

# ACOMHS NEWSLETTER



**ACOMHS**  
ACCREDITATION FOR  
COMMUNITY MENTAL  
HEALTH SERVICES

Issue 7, Winter 2024



## WINTER EDITION 2024

CCQI | ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Winter 2024 edition of the Accreditation for Community Mental Health Services (ACOMHS) newsletter!

It's been a little while since our last newsletter but we are back with a new look and some wonderful new content. We've had a great year so far and we're so excited to share what we've been up to with you all.

This past year we've welcomed some new member services and facilitated several events, reviews and training sessions. We've also recently published the [3rd Edition of our ACOMHS Standards](#), which reflect the current landscape of adult community mental health care. We couldn't have done any of it without your input and engagement so thank you all for all your enthusiasm and your time.

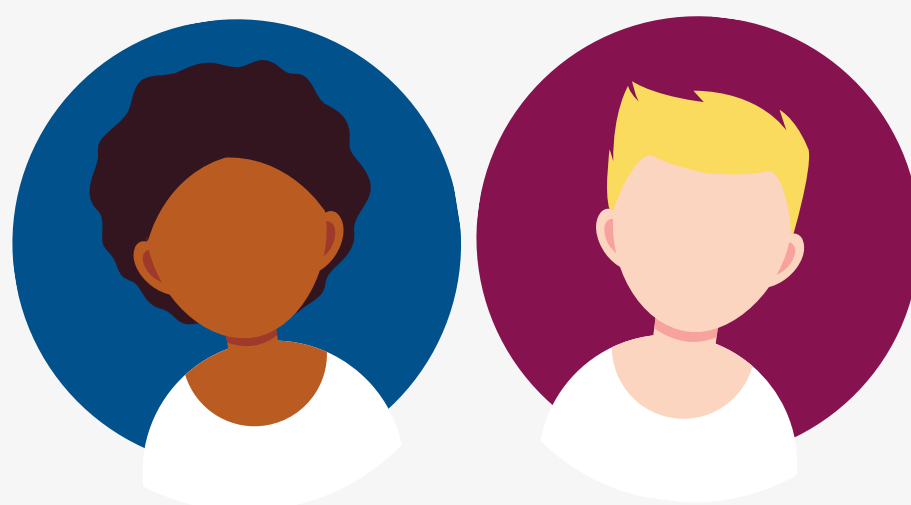
In this edition of the newsletter you can read more about what the ACOMHS project team have been up to over the last year, how the network has developed and some of the amazing work that services across the network have been implementing. You can also (virtually) meet our Patient Representatives and one of our newest Accreditation Committee and Advisory Group members.

The network works best as a peer support group where member services can share learning and innovation. As the network has grown, this has become more and more apparent. We are better when we work together.

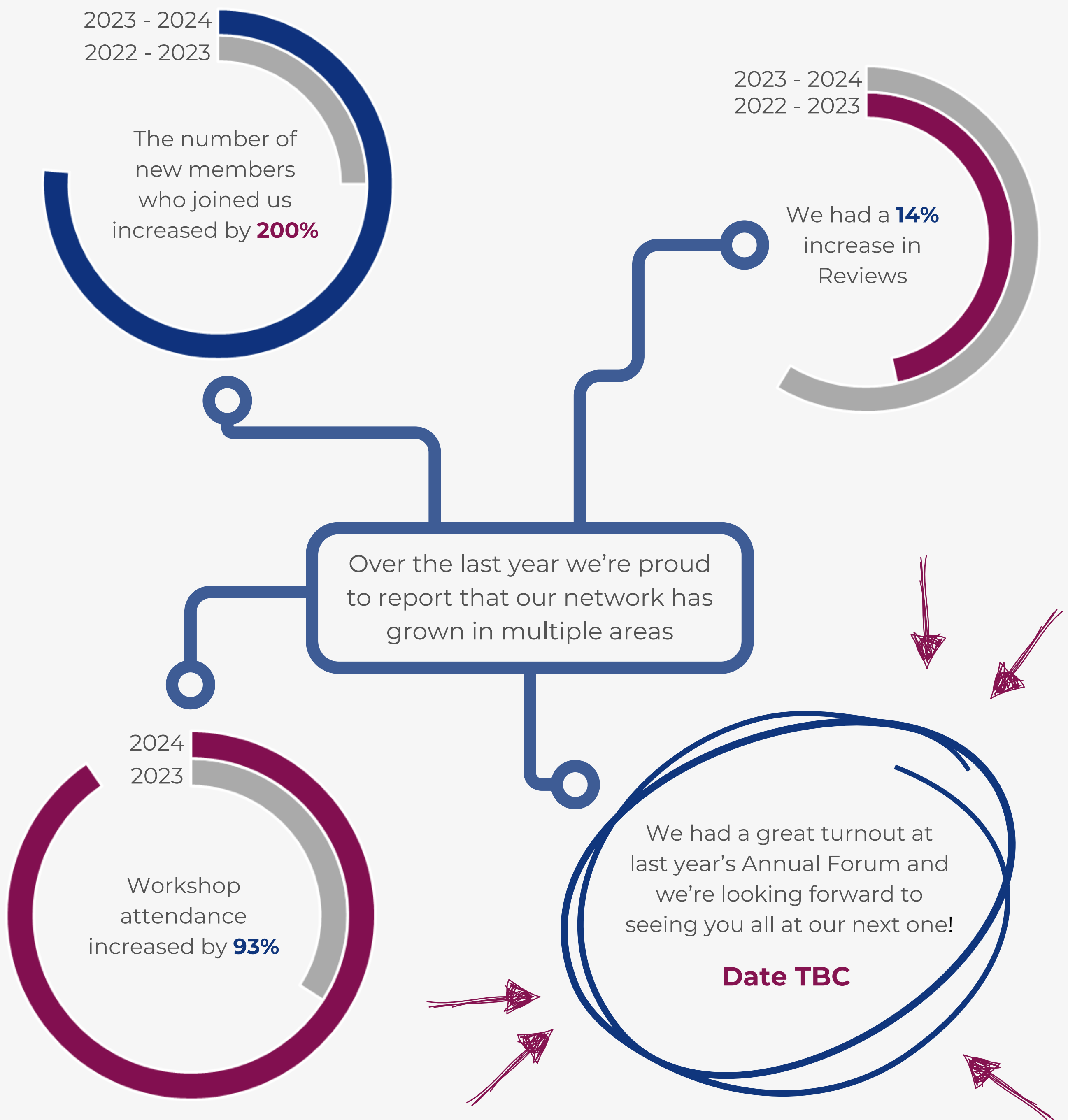
Over the next year and in the years to come we hope to continue to help you provide even better care and outcomes for people who engage with your service.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

**Esther & Jake**  
(ACOMHS Project Officers)



# A YEAR IN REVIEW



We hope to grow even more over the next year. If there are services that you think would be good additions to the network, please do let us know. In the meantime, keep an eye out for information about our 2025 events and [review opportunities on our website](#) and in our fortnightly ACOMHS bulletin.

If you are not subscribed to the ACOMHS bulletin and would like to be, please [contact us](#).

# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024



## ACCREDITED SERVICES

Congratulations to the following services who achieved their accreditation this year:

- **Cookstown CMHT** - Northern Health and Social Care Trust
- **Oxford House** - Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust
- **Dacorum CMHT** - Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust
- **St Albans CMHT** - Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust
- **Rosanne House** - Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust
- **Cygnets House** - Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust



## BEST PRACTICE HIGHLIGHTS

### **Oxford House - Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust**

Oxford House recently won the Innovation of the Year Award for the implementation of the new depression pathway. 80 patients are currently on this pathway which aims to keep patients at the centre, collaborate with primary care and focus on prevention. The peer review team were pleased to hear this was co-produced with patients and carers. Staff also spoke of a suicide prevention pathway that is being developed and the peer review team encourage the service to collaborate on this with those who use the service.

### **Cookstown CMHT - Northern Health and Social Care Trust**

Throughout discussions on the peer review day the service demonstrated excellent interface with other services and provided many examples of specialist teams working together, as well as efforts to improve relationships with primary care. Perinatal and eating disorder pathways have been reviewed and improved with input and additional training from specialist colleagues. To improve communication between the service and GP's, the service have ensured regular contact with practice managers to address any issues. The Trust medical director also meets with surgeries regularly to address any longstanding or complex challenges.

### **St Albans CMHT - Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust**

St Albans have introduced "The café" connect group where the occupational therapists support patients to attend different café shops each week and develop their social skills by interacting with others and ordering coffee, from attending this group patients have been supported to volunteer at places they've visited.



# ABOUT ME - AC/AG



**Caroline Parker**

**Role:** Mental Health Pharmacist

**Service:** Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust

## What three things would you bring to a deserted island?

- Good coffee and chocolate – I can't live without them!
- A Bible – as I believe in God so need to read this.

## How did you end up in your role?

As a pharmacist I've chosen to specialise and work in mental health for many years now. When I started I didn't know anything about the field, now I know a lot more. Yet it never ceases to amaze me how we medicines can make such a remarkable difference to someone when they are mentally unwell. Seeing someone improve from an acute episode back to their normal self again is such a privilege and very rewarding. Now I can now constructively contribute to people's recovery through by helping to get the medicines tailored to the best for them.

## What do you enjoy most about your role?

I think continuing across services is incredibly important. I find it rewarding to see patients' recovery journey continue beyond their stay as an inpatient. Conversely when a patient becomes unwell and needs an admission, knowing them and understanding their baseline functioning and character when well really helps inform their inpatient care.

## What made you want to join the ACOMHS AC/AG?

Just about every patient with an SMI will be prescribed medicines. These can have a huge impact on their life, both positively and sometime, negatively. So it is really important to get these right and place due respect and effort on them and getting them exactly right. That's what I would want if I was receiving care. So I offered to join the group as there was a gap for a pharmacist.

## What have you learnt since being a member of the AC/AG?

Nothing just yet as I am VERY new! But I look forward to learning lots from the other members and from the groups.

### What is the AC/AG?

The Accreditation Committee (AC) and Advisory Group (AG) are made up of patients, carers and professionals from a range of disciplines within community mental health services who represent different areas of interest and expertise.

The AG advises and furthers the work of ACOMHS and the AC reviews peer review reports and evidence from services and decides on accreditation status.



# BENEFITS OF BEING A PEER REVIEWER

The ACOMHS Network are always looking for eager peer-reviewers to join the team! Becoming a peer-reviewer is a great benefit of membership with the ACOMHS network. Some of the benefits of being a peer-reviewer include:

- **Sharing good practice** - Peer-reviews present an opportunity to share best practice with other services to foster improvement UK wide.
- **Learning** - Attending peer-reviews is a great way for reviewers to take Quality Improvement initiatives or best practice being done by other services.
- **Connecting with peers** - Peer-reviews present the opportunity to meet like-minded professionals working across the UK.
- **Prepare for accreditation** - Attending peer-reviews provides valuable insight into the accreditation cycle.
- **Development** - Develop leadership by chairing sections of the review.
- **CPD Points** - CPD points are awarded to those who attend reviews.

The ACOMHS team offer in-depth peer-reviewer training which can be attended by all staff from member services. If you would be interested in becoming a peer-reviewer please sign up using our [peer reviewer training registration form](#).

“Meeting service users and carers who spoke of how much the service had improved their lives and outlook.”

“Opportunity to learn from other similar services. Share good practice.”

“Great opportunity to understand [other services] perspectives and think about my own service in relation to the service they deliver...”

“Meeting new colleagues, hearing about the service and what staff were proud about.”

“Hearing lots of positive practice examples...”



# MEET OUR REPS!



**Oscar  
Patton-Lyons**

Oscar Patton-Lyons is a Patient Representative with the Accreditation for Community Mental Health Services.

Oscar's journey into services began with personal experiences of really struggling and accessing a range of different supports and interventions, Oscar now uses those insights to advocate for service users and help shape more inclusive care environments.

Oscar's passion lies in driving systemic change by sharing his lived experience, promoting peer-led support, and working to bridge the gap between service users and clinicians. Oscar is very passionate about Neurodiversity, Trauma-Informed Approaches, and collaborative relationships between services and their patients & carers.

Joining the ACOMHS network has been an incredible opportunity for Oscar to contribute to the continuous improvement of community mental health services on a national level, ensuring they remain compassionate, person-centred, and effective. Through his involvement, Oscar hopes to inspire others and amplify the voices of those often unheard in the system.



**Jason  
Grant-Rowles**

Jason is a lived experience mental health practitioner, researcher, and advisor who works within the system to improve outcomes for others.

Jason has experience of psychosis, inpatient care, early intervention services, and managing in the community with the support of family, friends, and GP.

Jason has been a patient representative for ACOMHS since 2020 and thoroughly enjoys the collaborative space with other mental health professionals, conducting reviews of services, being part of the accreditation process, and speaking to the people who access services around the country.

Jason joined ACOMHS to further improvement within community mental health services. Outside of ACOMHS, Jason works as a peer coach in a community mental health team and is a lived experience practitioner for the trauma informed collaborative.

# ART COMPETITION

Congratulations to our artwork competition winner!



**“Oak Woman”**  
**By H. Thompson**

(Older People’s Community Mental Health Services Norfolk and Suffolk Mental Health Trust)

“

*I have worked as an artist for many years through a wide range of media. I am BiPolar and after a terrible tip I emerged working no longer in tiny watercolours but very large, spontaneous charcoal drawings. Trees play an important part in my life and this drawing is of the bole of an ancient Sweet Chestnut. The stimulus for this dramatic change of direction was many sessions of CAT therapy.*

**- H Thompson**

”



# CURRENT RESEARCH

We've put together a short list of some recent research that we thought might interest you. Each study has the full paper linked so you can read more if you'd like to.



[How is physical healthcare experienced by staff, service users, and carers in adult community mental health services in a south London mental health trust? A service evaluation](#) - Gracie Tredget, Julie Williams, Ray McGrath, Euan Sadler, Fiona Gaughran, Karen Ang, Natalia Stepan, Sean Cross, John Tweed, Lia Orlando, Nick Sevdalis & The Integrating our Mental & Physical Healthcare Systems (IMPHS) Study Team

**Summary:** Adults with a serious mental illness (SMI) are at greater risk of physical health morbidity and premature death than the general population, largely as a result of preventable physical health issues. Staff working in mental health services have a role to play in addressing these inequalities, but little is known about how they perceive their role and how this impacts on their practice. Understanding this better would enable services to improve their approach and support better health outcomes for SMI patients.



[Implementation of Positive Advanced Recovery Connections in Primary and Secondary Mental Health Care—A Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner-Led Initiative](#) - A. Cunningham, D. De La Harpe Golden, M. Pink, E. Truszkowska, T. Byrne, C. Murphy, A. Strahann, C. Doyle, A. Kasemiire, T. Frawley

**Summary:** This study reports on the implementation of a registered advanced nurse practitioner intervention called Positive Advanced Recovery Connections (PARC). The initiative aimed to improve access to evidence-based mental health treatments between primary and secondary care for people presenting with mild to moderate mental health illnesses.



[The effectiveness, implementation, and experiences of peer support approaches for mental health: a systematic umbrella review](#) - Ruth E. Cooper, Katherine R. K. Saunders, Anna Greenburgh, Prisha Shah, Rebecca Appleton, Karen Machin, Tamar Jeynes, Phoebe Barnett, Sophie M. Allan, Jessica Griffiths, Ruth Stuart, Lizzie Mitchell, Beverley Chipp, Stephen Jeffreys, Brynmor Lloyd-Evans, Alan Simpson & Sonia Johnson

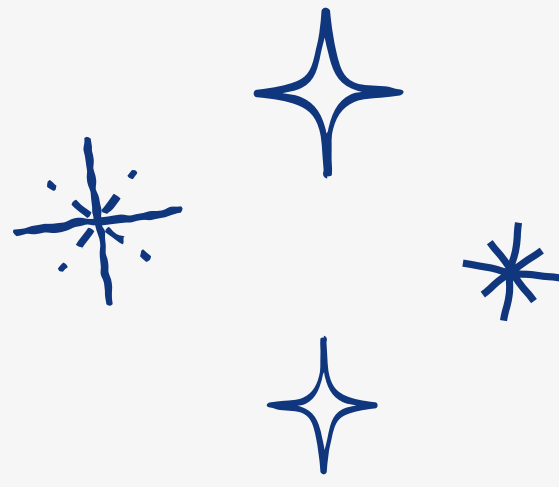
**Summary:** Peer support for mental health is recommended across international policy guidance and provision. Our systematic umbrella review summarises evidence on the effectiveness, implementation, and experiences of paid peer support approaches for mental health.



[Service user perspectives on social prescribing services for mental health in the UK: a systematic review](#) - M Cooper, D Flynn, L Avery, K Ashley, C Jordan, L Errington, and J Scott

**Summary:** A thematic analysis of adult service users' perspectives on how UK-based social prescribing services support them with their mental health management.





# THANK YOU!

We'd like to acknowledge the following people for their amazing contributions to this year's edition of the ACOMHS newsletter:

**Older People's Community Mental Health Services** (Norfolk and Suffolk Mental Health Trust, member service)

**Caroline Parker** (Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust, Accreditation Committee & Advisory Group)

**Oscar Patton-Lyons** (Patient Representative)

**Jason Grant-Rowles** (Patient Representative)

Special thanks to all of the members of the ACOMHS network for all of your invaluable work. Thank you for reading this edition of the newsletter. Please keep an eye out for the next one coming out next year!

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of the ACOMHS newsletter, please [get in touch](#) with us.

