo on a project that is aiming to develop an electronic memory journal for people living with dementia. Up to five patients will trial the Memjo tablet and provide feedback on its content, accessibility and usability. This feedback will inform the design of a tool, to meet the needs of individuals with dementia, and scope of the follow-up evaluation.

During the process of developing our Developmental and Complex Trauma programme, patients within the CAMHS service took part in a series of workshops to explore their understanding of trauma and its relationship to their care needs. This information was used to frame the current research programme, its priorities and focus.

During the design stage of our Physical Activity Intervention project, the researcher used ward community meetings to engage patients in question and answer sessions. Topics explored included barriers and facilitators to exercise, and patient likes and dislikes of physical activity. The findings from this PPI were used to develop the guidelines for the initial interview stage of the project and highlight areas to target within the intervention study.

"It was a great experience – quite hard experiencing real-life situations via virtual reality. I'd like to give it a go again."

Patient on Harlestone ward

Patient pictured trying out the VR environment, August 2019



Communication and dissemination

The publication of research findings is an important activity for every researcher and research active clinician, as it ensures that the findings from our research can be transmitted to the wider clinical community and put into practice. And we've done well this year.

Some of the publications from our clinicians and researchers include titles as varied as:

- "Forensic staff attitudes toward men who have sexually offended"
- "Adolescent inpatient completers of dialectical behaviour"
- "Assessing the risk of inpatient violence in autism spectrum disorder"

St Andrew's clinicians and researchers have recently published in:

- The Journal of Forensic Practice
- Advances in Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities
- The Journal of Intellectual Disabilities and Offending Behaviour
- The Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law
- The Journal of Criminal Psychology
- Science and the Law
- The International Journal of Mental Health Nursing
- PSYPAG quarterly

In write up

Within our research portfolio, we have a number of projects that are in write up, with many authors aiming to publish in due course:

-  **ASD and Internet Crime:** analysed the demographic and clinical characteristics of internet and non-internet offenders. *St Andrew's*
-  **Exploring Perceptions:** looked at the perceptions of public and private space within a forensic mental health setting. *PhD, London South Bank University*
-  **The mATCH Study:** identified a patient sub-typology to support personalised care, and reduce hospital stays. *University of Kent*
-  **Exploring Seclusion:** considered the experiences of women with learning disabilities within secure services. *PhD, Birmingham City University*
-  **Sleep Disorder:** investigated the association between sleep and inpatient violence. *St Andrew's*
-  **Patients Experiencing Work:** examined how mental health service-users, within secure units, experience work. *PhD, University of Northampton*
-  **RO-DBT:** evaluated Radically Open Dialectical Behaviour Therapy in our specialist women's unit. *St Andrew's*
-  **Frontline Staff Views DBT:** explored the views of staff about Dialectical Behavioural Therapy. *DCLin, University of Birmingham*
-  **Violence Prevention Climate:** explored whether anger levels change perspective on violence and perceived risk. *MSc, Birmingham City University*
-  **Relationship Policymaking:** considered how hospital policymakers make sense of forensic inpatients' desire for intimate and sexual relationships. *St Andrew's and London South Bank University*
-  **ACEs and BMI:** explored the relationship between BMI and adverse childhood experiences in a CAMHS developmental disorder population. *St Andrew's*
-  **ID and Trauma:** looked at the validity of intellectual disability diagnoses in people exposed to childhood trauma. *St Andrew's and University of Connecticut*
-  **DRA:** explored co-production in dynamic risk assessments in developmental disorder populations. *St Andrew's*
-  **PTSD Systematic Review:** review of the prevalence, clinical needs and treatment outcomes of complex PTSD. *St Andrew's and University of Birmingham*



Spreading the word...



near...

The Research Centre arranged for two guest speakers to deliver lectures at St Andrew's: Professor Mike Crawford, Imperial College London, visited our Northampton site to present the CALMED study to clinicians.

Dr Alessandra Girardi, Research Manager in the Research Centre, delivered a session on "Assessment of Violence in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)" in November, assisted by Peter Ford, Clinical Lead in the ASD service.

...and far

In August, our VR in Dementia project was featured on LADbible – a hugely popular social media and entertainment social publisher best known for their viral video creation across multiple platforms. Their Facebook post about the project received over 1,000 reactions and nearly 300 shares.

Raising awareness of our work is an important part of our role, and getting conversations going in the public arena is vital to tackling the health issues of the future, such as caring for and treating the growing number of people with dementia.

A carer's perspective



The problems that people with serious mental illness, their carers and the professionals that care for them face are immense and complicated. Solving these problems, therefore, requires a sophisticated approach but, despite the best intentions of all concerned, this has not always been evident.

Things have been slow to change and mental health lags far behind the advances made elsewhere in healthcare. Unless time, effort and money is directed into mental health research, this will continue to be the case. Put simply, if we don't change the theory and methodology, we won't change the outcomes.

This is largely why I joined the St Andrew's Research Committee as a carer representative, as I saw it as an opportunity to influence and shape a way forward that would be innovative, effective and person-centred. I was particularly attracted by the research focus of St Andrew's to reduce length of stay, and to find new, safe and effective ways to help patients back into their home life, families and community. This is what we carers and our loved ones hope for.

The work has begun at quite a pace. We have projects looking at the fundamentals of diagnosis and treatment, the use of new technologies, and that target the barriers to discharge. An exciting prospect for me, as a carer, is to see how new ways of working can be developed and how research evidence can challenge and change attitudes and approaches to treatment.

This will take time. It will be hard to achieve. But it has to be done if we are serious about improving the outcomes and the lives of people with serious mental illness.

Bryan Green
Carer Representative, Research Committee



Research Committee

Sir Peter Ellwood (Chair)	Governor, St Andrew's Healthcare
Johnny Wake	Governor, St Andrew's Healthcare
Dr Mike Harris	Non-Executive Director, St Andrew's Healthcare
Prof. Kevin Browne	Director of Centre for Forensic and Family Psychology, University of Nottingham
Dr Giri Rajaratnam	Deputy Regional Director for Public Health England in Midlands & East
Marion Williams	Patient Representative
Bryan Green	Carer Representative
Dr Sanjith Kamath	Executive Medical Director, St Andrew's Healthcare
Johnny Fountain*	Director of the Research Centre, St Andrew's Healthcare
Dr Kieran Breen	Head of Research & Innovation, St Andrew's Healthcare

Research & Innovation Team

Johnny Fountain*	Director
Dr Kieran Breen	Head of Research & Innovation
Louise Millard	Senior Project Manager
Dr Alessandra Girardi	Research Manager
Elanor Webb	Research Assistant
Lucy Lee	Research Administrator
Dr Deborah Morris	Consultant Clinical Psychologist

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