Welcome to our eighth newsletter for the EQUIP study. EQUIP stands for “Enhancing the quality of user-involved care planning in mental health services”. We hope that you enjoy reading about our continued progress.

This 8th edition gives an update on work stream 4 / the dissemination phase and looks forward to reporting findings in the next issue. Thank you for taking the time to read it.

Prof Karina Lovell, EQUIP Chief Investigator

Trial Update

In November 2016, we entered the final year of the EQUIP programme. We are currently in work stream 4, the dissemination phase, and are engaged in sharing the lessons learned during the study. We are continuing to train control groups (those who didn’t originally receive training as part of the trial and were included for reasons of comparison) and ‘willing adopters’ (up to 10 Trusts who have/will participate in the EQUIP Train the Trainers intervention, originally devised for the service user and carer trainers on EQUIP). We have already trained Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust, preparing them to pass their training on to peers. We also have another team waiting in the wings, signed up with training dates for March 2017.

Analysis by our trial statisticians, Chris and Lesley, is ongoing and will eventually tell us whether the EQUIP intervention was effective at enhancing the quality of service user and carer involvement in care planning.

In the next issue—Report on findings!

If you want to receive a summary of the findings and you are not currently on our mailing list (or your contact details have changed) you can add them by emailing or phoning Elinor via the contact details below.

Want to know more or get in touch? Visit our website: research.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/equip
You can also email: equip@manchester.ac.uk
Or call: 0161 306 7832
EQUIP Animations:

10Cs Animation

Penny Bee and Andy Grundy have been working with James Munro, an illustrator and animator, to design an animation based on Andy’s paper on the 10Cs of user involved care planning that were identified through focus groups/interviews with mental health service users (Grundy et al, 2015):

- Establishing a **connection**
- Making a real **contribution**
- Ensuring their plan is **current**
- Consolidating **care**
- Tangible **consequences**
- Acknowledging their **capacity**
- Feeling **confident**
- Professional **consultation**
- Understanding **choices**
- Everything communicated **clearly**

The animation is now available on the EQUIP website:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6DgxFpcT1VU

Carers’ Animation

Lindsey Cree and Helen Brooks have worked together with James Munro to produce the Carers’ animation, which is similar in style to the 10Cs animation above, but tackles the subject of carers and confidentiality. The animation stars Lucy and Jed (sister and brother) and looks at issues such as developing care plans collaboratively, how carers can fill in gaps in knowledge / understanding for professionals, the ‘wall’ of confidentiality between professionals and carers and confidentiality as a two-way process.

https://youtu.be/UmC-nK3ERc4

Pet Animation

Helen Brooks’ article, published in BMC Psychiatry, about the role of pets as support for owners with mental health problems was selected by the journal to have a video abstract made from it summarising the findings to be promoted on the website. A link to the animation and the guest blog can be found below:


For further information on Helen’s research, see page 4.

My name is Corinna Conley, I am a fourth-year student at the University of Manchester studying for a PhD. As part of my studies I am conducting research under the supervision of Professor Karina Lovell and Dr Penny Bee, to find out what information carers feel they need to know in order to facilitate service user care in mental health. I need to have carers’ views and I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you about your experience on this topic. I plan to conduct this research either face to face or on the telephone. Your involvement in this is entirely voluntary and there are no known or anticipated risks to participation in this study. If you agree to participate, it should not take more than about 90 minutes. The questions are about your experiences and views as a carer on information sharing. A shopping voucher will be given to all those who complete the interview. If you would like further information please email: corinna.conley@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk or call: 07990619609.

This study has been approved by University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee (Ref: 2017-0788-1808)
EQUIP findings presented at the International Health Policy Conference at the LSE

On Friday 16th February, Gemma Shields from the EQUIP project presented a poster on the findings of the stated preference survey at the International Health policy conference. This conference seeks to bring together academics and policy-makers from a wide range of disciplines to take a multi-disciplinary approach to key health and social care issues.

The poster focused on responses provided by the largest group (service users) of which the survey had 132 responses.

The key results shown in the poster were:

- In the ranking task “My preferences for care are included in the care plan” was ranked number one (most important) by 41% of survey users.
- The conditional logit analysis showed the greatest preferences were for “My preferences for care are included in the care plan” and “The care plan helps me to manage risk”.
- Time was ranked as the least important. Willingness to spend time in hours for an improvement in an attribute (WTP) was highest for “My preferences for care are included in the care plan”.

In conclusion, the poster noted that service users particularly valued care plans that included their preferences. Results demonstrate that service users are willing to sacrifice their time if it leads to improvements in care planning.

Comments received during the poster presentation focused on the large sample size, which was seen as very positive, and conference attendees asked questions mainly centred on recruitment challenges.

Find out more about the conference here: http://www.lse.ac.uk/LSEHealthAndSocialCare/events/International-Health-Policy-Conference-2017.aspx

Staff Focus:

We would like to welcome Vicky Bell to the staff of EQUIP.

I joined the EQUIP team at the end of 2016, but I worked with the team at the beginning of the trial supporting recruitment to EQUIP.

I have worked in mental health research for more than 10 years now, and moved back to the University a couple of years ago after an extended period in the NHS working for the NIHR.

Alongside EQUIP, I am working on a new study called RAPID. This is a national study and is a trial of guided self help, using a web and app-based programme, to treat PTSD.

Away from work, I have a very active four-year-old who keeps us all busy. We love travelling and family holidays, cinema trips, park days and family activities.
An article published in BMC Psychiatry in December (link on page 5) by EQUIP team members Helen Brooks, Kelly Rushton and Karina Lovell in collaboration with colleagues from Southampton University, Anne Rogers and Sandy Walker, demonstrated the role of pets for the management of mental health conditions. This qualitative study incorporated a social network approach, which enabled participants to self-select the resources important to them in the day-to-day management of mental health.

The findings demonstrated a range of roles attributed to pets and a strength and depth in the value of pets in the management of mental health problems:

- Pets provided secure and intimate relationships often not available from elsewhere.
- Pets distracted their owners from symptoms and upsetting experiences such as hearing voices and suicidal thoughts.
- Pets accepted their owners for who they were without judgement.
- Pets connected their owners to others in and beyond their personal networks.

The paper has been accessed over 63,500 times since publication three months ago, has been the subject of a Mental Elf blog, is ranked in the top 1% of all research tracked by Altimetric and has received international press coverage by over 230 media outlets including:

ABC News in Australia
Reuters, Huffington Post, Fox News, New York Daily Times
The Times of India
The i-newspaper and the Express in the UK

Dr Helen Brooks, Research Fellow
Service User Co-Applicant / Research Assistant Update:

Lauren Walker

Having been involved with EQUIP since the early stages as a member of the Research Methods for Service Users and Carers course and as a Co-applicant on the grant, and this being the first time I have been involved in a research programme, I am very proud of the progress we have made with EQUIP.

I love the variety of the work I have been involved in and have especially enjoyed my work roles with people such as interviewer, focus group facilitator and training facilitator.

I have found the research team to be encouraging and supportive and have had the opportunity to learn many new skills whilst working as a research assistant. I have become more confident and have been encouraged to be involved in a variety of tasks from data entry to co-writing papers, facilitating training for health and social care professionals and participating in team Away days.

I feel that I have been treated as an equal by my colleagues and my lived experience has been valued and treated with respect.

I am extremely grateful for this opportunity to be a researcher and Co-applicant on EQUIP. As someone who had spent many years on sickness benefits due to my mental health condition, I feel I now have the skills and experience to continue working in a similar or related role.

Finally, I have loved seeing Andrew Grundy and Lindsey Cree (who have travelled alongside me as Co-applicants and from studying together on the research methods course) grow and learn from the opportunities they have been able to experience.

Publications List:

Most recent publications from the program:


Hughes-Morley, A. et al. ‘The impact of advertising patient and public involvement on trial recruitment: embedded cluster randomised recruitment trial’ Trials (2016) https://t.co/dOJXubH5Ug

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