

Speaker profiles

CAPSS 15-year anniversary symposium

2 April 2025

Professor Prathiba Chitsabesan

National Clinical Director for Children and Young People's Mental Health, NHSE



Prathiba is the National Clinical Director for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Chair of the Clinical Reference Group (NHS England) and has been involved in a number of regional and national transformation programmes. She is also a Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry working in a large mental health and learning disability trust (Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust).

She has an interest in the mental health and neurodevelopmental needs of children and young people in contact with the criminal justice system, working across systems and government departments. Over the last 20 years she has published in peer reviewed journals and books and contributed to national reports and guidance for NHS England, Youth Justice Board and Office of the Children's Commissioner. She was involved in developing the mental health response following the Manchester Arena Attack (2017) and contributing to the national framework for psychosocial and mental health care following incidents and emergencies (Emergency Preparedness Resilience Response, EPRR). She continues to be research active as a Visiting Chair (University College London and Manchester Metropolitan University).

Dr Paul French

Interim Mental Health clinical lead for North West Research Delivery Network (RDN) and National Speciality Lead for Mental Health at the RDN, NIHR



Paul French is a registered Mental Health Nurse and clinical researcher based at Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust. Paul has specialised in working with people with psychosis and emerging psychosis.

Paul was a member of the National Expert Reference Group that developed the Access and Waiting Times Standards for EIP and supported the implementation of national standards and service improvement initiatives through his post within the Royal College of Psychiatry at the College Centre for Quality Improvement who undertake national audit work and where he was joint clinical advisor for the National Clinical Audit of Psychosis from 2018-2025.

Paul is an applicant on multiple NIHR clinical trials including an NIHR Program grant as Co CI to understand the impact of duration of early intervention treatment on health outcomes. Recently he was awarded a £3M HTA grant as Co CI to lead a trial looking at Metformin to prevent antipsychotic weight gain. He is an author on over 100 peer reviewed publications alongside several book and book chapters in relation to the treatment of people with psychosis and early psychosis.

Paul is the interim Mental Health clinical lead for North West Research Delivery Network (RDN) and National Speciality Lead for Mental Health at the RDN. He has expertise in clinical trials and is a member of the NIHR HTA CET funding panel and in April 2023 was awarded an NIHR Senior Research Leader post through NIHR.

Dr Elaine Lockhart

Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist



Dr Elaine Lockhart studied medicine at University College Dublin and has worked in Ireland, France and the UK.

She is currently Chair of the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Child and Adolescent faculty.

She has lived in Scotland for the past 30 years and is currently a consultant psychiatrist with the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Learning Disability CAMHS team. Her areas of focus are improved funding to support values and evidence-based specialist CAMHS across the UK and the recruitment and retention of psychiatrists to work with infants, children and young people.

Dr Tamsin Newlove-Delgado

Associate Professor and Honorary Consultant in Public Health



Tamsin Newlove-Delgado is an Associate Professor in Child Public Mental Health and Director of the University of Exeter's [Children and Young People's Mental Health Research Collaboration \(ChYMe\)](#). She is also an Honorary Consultant in Public Health Medicine with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).

Tamsin's research concentrates on public health aspects of the mental health of children and young people, with a particular interest in the transition from child to adult services, and in the application of epidemiological methods for service planning. She has recently completed an NIHR

Advanced Fellowship, which studied time trends in child and adolescent mental health and mental health related service contacts (the [CHANGES project](#)). Tamsin is also an academic consultant on the NHS Digital [Mental Health of Children and Young People in England](#) survey series and co-leads the academic input to the survey consortium.

Tamsin has been involved in several CAPSS studies including the NIHR funded project on Children and adolescents with ADHD in transition between children's services and adult services ([CATCh-uS](#)).

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Umairah Malik

Clinical and Co-production Manager



Umairah is the Clinical and Co-production Manager at Beat, the UK's eating disorder charity. Her role includes ensuring Beat's work is founded on clinical expertise, lived experiences, and good-quality research. She manages Beat's co-production work to ensure people with lived experiences play an equal role in designing and developing services and research. Umairah also leads on work to ensure people receive the treatment and information guidelines say they are entitled to, and on a campaign to increase the provision of intensive community and day treatments for eating disorders. She is a member on NHS England's clinical reference group for all-age eating disorders.

Professor Dasha Nicholls

Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry



Dasha Nicholls is Professor of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Acting Head of the Division of Psychiatry at Imperial College London; Honorary Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist in Children and Young People's Eating Disorders; National Specialist Advisor on Eating Disorders to NHS England; and Clinical and Strategic Director for National Audits and Research at the College Centre for Quality Improvement (CCQI) of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. Her research focuses on prevention and early intervention for young people's mental health, predominantly but not exclusively around feeding and eating disorders and those living at higher weight.

Dasha is a world respected researcher in the field of eating disorders and led CAPSS studies on early onset eating disorders and avoidant restrictive feeding intake disorder (ARFID).

Hala Rachidi

Research Programme Lead at MQ Mental Health Research



Hala Rachidi is the Research Programme Lead at MQ Mental Health Research and the Lead for Datamind's Workforce Capacity Building, Training, and Development Workstream. In her role, Hala leads the development and execution of MQ's grant funding programmes and manages the organization's research portfolio. Additionally, she oversees the design and delivery of data science conferences, training sessions, and career development opportunities for the DATAMIND project and MQ grant holders.

Prior to joining MQ, Hala worked in the humanitarian emergency response sector with International Medical Corps Lebanon. She oversaw the monitoring and evaluation of healthcare and community-based psychosocial support programs across primary healthcare facilities.

Hala holds a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree with a concentration in Health Management and Policy from the American University of Beirut (AUB), Lebanon.

Professor Kapil Sayal

Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Honorary Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and an NIHR Senior Investigator



Kapil received 3 awards for work based on his PhD, including the Royal College of Psychiatrists Research Prize. This work informed the care pathway recommendations in the NICE Guidelines for ADHD.

Kapil's research interests and expertise include RCTs, developmental epidemiology, Health Services Research, child and adolescent mental health in schools and primary care, ADHD and depression. His programme of Health Services Research includes intervention research that aims to improve the identification of, access to services and outcomes for children and young people with mental health problems in school, primary care and specialist clinical settings.

Kapil is Chief Investigator of the large, multi-site, NIHR HTA-funded STADIA trial investigating the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of a standardised diagnostic assessment for children and young people with emotional difficulties who have been referred to CAMHS (<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/12/5/e053043.long>). He also led the multi-methods "Far Away from Home" national study which investigated the scale and impacts of far-from-home or out-of-area admissions experienced by young people with mental health difficulties (<https://arc-em.nihr.ac.uk/research/far-away-home>).

Dr Aditya Sharma

Clinical Senior Lecturer and Honorary Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust and Newcastle University



Now based at Academic Psychiatry, Translational and Clinical Research Institute, Newcastle University, Wolfson Research Centre. Aditya completed his PhD on 'Neurocognition and Facial Processing in Bipolar Offspring' in September 2013.

He is Chief Investigator on the FAB study (Family focussed treatment for Adolescents with Bipolar disorder) funding for which has been awarded from the Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB) stream of NIHR.

Dr Sharma was an original member of the CAPSS Executive, serving as vice-chair and since 2020 as chair of the Executive. He has experience in undertaking CAPSS studies being the Principal Investigator for the First Paediatric Bipolar Disorder Surveillance Study of United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland (PBSS-UK&ROI) and the Early onset depression (EOD) study.

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Toni Wakefield

Parent, carer, and RCPsych CAP Faculty Carers Representative



Since her first encounter with NHS Mental Health services for children and young people in 2012 as a parent/carer Toni has worked extensively with multi-disciplinary teams to support her daughter's journey to recovery.

She is committed to sharing her experiences, both positive and negative, for the benefit of others including other parents/carers and the professionals that work with families, using her honest and engaging reflections of experiences of various services including CAMHS (community and inpatient), EIS and Adult Services, providing invaluable insights for informing how current and future professionals should respond to the needs of those who access their services. She is not afraid to challenge stigma and negative attitudes to mental illness, encouraging an inclusive approach by professionals.

Through her work in this area, she inspires professionals and promotes the importance of children and young people and their families having an active voice that is heard and recognised, supporting the RCPsych (CAP Faculty and CAFPEB), her local NHS trust (Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust), research studies in collaboration with the University of York and Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (BAY) and University of Nottingham ('Far Away from Home').