

SURESEARCH ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

For Suresearch AGM on Thursday 1st November 2018

Organisation, meetings and funding

The running of Suresearch is a team effort of members and officers and organised through the Futures Group.

Membership

We have 96 members on our email list, about 13 receiving the postal mailout, plus 10 members whose email addresses have not been functioning for some time.

During the year members became aware of the death of Sohan Soroya, who was an active member of Suresearch for some years. He attended and contributed to our meetings, and had poetry published on our website. Our website editor and secretary have been in contact with the family.

Organisation

Officers

Officers elected in November 2017 have served throughout the year.

Office Facilities

Suresearch has use of an office opposite the Courtyard Room in Park House. The office houses our archives, a small number of reference books and computers which are used by authorised members for maintaining our membership database, website, and other Suresearch activities. Members can arrange to access the office to view books and archives by emailing suresearch.org@gmail.com.

Mailings

Most members are on the e-mailing list and receive monthly mailing about our meetings plus circulations of events and opportunities of interest. Around 13 members still receive just the monthly mailing by post.

Abbreviations:

UoB – University of Birmingham
HSMC – Health Service Management Centre
NIHR – National Institute for Health Research

HSDR – Health services and Delivery Programme
BSMHFT – Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust

Monthly Meetings

Suresearch has continued to have [monthly meetings](#) at Park House. Speakers have included:

- March - Caroline Hutton, Director, spoke about [Martineau Gardens](#). The gardens are open all the year round and, as a therapeutic community garden, are looked after by volunteers many of whom have mental health issues.
- April - Stephen Jeffreys presented an account of his journey as a researcher with lived experience of mental health issues, referring to his training through the joint Suresearch/MHRN service user and carer research training project, working on research projects large and small, and some of the key texts from the service user literature.
- May - Karen Newbigging and Barbara Norden – provided an update on the progress of the research project- contribution of the voluntary sector to mental health crisis care in England.
- July - David Packingham spoke about his work as a mental health champion for the Central England Co-operative Ltd, and his personal journey to the role. In this role he has helped with surveys as well as working within the Co-op and in the community in education and training.
- August - Gemma Unwin, UoB School of Psychology spoke about a research proposal being developed on unmet needs of individuals accessing IAPT who have relatives with addictions and discussed how Suresearch members might become involved.
- September - Tim Kariotis, of University of Melbourne, spoke about his PhD on Rewriting the Narrative of Integrated Care and his interests in public health and service user involvement. He aims to co-develop a plan for co-production of medical records.
- October - George and Luke spoke about the Birmingham Nightline service, a confidential listening and information service run by students, open from 6pm to 8am and available to those studying at the University of Birmingham, Aston University, and University College Birmingham.

Funding of Suresearch

A separate financial report for 2017-18 is presented to the Annual General Meeting.

We benefitted from Awards for All Lottery Funding to the end of December 2017 (Suresearch2017), and again from August 2018 (Suresearch2018). In between, travel expenses were paid from Suresearch reserves from donations, and the frequency of group meetings was reduced to conserve funds together with a £10 cap on expenses payments.

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Suresearch Website

Last year we reported on the decision to rebuild the [Suresearch website](#) in order to escape from our bad experience with the Carbon Creative web design company. The site was expanded and rebuilt in November 2017 by Stephen Jeffreys with assistance and guidance from web designer, [Phil Choi](#), as the last part of the Suresearch2017 Awards for All project. The new site went live in December 2017 with the new hosting service, TSO Hosting. It is a standard WordPress site which we are able to maintain and update ourselves, with just occasional technical support.

The new site was rebuilt with a similar page structure to the old site, but has:

- expanded content,
- a refreshed appearance,
- better integration with material on the University of Birmingham website,
- and improved functionality of the News and Views blog section where members can post reports and opinion articles.

In the course of rebuilding, new material was written by members and posted on the site. Tony Devaney continued as website editor and assisted some members in contributing new material. Tony has since stepped back from this role due to personal circumstances, and we thank Tony for his contributions to the site.

Members are encouraged to submit items for posting on the website, under the following categories:

- Reports on members activities, including involvement in research, training and other work, through Suresearch,
- Articles, and opinion pieces from members,
- Members' creative writing.

Under our new Big Lottery Awards for All funded Suresearch 2018 project, we will be able to provide further training and peer support for members on blogging and use of twitter.

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Special Projects

Suresearch2017 Project

This one year project, funded by Big Lottery Awards for All Fund, finished at the end of December 2017. It is referred to in various parts of this report and in the separate 2017-18 Financial Report.

Suresearch 2018 Project

Suresearch has been successful in obtaining further Awards for All Lottery funding for one year from 1st August 2017. The three project funding streams for this project are:

- fares for attending meetings and training
- payments to members for providing peer training and support, making regular contributions to website maintenance, and developing resources and opportunities for members.
- money for professional training of members interested in gaining and updating their computer skills and knowledge in the areas outlined below, and website expenses.

The training will include

- using Twitter
- working with WordPress blogs
- wordPress website maintenance

Aims of this training are:

- To increase the contribution that members make to the News and Views section of the website
- to increase members' confidence and skills with the various media
- to make sure than the other website sections are updated regularly
- to increase the number of people in the core website team providing website maintenance and the management of new material.

The first training sessions are currently planned for 7th and 14th November 2018, and will be delivered by Phil Choi, who worked with us for Suresearch2017.

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Research

During the year, members have continued to be involved in a variety of mental health research projects, by providing advice and working collaboratively.

Research Projects

Research Project on Role of Voluntary Sector in Mental Health Crisis Care

Suresearch is named as a partner in the NIHR funded research project investigating the scope and role of voluntary sector provision for those experiencing a mental health crisis, led by Dr Karen Newbigging (HSMC and Suresearch member). Other Suresearch members are involved in various capacities on the project. Alex Davis is on the research team, Jo Barber is on the Study steering Group and Barbara Norden is a co-researcher. Stephen Jeffreys and Mohammed Zaman are on the Service User Reference Group which is chaired by Jo.

This is a two year project, now in its second year. Its aims are:

- to identify the contribution of the voluntary sector to crisis care in mental health
- to make policy and practice recommendations to strengthen the crisis care response for people experiencing mental health crisis.

It involves co-production with service users and carers as researchers and advisors and involves a national survey, selected regional mapping of relevant initiatives and interviews with providers individual users and their families.

For information on the project on our Suresearch website , go to <http://www.suresearch.org.uk/resources/research-resources/contribution-of-voluntary-sector-to-crisis-care/>

For project website, go to <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/social-policy/departments/health-services-management-centre/research/projects/2016/Voluntary-sector-research/The-contribution-of-the-voluntary-sector-to-mental-health-crisis-care-in-England.aspx>

Jo Barber's Research on Spirituality

Suresearch member, Jo Barber has continued with her [research on spirituality and its role in recovery](#), looking at why some find their religion helpful and others find it a problem. Jo has so far developed a new mental health recovery scale concentrating on spiritual issues. She is now continuing her work with two studies, one qualitative and one quantitative. For the qualitative study, recovering service users are being interviewed about their experiences of recovery, focusing particularly on the spiritual and religious aspects. She hopes this will generate theories concerning the processes of recovery from the service user viewpoint and help to discover what promotes and what impedes it. Earlier in the year, assisted by Ann Davis, Jo's proposal was granted ethical approval by the NHS regional

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Ethics Committee, and she was congratulated by this Committee as a service user researcher. Having made the minor amendments requested, she has begun interviewing service users and is looking for volunteers to be interviewed.

For the quantitative study she is using her new recovery scale as an outcomes measure for an inner-city counselling service in order to calculate sensitivity to change and test reliability of this scale. Data collection has now begun for this study. In the future, she hopes to compare the process of recovery as measured by clinicians with self-report recovery as measured using the new scale, and to use the scale to evaluate different interventions, including spiritual care, for their ability to facilitate recovery from the service user viewpoint.

Thrive into Work Individual Placement and Support (IPS) pilot research.

Six members accepted an invitation from Social Finance to act as a service user advisory group to the Thrive into Work Individual Placement and Support (IPS) pilot research. Unfortunately, the Central Commissioning Group research team that took over the delivery of the pilot adopted a different approach and failed to communicate properly with our members with the result that only two members (plus a third member in a service provider capacity) were invited attend a stakeholder workshop instead of the planned advisory group. The project team then asked for further involvement on a voluntary basis instead of the hourly rate agreed. Suresearch communicated our dissatisfaction that the research team had not honoured the agreement with Social Finance that members should be paid for their time in providing service user expert by experience advice on this project.

EURIPIDES study

Stephen Jeffreys and Emma Ormerod have been concluding their work as co-researchers for the Mental Health Foundation on a University of Warwick/Sheffield led HSDR study, called EURIPIDES, looking at how Mental Health Trusts collect feedback from inpatients and how that feedback is used in improving services.

Self and Identity Research Project

[This project](#) was a collaboration between our Suresearch service user/survivor researchers, UoB academic researchers, and practitioners in Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust, originating from workshops organised by the former Mental Health Research Network, Heart of England Hub with Suresearch members amongst the facilitators. The project was investigating the influence of mental health difficulties and use of services on people's sense of self and identity and aimed to develop ideas for improving services.

We conducted four focus groups, completed preliminary readings of each typed transcript, and agreed on a coding framework for a full analysis of the information we collected. The

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project has been on hold for some time now, but there has been some recent fresh interest from UoB academic staff in working on it. We hope to call a meeting to discuss seeking funding for the Suresearch researchers with lived experience and identifying individuals who are currently in a position to conclude the research. The intention is that the project should remain fully collaborative.

Review of the Mental Health Act

Suresearch members, Stephen Jeffreys and Emma Ormerod, have worked with the National Survivor User Network (NSUN) on facilitating focus groups for the current Review of the Mental Health Act.

Suresearch collaborating in bids for research funding

The following bids, in which members were already involved at the start of the year were ultimately unsuccessful:

- a bid led by Jason Schaub, UoB School of Social Policy, to undertake research for LGBT services in Nottingham funded by the local CCG;
- a resubmitted HSDR bid including co-researchers, led by Dr Nicola Gale (HSMC), looking at potential use of community health workers in primary care (co-applicant, Stephen Jeffreys).

Members were involved in further collaborative bids in 2017-18, including:

- University College London Language and Psychosis Network Plus (LaPsyNet+) funding application, with Suresearch named among the 'collaborators'. The bid involved looking at the language used in talking about psychosis. The call was for interdisciplinary research networks and included a budget for smaller supplementary service user/survivor led projects. Unfortunately this bid was chosen, and successful projects have been announced as the new UK Research and Innovation Mental Health Networks.
- a National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) first stage grant proposal being developed in the UoB School of Psychology, focused on unmet needs of individuals accessing IAPT who have relatives with addictions. Gemma Unwin from the research team discussed the project with members at our September meeting, and members with relevant experience and interest have been invited to be involved.

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Research Groups and events attended by members

Members have attended a number of research groups and events, including:

- A July conference in Stoke-On-Trent showcasing research projects undertaken by trainee clinical psychologists at University of Birmingham (UoB) and other West Midlands Universities.
- Stephen Jeffreys has been appointed as a member of the NIHR funded [Mental Health Policy Research Unit's](#) Lived Experience Working Group, led by University College, London.
- UoB's [Birmingham Institute of Mental Health](#) inaugural forum on 15th October. It is a new interdisciplinary organisation with a focus on young people's mental health.

Involvement in Teaching

Suresearch members, including Janet Qureshi and David Goley, continue to [participate in teaching on the UoB social work courses](#). Members are also involved in teaching and course management committees for, clinical and forensic psychology, mental health nursing and other practitioner training at the University of Birmingham and elsewhere. This includes the [Collaborative Learning Initiative](#) each January which brings together trainee social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists and nurses.

Stephen Jeffreys has been working with Dr Nicola Gale (HSMC) on development of a [workforce development tool](#) for community health workers looking at approaches to risk.

During this year, the UoB clinical and forensic psychology doctorate course have set up an Expert by Experience Committee (EBESC) to coordinate lived experience involvement in the courses and related research, and a number of Suresearch members are involved.

Suresearch Groups

Suresearch has a number of smaller group meetings open to all members.

Future of Suresearch (Futures) Group

The [Futures group](#) has continued to meet when required and focused on the future and day to day running of Suresearch, preparing funding bids, and planning the Suresearch2017 and Suresearch2018 projects.

Six meetings were held during the year.

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Inpatient Care Forum (Suresearch Group)

The [Inpatient Care Forum \(IPCF\)](#) focuses primarily on Inpatient issues. Topics discussed are often linked to members' activities. It has met four times during the year.

Two attenders are Governors of the BSMHFT. Three others are closely involved with the University's Health Management Study Centre's research project on the role of the voluntary sector in mental health crisis care. One member continues to develop and refine her research project on spirituality and personal recovery.

Members have contributed to a newly published book - *Service User and Carer Involvement in Health and Social Care*. Chapter 6, 'Exploring resilience and wellbeing: crossing the boundaries between service user and practitioner in mental health'. The chapter is written by Suresearch member and UoB lecturer, [Maureen Smojkis](#) and includes input from members of the Inpatient Care Forum.

Writers and Readers Group (Suresearch Group)

The [Writers and Readers Group](#) provides an opportunity for members to support each other with their writing and share information about local and national events and festivals, linked to the written word, music and mental health. The meetings have also provided members with a space to share their work as well as opportunities for spontaneous writing. In addition, the meetings have been used by members to share the work of authors that have inspired them. The group has met seven times in the last year.

Members contributed a range of work for the [Suresearch website](#) as part of the Suresearch 2017 lottery funded project. This includes poetry, prose and reflective writing.

Members have been involved in various external events, including:

- the Birmingham annual 'Arts All over the Place' event concerned with mental health and the arts.
- the Survivors Art Open Day held at the University of Birmingham, Muirhead Tower.
- several members have been invited to share their work and views at local events.

Campaigns, consultations other activities

Members have provided personal input to various consultations on service changes in their own areas and attended a variety of meeting bringing together service providers, commissioners, service users and carers throughout the Midlands.

Stephen Jeffreys, 27 October 2018

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