NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration South London

Know your ARC Awards 2022 – summary of entries

26 January 2023

Theme awards:

Communicating your research:

Judged by Syeda Hasnain-Mohammed, head of communications, King's Health Partners, Alex Booth and Franca Davenport, communications and engagement managers, NIHR Maudsley Biomedical Research Centre

1. Development of a novel electronic clinical decision support system to support the management of abnormal blood sugars in patients with mental illness
Entry from: Applied informatics theme
(Dr Dipen Patel)

This work has focused upon the development of a novel electronic clinical decision support system to support the management of abnormal blood sugars in patients with mental illness. Following initial development of the novel digital system which links up the electronic health record with a real-time alerting platform for clinicians, the plan is to pilot the system in a mental health trust (South London and Maudsley NHS) to evaluate its acceptability and feasibility, and to then use the results to inform further refinement and implementation of the system prior to scaling up.

Given the novelty of a completely new applied informatics tool, which is to be used in a live NHS setting, we have prioritised a collaborative approach from the outset, and used various outlets to communicate our goals and vision, including media, academic conferences, and presented an overview of the project with members of our Public Research Panel at the 'Inside Research' seminar.

Read:
Bridging the gap between mental and physical health, *Health Tech World*
Seminar attracts over 170 people to discuss the power of health data, NIHR ARC South London

2. Implementation Outcome Repository
Entry from: Implementation research theme and King's Improvement Science
(Dr Louise Hull and Prof Nick Sevdalis)

Following completion of a systematic review to identify instruments that assess implementation effectiveness for interventions aimed at improving physical health, and with the aim to communicate the findings from the review to a wider group of implementation stakeholders in an accessible format, we developed an Implementation Outcome Repository. The repository is a free online resource containing quantitative instruments to measure the success (or failure) of implementation efforts.

The repository includes all instruments identified through our systematic review of the literature and is designed for anyone working on projects to implement changes in healthcare, including researchers, healthcare staff, managers, patients and service users, who want to quantitatively measure the outcomes of implementation. We worked closely with a creative design company to design and develop a user-friendly, accessible resource. We worked with the NIHR ARC South London communications team to develop a wide reaching and extensive communication and dissemination plan.

Watch the video here

3. Gestational diabetes – one prick at a time
Entry from: Maternity and perinatal mental health theme
(Dr Claire Wilson)

Gestational diabetes is diabetes that occurs for the first-time during pregnancy. For those experiencing gestational diabetes, pregnancy can be a time of even greater uncertainty than usual, associated with worries about their own and their baby's health. Other emotions include anger, guilt and shame. The research evidence suggests that there may be an increased risk of anxiety and depression in those with gestational diabetes. This project aimed to amplify the voices of those affected by gestational diabetes. I worked with artists and those with lived experience of the condition. We produced a short film, Gestational diabetes – one prick at a time, about the experiences of those with gestational diabetes. This film can be freely accessed online.

Read about the making of the film and watch it here

4. Putting the public back into public health policy
Entry from: Public health and multimorbidites theme
(Dr Toslima Khatun)

The Covid-19 pandemic affected us all. It demonstrated the importance of not only having appropriate public health policies in place, but also the right systems and structures to implement them quickly and effectively. In August 2020 the UK government announced without warning the abolition of Public Health England (PHE), the principal UK agency for the promotion and protection of public health, and the creation of two new organisations, UK Health Security Agency and Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. We undertook a rapid research project to understand the reasoning behind the decision to abolish PHE and to identify lessons that the new organisations should take into account to avoid similar mistakes being made in future. We developed rapid and timely ways of communicating our results so that they were available to inform the national independent inquiry into the government's management of the pandemic.

Read:
The blame game has started: the downgrading of Public Health England, NIHR ARC South London

5. Online dissemination event – Midwifery continuity of care – a research update
Entry from: Maternity and perinatal mental health theme (Dr Cristina Fernandez Turienzo, Dr Hannah Rayment-Jones, Ms Mary Newburn, Dr Abigail Easter, Prof Jane Sandall)

In 2022, we organised an online dissemination event '*Midwifery continuity of care - a research update*' to discuss what we already knew and what more we needed to find out. Models of midwifery continuity of care models are recommended in international guidance and at the heart of maternity policy in the UK. These models have been found to improve outcomes and experiences of care among women at low- and mixed-risk of complications. This event brought together more than 250 clinicians, service users, researchers and policymakers who engaged in discussions of innovative research findings and implications from our NIHR ARC studies of high-risk women: POPPIE (continuity of care for women at risk of preterm birth); Project 20 (maternity care for women with low socio-economic status and social risk factors) and LEAP (community-based continuity of care for women living in areas of social disadvantage and ethnic diversity).

Read:
More than 250 clinicians, service users, researchers and policymakers join event on midwifery continuity of carer, NIHR ARC South London

Most innovative patient, public involvement and engagement (PPIE) initiative

Judged by Beverley Randall, programme manager, Mosaic Clubhouse and Mosaic members Carol Aka and Louise Wilson

1. Integrating our physical healthcare systems (IMPHS)
Entry from: Implementation science research and Gracie Tredget

Our entry seeks to showcase the involvement and input of experts with lived experience of long-term mental illness or lived experience of caring for another adult with a long-term mental illness, in the Integrating our Mental and Physical Healthcare Systems (IMPHS) project at South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM). Having experts by experience (EbE) form part of our project delivery team, has ensured that experienced voices sit at the very heart of and inform our approach towards improving physical healthcare outcomes for adults living with long-term mental illness.

2. Co-developed Public Involvement Strategy for palliative and end of life care research
Entry from: Dr Lisa Brighton, Cat Harvey, Halle Johnson, India Tunnard, Margaret Ogden, Rashmi Kumar, Pam Smith, Marion Sumerfield, Alan Quarterman, Tofunmi Aworinde, Dr Jo Bayly, Dr Joanna Goodrich, Juliet Gillam, Monica Oancea, Dr Steve Marshall, Prof Catherine Evans, on behalf of the Public Involvement Strategy Group

We successfully co-developed and implemented a 'Public Involvement Strategy' that has strengthened how we engage and collaborate with members of our diverse communities, and enriched our research. We developed five key goals with accompanying actions for 2021-2023, and this targeted approach has allowed advancements across all of these areas:

• Diversity and inclusion: increased involvement opportunities for people with disabilities, and from minoritised ethnic groups

• Support and learning: developing research training and a buddy scheme for our public members, plus bespoke researcher training

• Varied involvement opportunities: From in-person community outreach activities, to adapting to virtual methods during the Covid-19 pandemic, to a cross-theme workshop focused on research with people with multiple long-term conditions

• Evaluating and promoting impact: holding 'knowledge exchange' events and helping our PPI members to produce research involvement blogs

• Capacity building: Sharing and developing expertise with national and international partners in palliative care.

Read:
Innovating public involvement in palliative care: co-producing our PPI strategy, NIHR ARC South London

3. 2Young Lives – a community-based mentoring intervention for adolescent girls in pregnancy in Sierra Leone
Entry from: Maternity and perinatal mental health theme (Dr Cristina Fernandez Turienzo, Ms Lucy November, Professor Jane Sandall)

2YoungLives (2YL) is a locally designed community-based mentoring intervention for adolescent girls in pregnancy in Sierra Leone, and the 2YL cluster trial is one of the main workstreams of the ARC adopted CRIBS group, a NIHR Global Health Research Group to implement simple, scalable innovations to reduce maternal mortality and build research capacity in Sierra Leone.

We discuss the development and potential of the mentoring scheme to reduce maternal motility and improve the health and wellbeing of adolescent girls and their babies in Sierra Leone, with a special focus on community engagement and involvement (CEI, as PPIE in global health settings), a core component of this complex intervention.

4. Exploring the human right to social care at a community tea dance
Entry from: Social care theme (Dr Caroline Emmer de Albuquerque Green)

Dr Caroline Green conducted an innovative and engaging public involvement activity to discuss and explore the human right to social care at a tea dance organised at a community centre Stanstead Lodge Seniors Club in Catford. The event in March 2022 engaged a group of artists and gave local older people an opportunity to hear different views on the topic of human rights and social care, while engaging in activities such as dancing, debating, poetry recitations as well as tea and cake! By making the event lively and focused on a tea dance, the essential topic was about a human right to social care was discussed in a non-threatening way, and people felt safe and empowered to contribute their views. Around 50 guests attended and enjoyed themselves, and the photos taken (with permission) also contribute to our growing library of social care images that show diversity, and the beneficial effects of receiving social care.

Read:
Exploring the human right to social care at a tea dance in Catford, NIHR ARC South London

5. Implementation Science, pragmatism and stakeholder engagement
Entry from: Implementation science research (Dr Richard Boulton and Dr Antonina Semkina)

In our project we collaborated with patient and public partners to explore the concept of pragmatism in implementation research. A key aim was to innovatively involve patients and public members in this highly specialised topic as partners in a non-tokenistic way.

Tools already exist in implementation science literature that seek to define the pragmatic quality (practicality) of outcome measures. But these tools are based on a narrow conception of pragmatism, defined using quantitative methods, and they are not open to 'non-expert' stakeholders. The significance of challenging these tools with a concept of pragmatism developed and supported by PPI will help to ensure that the process of creating measures and their use will be more participatory.

Using a unique mix of highly interactive and engaging strategies we have involved patients and public partners in a wider, insightful, and inclusive discussion of what it means to be pragmatic (or practical) in implementation science. Our pioneering project demonstrates that it is possible to meaningfully involve this stakeholder group in exceedingly 'expert' research.

6. Innovative joint training for researchers and PPIE network members
Entry from: Maternity and perinatal mental health (Mary Newburn)

Innovative joint training for researchers and PPIE Network members.
i) The training used participatory appraisal methodology (closely aligned with community engagement and development values);

ii) it was organised and led by the service users;

iii) it used Jamboard, online software which enables participatory, small-group working during online meetings, and shared storage and retrieval of information over time.

iv) A report of the process and learning was published, co-written by a service-user writing group;

v) a dedicated PPIE publications webpage was created with the ARC-SL Comms team to showcase the theme's PPIE methods and outputs;

vi) a social media campaign, with bespoke artwork, highlighted the key messages with an accessible link to the report. The primary focus was involvement in the design and doing of research, but the learning is also relevant for more diverse research participation, and public engagement (how researchers work interact with the public to share research findings).

Read:
New report on involving diverse communities in maternity research, NIHR ARC South London

Most successful equity, diversity and inclusion initiative

Judged by: Chifundo Stubbs, equality and diversity lead, Dawn Beaumont-Jewell, deputy chief operating officer, Christopher Ward, study support service specialist, NIHR CRN South London

1. ARC South London Public Research Panel
Entry from: Dr Josephine Ocloo, Professor Ann McNeill and the ARC South London Public Research Panel

I am the equity, diversity & inclusion (EDI) research lead at the ARC South London. The key aim of my work is to strategically embed EDI across all the ARC's work. Key areas of focus include looking at diversity of the workforce, the research pipeline, involvement, recruitment, and participation of diverse groups in ARC SL research projects, EDI data collection, and governance. To facilitate this work, I have worked with our involvement and implementation team and the ARC Executive and Board to set up key structures to support EDI: e.g. an ARC SL EDI Working Group, ensuring EDI is central to the ARC's Involvement Strategy; and setting up and chairing an ARC Public Research Panel. To further progress EDI objectives within the ARC and beyond, I have published many articles and am involved with NIHR partnerships locally and nationally, aimed at achieving more inclusive, diverse, and community-based research and practice.

Read:
Public Research Panel enhances ARC South London research with diverse community engagement, NIHR ARC South London

2. Online engagement events on maternity care with diverse community groups during Covid-19
Entry from: Maternity and perinatal mental health research and advisory teams
(Dr Cristina Fernandez Turienzo, Dr Hannah Rayment-Jones, Ms Mary Newburn, Dr Abigail Easter, Professor Jane Sandall)

We organised two online engagement events where researchers and community groups analysed how the Covid-19 crisis has exacerbated persisting vulnerabilities, socio-economic and structural disadvantage and discrimination faced by many communities of social disadvantage and ethnic diversity. Discussions centred around: access, engagement, and quality of care; racism, discrimination, and trust; engagement with community stakeholders; and the impact of wider social and economic inequalities.

We discussed future strategies on how best to engage and involve local groups in research to improve outcomes for childbearing women experiencing mental illness and those living in areas of social disadvantage and ethnic diversity. We co-produced a commentary paper to raise awareness of what is important for ethnic minority communities and those who experience social disadvantage at this point in time. Addressing biomedical factors alone is not sufficient, and integrative and holistic long-term public health strategies that address societal and structural racism and overall disadvantage in society are urgently needed to improve health disparities and can only be implemented in partnership with local communities.

Read:
Public involvement blogs, papers, reports and presentations, NIHR ARC South London

Most successful response to the Covid-19 pandemic informed by applied research

Judged by: Anne-Marie Murtagh, research & innovation director and head of nursing, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Dr Kate Blake, director of research and development strategy, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

1. Remote consultations in mental health – learning from evaluation
Entry from: Applied informatics and implementation research themes
(Professor Nick Sevdalis)

Covid-19 brought significant changes in how mental health services in south London have been delivered, with a rapid shift from face-to-face appointments to video and phone consultations.

Launched in June 2020, the Remote Consultations in Mental Health – Learning from Evaluation project sought to understand the impact of these changes. The project was a unique partnership between south London NHS mental health providers, the Health Innovation Network, ARC South London and King's Improvement Science (ie the major ARC co-funding infrastructure). The aim was to form a '**Learning Healthcare System**'.

The project focused on three areas:

• Effect on staff and service users of changing how services were delivered

• Evidence on the effectiveness of remote consultations

• How to embed or adapt, new and emerging models going forward, to ensure greatest benefits for service users, carers and staff.

The project culminated in a final report (September 2021) which made recommendations to inform clinical practice and to determine ongoing gaps in knowledge; and in ongoing knowledge mobilisation activity across south London mental health NHS trusts.

Read:
Remote Consultations in Mental Health – Learning from Evaluation, Health Innovation Network

2. Covpall study – rapid evaluation of the Covid-19 pandemic response in palliative and end of life care
Entry from: Palliative and end of life care
(Dr Mevhibe Hocaoglu)

We carried out timely and critical research with the CovPall family of studies, which captured the response of palliative and end of life services across the UK and the world. The proposals were developed by listening to what patients and the public told us about their concerns and priorities early in the pandemic. We produced evidence that influenced national and international policy and practice. We published findings quickly and delivered presentations and policy briefs to support research, clinical and policy decisions. The information and feedback we collected from palliative care services showed that findings played a crucial part in caring for patients with Covid-19 and supported them in 'frugal' and practical innovations. Palliative care made a demonstrable difference to patients even with two days of care. Our response showed how researchers, clinicians and patients can work together under the most challenging of times to improve care for patient, families, and communities.

Read:
CovPall: Rapid Evaluation of the COVID-19 Pandemic Response in Palliative & End of Life Care, King's College London

3. Helping day centres to unlock lockdown
Entry from: Social care theme
(Dr Katharine Orellana, Dr Kritika Samsi)

In June 2020 when social care services like day centres were reopening after the Covid lockdown, there was very little guidance for how to do this safely. Dr Orellana from the Social Care theme worked with day centres to produce Helping adult day centres to unlock lockdown, a two-part national resource of guidance for day centre managers. Part 1 drew on Covid-19 guidance, advice, and action points. Sections covered infection control, communications, supporting staff/volunteers/ managers, immediate actions before re-opening, and a practical scenario planning tool. Part 2 prompted reflection on what had happened, the process of starting up again and any learning that might be helpful for the future. The guidance was widely shared. We received enthusiastic feedback from day centre providers and the guidance was circulated round the UK. We are building on this document in our further work on day services.

Read:
New resources to support day centres to re-open after lockdown, NIHR ARC South London

4. The impact of Covid-19 on maternity services and perinatal mental health
Entry from: Maternity and perinatal mental health theme
(Sergio A. Silverio)

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Sergio has amassed the largest portfolio of research in the UK dedicated to the consequences of Covid-19 on maternity care, maternal and child health, and perinatal mental health. This work has been conducted locally (in south London), nationally (in England and the rest of the UK), and internationally (with colleagues all over the world). The work published has fed into a national consortium of researchers, clinicians, policy makers, and charitable organisations working on this area called PIVOT-AL, for which Sergio is a founding member and the policy lead. The synthesised work is leading directly to national policy recommendations, through work with NHS England and Improvement (Chief Midwifery Office), the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, and the Royal College of Midwives; with the aim of improving healthcare organisation and outcomes in the future, post-pandemic world and improve preparedness for future health system shocks.

Read:
Post-pandemic planning for maternity care for local, regional, and national maternity systems across the four nations, King's College London

5. Informing mental healthcare and policy decisions during the Covid-19 pandemic through innovative near real-time mental healthcare surveillance
Entry from: Applied informatics theme
(Professor Rob Stewart)

As the serious impact of the Covid-19 pandemic became clear in March 2020, a team of applied informatics researchers at ARC South London were able to use the Clinical Record Interactive Search (CRIS) system (developed by NIHR Maudsley Biomedical Research Centre) to analyse nearly real-time output from electronic mental health records at South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Foundation Trust, a large south-east London mental health service.

The team drew on this data using novel text-mining techniques to monitor the response of mental health services in south London during the pandemic. Led by Professor Robert Stewart, he team has produced a series of reports highlighting the mortality increase in mental health service users, inequalities in mortality (eg by ethnic group), and the profound changes in mental healthcare delivery (eg falls in referrals, transition to virtual care) during the pandemic.

Read:
Investigating the impact of Covid-19 on mental health services using informatics, NIHR ARC South London

Research impact

Judged by Tanya Schlovogt, director of research quality and head joint office of Research and Development, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, King's College London and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust; and Dr Natalie Wall, research impact lead, King's College London

1. Transforming the management of breathlessness in advanced illness
Entry from: Palliative and end of life care
(Professor Matthew Maddocks, Professor Irene Higginson, Dr Charles C. Reilly)

Breathlessness, the feeling of being short of breath, is frightening and distressing for patients, families and carers. It often persists despite best treatment of the underlying condition(s). Breathlessness affects over two million people in the UK and 75 million people worldwide. ARC South London researchers at the Cicely Saunders Institute have pioneered a programme of research to understand and tackle breathlessness across multiple long-term conditions. This work included evidence reviews to identify treatments and studying their effects when delivered in breathlessness support services. The work was underpinned by strong public and patient involvement and engagement.

Together, it has transformed how breathlessness is recognised and managed locally, nationally, and internationally. The approach is recommended in textbooks, clinical guidelines and policy documents. Breathlessness is now widely recognised, assessed and treated. This has greatly improved the quality of life, dignity and empowerment of people living with breathlessness and others close to them.

Read:
An integrated palliative and respiratory care service for patients with advanced disease and refractory breathlessness: a randomised controlled trial, *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine*

2. The Children and Young People's Health Partnership (CYPHP)
Entry from: Children's and young people's health theme
(Dr Ingrid Wolfe and Dr Julia Forman)

The Children and Young People's Health Partnership (CYPHP) developed, implemented, evaluated, and embedded a new model of integrated healthcare for children and young people, in Southwark and Lambeth. The model integrates primary and secondary care services, and provides proactive early intervention nurse-led care for ongoing conditions, through service redesign and better use of data.

The CYPHP evaluation included the largest trial of children's health services in the UK. This was achieved through a real-world implementation and evaluation at scale, for the ~128,000 CYP in Southwark and Lambeth. Routine clinical data were used to evaluate the impact at population level, while additional measures were collected from close to 2000 individual participants, and some took part in qualitative interviews.

The CYPHP model aimed to improve health services and address inequalities. It also developed and demonstrated novel ways of working, with new partnership and evaluation approaches, alongside the new model of care.

Read:
Children and young people's health partnership – implementing and evaluating a new model of care, NIHR ARC South London

3. ESMI-III study (Effectiveness and Implementation of Maternal Mental Health Services)
Entry from: Maternity and perinatal mental health theme
(Dr Abigail Easter)

The ESMI-III study (Effectiveness and implementation of Maternal Mental Health Services) is a national implementation-evaluation of maternal mental health service (MMHS) in England, funded through the ARC Child and Maternity Priority Programme. Phase 1 of the study, aimed to understand variation in service delivery in pilot sites, and barriers and facilitators to service development and implementation.

The findings and recommendations have been widely disseminated, including at national NHS England Implementation events. They have informed the development of national and regional implementation guidance and workshops, and national scale-up of the services. This study is an example of how ARC research can be produced in a timely and collaborative way to inform real time service development and implementation. In the second phase of the study, we will conduct in-depth realist evaluation at four sites to inform optimal service delivery models. We have received additional funding to develop training and implementation guidance for a safeguarding pathway within MMHS to support women at risk of loss of custody of their baby due to safeguarding concerns, in collaboration with the Centre for Child and Family Justice.

Read:
The effectiveness and implementation of maternal mental health services, NIHR ARC South London

4. Developing a stroke care pathway
Entry from: Public health and multimorbidities theme
(Professor Charles Wolfe)

ARC South London researchers estimated the future impact of stroke and identified significant research evidence gaps, cited in the NHS Long Term Plan and the NHS Research Demand Signalling report (March 2022). They have subsequently developed a stroke care pathway framework to address these evidence gaps, outlining what types of research should take priority in the long term and offering senior NHS healthcare practitioners and commissioners an opportunity to access and exchange knowledge on transformation across health and social care. This evidence is now informing the successful delivery plans for the NHS Long Term Plan by commissioners and clinical networks. This work translates to meaningful benefits for stroke patients through the ways in which it identifies gaps and inequalities in stroke care and provides evidence for structures and processes which can improve survival and long-term support.

The ARC's research was also cited as evidence for the benefits of a centralised model of acute stroke care. In London, centralised hyper-acute care is provided to all stroke patients, and this has been shown to reduce mortality and length of hospital stay. With UCL, Manchester University, and ARCs North London and Greater Manchester, ARC South London researchers demonstrated (2019) that the centralisation of stroke services in urban areas (London and Manchester) led to sustained or further improvements in care.

Read:
Transforming systems for more effective stroke care, King's College London

5. Health Eating and Active Lifestyles for Diabetes (HEAL-D)
Entry from: Public health and multimorbidities theme
(Dr Louise Goff)

Healthy Eating & Active Lifestyles for Diabetes ('HEAL-D') is a co-produced culturally tailored diabetes self-management programme for adults of African and Caribbean heritage. Patient acceptability and intervention fidelity were evaluated in a feasibility trial in 2018/19 in south London. High programme attendance and completion was supported by patient evaluation showing the programme was culturally sensitive and supported self-management behaviour change. Furthermore, patients experienced a reduction in HbA1c (glycated haemoglobin levels) and an

increase in self-assessed quality of life. These improvements are considerably greater than in standard programmes. The feasibility trial attracted considerable commissioning interest and in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the need for online diabetes education provision, the south London Applied Health Sciences Network, in partnership with commissioners, funded the adaptation of HEAL-D for online delivery using video conferencing. HEAL-D online has now been commissioned for implementation in both south-west and south-east London.

6. Maternity continuity of care
Entry from: Maternity and perinatal mental health
(Dr Cristina Fernandez Turienzo, Dr Hannah Rayment-Jones, Ms Mary Newburn, Dr Abigail Easter, Professor Jane Sandall)

Our researchers in NIHR ARC South London's maternity and perinatal mental health team are some of the leading researchers internationally on models of maternity care for childbearing women including midwifery continuity of care models. We led a Cochrane review on the effectiveness of midwife continuity of care models that informed many international guidelines and maternal policy in the UK. Our current research in South London explores the implementation and impact of models of maternity care to reduce inequalities among at populations at higher risk of poorer outcomes such as 1) women with risk factors for preterm birth 2) women with social risk factors and vulnerabilities, and 3) women living in the poorest areas and from some ethnic groups. We present an overview of our research findings and impact, knowledge exchange activity, current work, and future plans to ensure our research has local, national, and global impact.

Read:
Improving health outcomes for women and babies at higher risk of complications during pregnancy and birth, NIHR ARC South London

7. Therapeutic engagement questionnaire (TEQ)
Entry from: Patient and public involvement research
(Professor Mary Chambers)

Therapeutic engagement is perceived as the crux of mental health nursing but prior to the therapeutic engagement questionnaire (TEQ) there was no metric to measure this objectively in acute inpatient mental health settings. Hence, there was no means to give recognition to the contribution of nurses to service user recovery and unwarranted variation and inequalities in nursing practice could arise. The TEQ was developed and validated as a tool to quantify and give recognition to registered mental health nursing therapeutic engagement activity with service users within a therapeutic environment. The first intervention in acute inpatient settings to be co-produced with service users and nurses. The TEQ has been implemented by NHS Mental Health Trusts and the private sector in England, and internationally. It is promoted on the NHS England website. TEQ implementation has led to improved and more equitable nurse-service user therapeutic engagement and care quality.

Individual awards:

Most original research paper

Judged by: Dr Julie Williams, postdoctoral research worker integrating our mental and physical health care systems, Centre for Implementation Science and Prof Kim Goldsmith, professor of medical statistics and complex intervention methodology, King's College London.

1. Patterns of unplanned hospital admissions among people with dementia: from diagnosis to the end of life
Emel Yorganci, palliative and end of life care theme

In the paper, "Patterns of unplanned hospital admissions among people with dementia: from diagnosis to the end of life", we linked information from a south London mental healthcare provider, and hospital and mortality databases to identify people diagnosed with dementia, and the frequency and length of their unplanned hospital admissions following dementia diagnosis. We showed that during the end-of-life period, people with dementia experience a higher number of unplanned hospital admissions than in the years following their initial diagnosis. Although most people with dementia and their families prefer not to spend time in the hospital towards the end of life, in this study people with dementia spent between 12-59 days in the hospital in the last year of life. Understanding when unplanned hospital admissions are most likely to occur can help to inform where resources need to be invested to provide high-quality dementia care.

2. Anticoagulation therapy and outcomes in patients with atrial fibrillation and serious mental illness: A systematic review and meta-analysis
Dina Farran, Applied informatics

We published an observational study in the Journal of *Psychiatric Research* examining anticoagulation prescription trends in people with Atrial Fibrillation (AF) and co-morbid Serious Mental Illness (SMI) who met criteria for anticoagulation treatment over the past 10 years in a general hospital setting (KCH).

We submitted a systematic review on prevalence, management, and outcomes of AF in people with SMI versus the general population to the Journal of Psychiatric research and it is currently under review.

We are working on a third paper that describes the association of mental illness and its severity with the prescription of oral anticoagulation therapy (OAT) in people with AF in South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

3. Association between air pollution exposure and mental health service use among individuals with first presentations of psychotic and mood disorders
Dr Ioannis Bakolis, economics and biostatistics

Until now, little was known about whether air pollution exposure contributes to the course and severity after the onset of more serious mental illness. To answer this question, we conducted a study, which is one of the first of its kind, to examine whether air pollution exposure leads to a more severe course of illness in people experiencing first episodes of psychotic and mood disorders. We analysed data from over 13,000 people aged 15 years and over who had face-to-face contact with an NHS foundation trust specialising in mental health services. We found that people exposed to higher residential levels of air pollutants used mental healthcare services more frequently in the months and years following their initial presentation to mental healthcare services compared to those exposed to lower air pollution. We observed findings for both mood disorders and psychotic disorders, as well as for both inpatient and community-based mental healthcare.

4. Supporting researchers conducting emotionally-laden and sensitive qualitative research studies.

Sergio A. Silverio, maternity and perinatal mental health

Based on his portfolio of work, Sergio was asked to develop internal guidance on how best to protect and support qualitative researchers who were working in the fields of research which tackled sensitive, challenging, and difficult topics. Whilst the internal guidance had been developed, Sergio turned to colleagues from King's and across the world and started thinking more broadly about these issues. The subsequent paper which was developed is a guide for all researchers, across the disciplinary boundaries, to ensure there were practical steps we can take as research groups to best protect and support qualitative researchers who might find themselves in distress whilst collecting, managing, or analysing qualitative data on sensitive, challenging, or difficult topics. The paper was accepted in the *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* – a high impact, international journal focused on qualitative research methodology, after three peer reviews which recommended publication without requirement of any revisions.

5. Material and epistemic precarity: It's time to talk about labour exploitation in mental health research

Dr Stan Papoulias, patient and public involvement research

In this paper we argue that improvements in research culture are only possible if we improve the working conditions of those producing research while also understanding how research knowledge is legitimised. We focus on mental health, calling for a dialogue between service user-led critiques of research culture and critical research on university labour. User-led critiques speak of 'epistemic injustice': how the processes of evidence production marginalise the voices of those with lived experience of mental distress. Critical research on university labour examines how managerialism, withdrawal of state funding and casualisation of the workforce impact on what kinds of research are possible. In bringing together these bodies of work, the article argues that research cultures can only be improved if those in roles most affected by both epistemic injustice and casualisation are at the heart of such efforts. To that end, the article examines three such roles: contract researchers, public contributors, and research participants.

6. An implementation framework and a feasibility evaluation of a clinical decision support system for diabetes management in secondary mental healthcare using CogStack

Dr Dipen Patel, applied informatics

This paper summarises the initial development and design of a novel electronic clinical decision support system to support the management of abnormal blood sugars (dysglycaemia and diabetes) in patients with mental illness.

Given the novelty of a completely new applied informatics tool, which is to be used in a live NHS setting, we described our collaborative approach with the aim of setting a gold-standard precedent for all future applied informatics projects (something which had not clearly been defined in the literature previously).

Following initial development and validation of this first of its kind system in a mental health setting, which links up the electronic health record with a real-time alerting platform for clinicians, we set out our planned vision within a 7-step framework to maximise chances of successful implementation.

Outstanding contribution by a predoctoral researcher

Judged by Dr Andrew Walker, head of evaluation and implementation science, Health Innovation Network and Laura Fischer, NIHR ARC Mental Health Implementation Network, patient and community involvement, engagement and participation, co-lead

1. Kaat de Backer – maternity and perinatal mental health theme

Kaat started an NIHR Doctoral Research Fellowship in October 2022, after undertaking an NIHR ARC predoctoral fellowship placement with the theme in 2020/21. She embodies the values and principles from the NIHR ARC, through applying her clinical background as a perinatal mental health midwife to various research studies within the Theme so far. In the short time Kaat has joined the Theme, she has made a remarkable transition from a healthcare professional without any research training or experience into a promising and dedicated academic researcher, passionately invested to improve care and outcomes for women marginalised by society, research and clinical guidance.

2. Joanna Davies – palliative and end of life care theme

Joanna contributes novel and impactful work to address socioeconomic inequalities in palliative and end-of-life care. Her recently submitted thesis investigates patterns and determinants of socioeconomic inequality near the end of life. It draws on both local and nationally representative health and care data, with three major papers including a systematic review of 112 studies (PLOS Med), a longitudinal cohort study (Lancet Public Health), and a local study using routinely collected clinical data (Palliative Medicine). Her findings challenge the view that people with lower socioeconomic position choose hospital services more and suggests tackling practical and communication concerns with targeted resources may help reduce inequalities. They have already been cited in parliamentary briefings and letters to the House of Commons. Joanna has additionally co-authored papers beyond her PhD outputs, supported projects, students and clinical teams with analysis, and been awarded grants as co-applicant and co-lead investigator.

3. Zoe Vowles – maternity and perinatal mental health theme

Active contribution as a pre-doctoral researcher to both the Maternity and Perinatal Mental Health theme and wider activities of the ARC South London including 1) supporting diverse and inclusive Patient and Public Involvement and 2) contributing to work within the ARC to both support care of people with multiple long-term condition and review how far the ARC South London is achieving its goals in this area.

4. Sergio A. Silverio – maternity and perinatal mental health theme

Sergio is a research fellow in Social Science of Women's Health pursuing a PhD in Life Course Science Research at King's College London, into the experiences of late-miscarriage, stillbirth, and neonatal death, (supervised by Dr Abigail Easter, Prof Jane Sandall, and Prof Davor Jurković). Alongside his PhD, Sergio is an active global collaborator and has led a large portfolio of work dedicated to the pandemic and maternity care. He is a prolific author with approximately 50 journal articles published in the last two calendar years, over 80 conference outings, and over £1million in grant income. Sergio contributes to teaching and supervision, as well as consulting internationally on qualitative methods. In the last year, Sergio has been a founding member of the PIVOT-AL National Collaborative, invited to join the NIHR Methodology Incubator's Qualitative Research Workstream, and selected as a delegate for the NIHR ARC South London Leadership Academy, among other activities.

5. Sofia Vassangi Hemrage – alcohol theme

As part of a wider body of work in line with ARC's scope and values, my PhD focuses on alcohol dependence and alcohol-related liver disease (ARLD). Patients with ARLD are at higher risk of psychological distress, adverse health outcomes, financial hardship, and homelessness, contributing towards health inequalities. The development of this research is imminent to reduce alcohol-related harm.

The research will fill a gap in evidence and practice, by being the first to adapt and develop a tailored psychosocial intervention specific to this clinical population. I have conducted a systematic review of the literature on the topic, organised patient and public involvement (PPI) activities and took training provided by ARC. I am currently conducting clinical research in partnership with the Alcohol Care Team (King's College Hospital) so that my research meets the multidisciplinary nature of ARLD. I have also disseminated my research by participating in symposiums and conferences.

6. Eileen Brobbin – alcohol theme

My PhD is exploring the accuracy, acceptability, and feasibility of wearable Transdermal Alcohol Sensor (TAS) devices with a clinical population. I have been able to conduct studies that are designed to solve practical problems alcohol services face and my research aims to provide evidence to help inform decisions about how alcohol treatment can be delivered with this wearable technology, with a broader aim of improving the quality, delivery and sustainability of alcohol services and the treatment outcomes for patients. I have published two papers from this data so far with two in preparation. I have also had many opportunities throughout my research to contribute to other activities with ARC, to disseminate my findings at UK and international conferences, an ARC seminar and newsletter articles, and participate in some of the training offered by ARC. As well as receive feedback from PPI and service users on this technology and research.

Outstanding contribution by a postdoctoral researcher

Judged by Professor Priscilla Harries, professor of occupational therapy, Kingston University, R&D Council Member – Royal College of Occupational Therapists, deputy theme lead, research capacity development, NIHR ARC South London and Dr Shalini Ahuja, lecturer in health systems & implementation science, King's College London

1. Dr Hannah Rayment-Jones – maternity and perinatal mental health theme

Aligned with the ARC goal to 'test new models of care and deliver research findings that are directly applicable to practice', Hannah completed an NIHR-funded doctoral fellowship evaluating models of maternity care for women with social risk factors. The findings of this ARC adopted project have been published in six international, peer-reviewed journals and communicated to the public, professionals, stakeholders, and policy makers. Her research has informed maternity policy, the NHS Equity and Equality strategy and NHS Long Term Plan and is widely cited in the global scientific literature regarding maternal and newborn health inequalities.

Hannah's recently completed NIHR Development and Skills Enhancement award addressed the ARC goal to 'optimise maternal health by exploiting the best routine data…' through analysis of the 'early LIfe cross-LInkage in Research (eLIXIR) cohort. She has made significant contributions to the wider research community, embedding herself in several working groups, PPIE committees and external collaborations.

2. Dr Cristina Fernandez Turienzo – maternity and perinatal mental health theme

Under the supervision of Professor Sandall, I was the research lead for POPPIE, a pilot collaborative trial of continuity of care for women at risk of preterm birth in south London. I was awarded a CLAHRC funded PhD integrated within the POPPIE trial in March 2021 and received the King's Outstanding Thesis Award in 2021.

Since then, I have been working very hard as a postdoctoral research fellow, with much enthusiasm, which has resulted in substantial achievements including successful awards, small and programme grants, publications, networking and collaborations.

3. Dr Jo Bayly – palliative and end of life care theme

Dr Bayly's work tests simple and inexpensive means to support people with advanced disease to optimise functional independence, resolve symptoms and increase their ability to self-care. Following her PhD (Feb 2020), she was awarded a competitive NIHR Development and Skills Enhancement Award (Dec 2020) to extend knowledge and skills in clinical trials. As a co-applicant, she secured funding from the Horizon2020 EU programme for a multi-national trial to investigate the clinical and cost effectiveness of integrated rehabilitation in palliative care. She is the scientific manager for the project.

She is a collaborating partner on two NIHR Palliative Care Research Partnerships, 'Functional Loss and Rehabilitation Towards the End of Life' and RE-EQUIPP, Reducing Inequalities Through Integration of Primary and Palliative Care. She is also seconded part-time as research lead in a third sector hospice, where she builds research capacity in an area with historically low recruitment rates to national portfolio studies.

4. Dr Josephine Ocloo – Implementation and involvement team

Work to make research more inclusive which I have been engaged with for several years, well ahead of the current policy focus. This interest accelerated after coming to King's in 2016 on a prestigious Health Foundation Improvement Science fellowship looking at "Diversity and public involvement in patient safety". Since completing this fellowship, I have published thirteen journal papers and edited two book publications since 2020 with a focus on inclusivity in research with international impact in research evidence and practice. As part of my ARC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion role, I have been working with Professor K Ray Chaudhuri [research and assistant medical director at King's College Hospital [KCH], leading on a novel initiative titled 'diversifying the research workstream'. We have published two high quality outcome and review publications and are writing up the proposed *King's Model for racially diverse participant recruitment to be used across KCH.

Outstanding contribution from professional services

Judged by: Ranjeet Kaile, executive director of communications, stakeholder engagement and public affairs, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and Sarah Rae, NIHR ARC Mental Health Implementation Network patient, carer, involvement and engagement co-lead

1. Savitri Hensman – Implementation and involvement team
Nominated by Dr Natasha Curran, implementation and involvement lead, ARC South London

As ARC South London's patient, service user, carer and public involvement coordinator, activities have included:

• coming up with an initial plan for co-designing an involvement strategy in the midst of the pandemic, then working with others in the involvement team to refine and put this into practice. About 100 people helped shape the strategy, which gained approval from the National Institute for Health and Care Research;

• helping to set up new structures to give local people and communities a greater voice in the ARC and supporting public members;

• playing an important role in coordinating Active Involvement in Research and other involvement events;

• responding to questions from themes and projects on involving diverse people; and administering an Involvement Fund to help resource this;

• identifying, and producing, information and guidance on inclusive involvement;

• producing a quarterly involvement e-newsletter;

• serving on the Executive and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion working group and advancing EDI.

2. Michele Harris-Tafri and Nick Sarson – communications team
Nominated by Dr Jane Stafford, associate director of operations, ARC South London

This is a joint application for Nick and Michele, who are communications managers (as a job share) for NIHR ARC South London. Nick and Michele oversee all communication activities for ARC South London and jointly manage a heavy load of communications work across the wide spread of ARC themes and activities. All of these tasks they conduct and complete to a very high standard of professional quality. Nick and Michele have worked especially effectively on the new website, internal and external communications events, communication with public and community partners, the use of newsletters, social media and blogs, and the international ARC Conference and Masterclass. They also make invaluable contributions to the annual ARC report, to demonstrate to the funder the high level of return on investment in the ARC. Nick and Michele are positive and constructive colleagues and are both highly collaborative.

3. Michele Harris-Tafri and Nick Sarson – communications team
Nominated by the social care theme

Michele and Nick are Communications Manager of ARC South London. Despite job-sharing, there is not a single task that has ever 'fallen through the cracks' or an email that hasn't been responded to by either of them. They work as one, and the social care theme feels hugely supported by their enthusiasm, positive attitudes to challenges and helpfulness with finding solutions to most queries we have.

4. Michele Harris Tafri and Nick Sarson – communications team
Nominated by the maternity and perinatal mental health theme

The maternity and perinatal mental health team would like to nominate communications managers Nick Sarson and Michele Harris-Tafri for their outstanding contribution to many of our ARC's activities since 2019. Both of them have always been extremely supportive with communication

and dissemination related activities: managing ARC's communication channels including the website, newsletters, blogs, Twitter account etc. They support us tremendously in the organisation of different events (and there have been lots of online events since Covid!) and always advise us on wider communication and engagement strategies. Nick and Michele have always been very reachable and responsive, keen to support in any way the junior and senior team members, and with a very positive, kind and friendly attitude. It is a pleasure to work with them and we always think of them as two key members of our team who help us communicate the importance of our research.

5. Dr Aoife Keohane and Bernadette Corrigan – capacity building
Nominated by Professor Rachel Allen, capacity building theme lead, ARC South London

Through their work delivering training and events such as the Implementation Science Masterclass, Implementation Science Conference, South London Applied Research Leadership Academy, PhD Winter School, Writing workshops, Aoife and Bernadette deliver outstanding contributions to the ARC. They engage effectively across all themes of our ARC and with all of our ARC partners in order to facilitate delivery of the Capacity Building Theme's activities. Similarly, their efforts make a valuable contribution to the ARC's activities by supporting researchers from across our ARC themes and partners. Particular added value comes from their work (and their willingness to go 'above and beyond') in facilitating the Implementation Science Masterclass and Conference, which extends our ARC's profile and support of research development from south London to a worldwide audience.

6. Tubah Sarwar – children and young people theme
Nominated by children and young people (CYP) theme

I have been working on the CYP theme and providing financial support by: developing effective working relationships with and regularly meeting the ARC operational team and KCL post award team to ensure the yearly budget is spent in an appropriate manner, communicating clearly with the team regarding plans for the budget, monitoring expenditure and ensuring it complies with funder requirements, keeping consistent and detailed financial reports, liaising between the CYP research team and the ARC operational team.

7. Sarah Egbe – finance, communications and administration
Nominated by Dr Jane Stafford, associate director of operations, ARC South London

As a newcomer to the ARC programme, having only joined eight months ago, Sarah has learned the programme very quickly. She has demonstrated a high level of organisation, initiative, and teamwork to the level of someone who has been on the programme for a long time. Sarah has demonstrated skills in managing change regarding the transition from online meetings to hybrid meetings while ensuring a seamless hybrid experience. For example, hosting the ARC Executive hybrid monthly meetings and the ARC Board hybrid meeting. This involved planning (setting up the rooms and testing the suitable AV equipment) and providing clear communication and guidance to colleagues so that they can join the hybrid meeting smoothly. Within weeks of joining the ARC, Sarah launched herself into undertaking the large task of the NIHR ARC Finance and Activity report 2021-22. Sarah initiated a highly efficient and effective approach to collating information for the ARC annual report and implemented changes to the process for collecting and organising data so that the report submitted to our funders was of an exceptionally high standard.