

# Mental Health Platform Research Summit 2025



10 October  
Edinburgh



UK Research  
and Innovation

in partnership  
with

**MQ**

Mental health  
research

# MHP RESEARCH SUMMIT 2025

## SCHEDULE

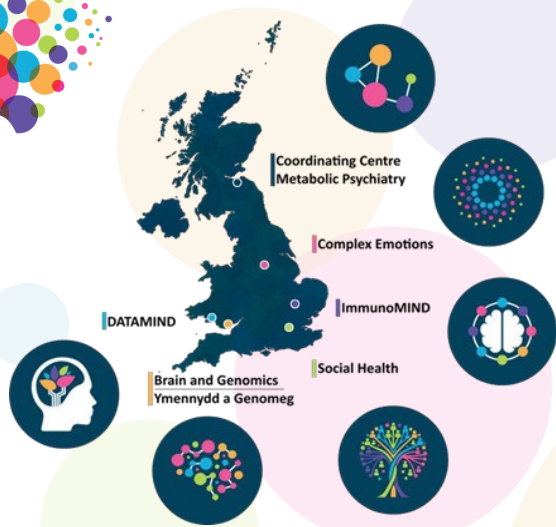
8:30am	Registration
9:20am	Welcome and Introduction: Professor Andrew McIntosh, MHP Director
9:30am	Keynote Talk: Professor Dame Til Wykes
10:00am	Core Session 1: Hub Presentations
11:10 am	Break
11:30am	ECR Flash Talks
12:15pm	Parallel Session 1 Parallel A: Molecular Psychiatry Parallel B: Social and Emotional Health Parallel C: Data, Digital, and AI
1:00pm	Lunch, poster judging, and optional Edinburgh history talk
1:45pm	Core Session 2: Hub Presentations
3:00pm	Parallel Session 2 Parallel D: PPIE Parallel E: Mental Health Data Science Parallel F: Working with Industry
4:00pm	Break
4:15pm	Keynote Talk: Professor Paul Harrison
4:45pm	Prizegiving and Closing Remarks

# Welcome to the MHP Research Summit



We are delighted to welcome you to the inaugural MHP Research Summit, held in partnership with MQ Mental Health Research. This event represents an exciting opportunity to bring together researchers, clinicians, early career researchers, people with lived experience of severe mental illness, and external partners in a collaborative space.

Throughout the day, researchers from across disciplines will present the latest developments and explore new opportunities for collaboration. The programme showcases research into the biological, psychological, and social aspects of conditions such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, complex emotional needs, and depression.



## Welcome from the Platform Director

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the first Mental Health Platform Research Summit. The Summit is an opportunity to share new findings and to spark collaborations that will help us better understand and respond to severe mental illness. I am especially pleased to see the next generation of researchers presenting their work and contributing to the future of our field.

Thank you for joining us for this important day. I hope you leave inspired, connected, and energised by the conversations and ideas we share.

**Professor Andrew McIntosh**  
Director, Mental Health Platform



8:30am – 9:20am: Registration opens & coffee



9:20am – 9:30am: Welcome and introductions



9:30am – 10:00am: Keynote Talk

**Professor Dame Til Wykes: *From Subjects to Participants to Co-production***

Co-chairs: Andrew McIntosh & Jan Speechly

Dame Til Wykes is Professor of Clinical Psychology and Rehabilitation and Head of Mental Health & Psychological Sciences at Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience at King's College London, and a consultant clinical psychologist at the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

A champion of Patient and Public Involvement, she founded the Service User Research Enterprise and has been recognised with multiple honours, including a Damehood. She is a fellow of three academies, holds two honorary doctorates, and continues to campaign on social issues.

Professor Dame Wykes will discuss her research, including her recent systematic review published this year in the Lancet, which explores the involvement of people with lived experience of mental illness in co-developing outcome measures. It discussed approaches to involving lived experience at different stages of measure development and consider how this can improve the relevance and impact of mental health research.



## 10:00am – 11:10am: Core Session 1

*Co-chairs: Emily Vicary and Saskia Sanderson*

15 minute talks + Q&A with our Hub Directors, who share the exciting research happening across the UK.

### **James Walters, Brain & Genomics**

The Brain & Genomics Hub is based in Cardiff and led by Professor James Walters. The Hub research was designed, in consultation with people with lived experience, to gather the same detailed information about individuals with psychosis, schizophrenia, bipolar and schizoaffective disorder. This data should enable researchers to identify new links across conditions that have not been considered before.

### **Scott Weich, Complex Emotions**

The Complex Emotions Hub is based in Sheffield and led by Professor Scott Weich. The research is focused on improving the understanding and care of individuals who experience complex emotional difficulties, such as difficulty managing relationships, emotional regulation, and impulsivity. Researchers explore the real-life experiences of those living with complex emotions, including those with and without a diagnosis.

### **Ann John & Robert Stewart, DATAMIND**

DATAMIND is coordinated from Swansea University and led by Professor Ann John and Professor Robert Stewart. DATAMIND is the mental health data science hub of the Mental Health Platform. It's a multi-site data organisation which has been a resource for researchers, the NHS, charities, policy makers and industry since 2021, and is now one of the six Hubs of the MHP.



## 11:10am – 11:30am: Break and Coffee

# 11:30am – 12:05pm : ECR Lightning Talks

*Chair: Joseph Hayes*

Selected abstracts give 3-minute talks with 1 minute for questions, presenting research related to one of the three themes.

## Data, Digital & AI

### **Bianca C. Branco**

*Machine learning to predict depression in the UK Biobank using genetic and environmental factors*

### **Naomi Lauanders**

*Using routine data to emulate a trial: Do specific statin-antipsychotic combinations improve symptoms of severe mental illness?*

## Molecular Psychiatry

### **Laurence Nisbet**

*Leveraging single-cell and bulk brain eQTL data to interpret GWAS signals for major psychiatric disorders*

### **Ruby Tsang**

*Immunometabolic profiles of developmental trajectories of depressive symptoms*

## Social and Emotional Health

### **Arish Mudra Rakshasa- Loots**

*Socioeconomic and inflammatory predictors of depressive episodes in people with HIV across three African countries*

### **Alex Lloyd**

*Transdiagnostic Profiles of Socio-Affective Functioning in Adolescents At-Risk of Poor Mental Health*



## 12:15am – 1:00pm: Parallel Session 1

Please sign up for one of these Parallel sessions at the registration desk.  
We encourage delegates to participate in sessions from Hubs they aren't members of to spark new connections and ideas.

Each are led by two of our Hubs in collaboration:

**Molecular Psychiatry** led by ImmunoMIND and Metabolic Psychiatry  
**Social & Emotional Health** led by Complex Emotions and Social Health  
**Data, Digital & AI** led by DATAMIND and Brain & Genomics

Raeburn Room

### Parallel A: *Molecular Psychiatry*

Co-chairs: Ed Bullmore & Daniel Smith

12:15pm – 12:20pm	<b>Danny Smith</b> University of Edinburgh	Metabolic Psychiatry Hub: Overview of therapeutic prospects.
12:20pm – 12:25pm	<b>Jess Tyrell</b> University of Exeter	Genomics project at Metabolic Psychiatry Hub
12:25pm – 12:30pm	<b>Caroline Jackson</b> University of Edinburgh	Health Informatics project at Metabolic Psychiatry Hub
12:30pm – 12:35pm	<b>Golam Khandaker</b> Bristol University	ImmunoMIND Hub: Overview of target triangulation
12:35pm – 12:40pm	<b>Xueyi Shen</b> University of Edinburgh	Proteomics of antidepressant drugs project at ImmunoMIND Hub
12:40pm – 12:45pm	<b>Yuankai (Edward) He</b> Cambridge University	Genetics of brain structure and psych disorders project at ImmunoMIND Hub
12:45pm – 1:00pm	<b>All</b>	Q&A and panel discussion, Chaired by Ed Bullmore, Cambridge

Playfair Library Hall

## Parallel B: *Digital, Data & AI*

Chair: Ann John

12:15pm – **Ann John**  
12:20pm Swansea University

**Welcome and Session Overview from DATAMIND and B&G Hub**

12:20pm – **Robert Stewart**  
12:25pm King's College London

**Health Research AI: The Importance of Having Adequate Data in the First Place.** There are huge opportunities in applied healthcare AI, but the models are only as good as the input they receive, depending largely on highly granular data from large samples. This is more challenging in mental health, but if we don't achieve it, health inequalities will only widen further.

12:25pm – **Sarah Markham**  
12:30pm King's College London

**PPI in AI-based Predictive Modelling** AI based predictive modelling has attracted much research interest, but systematic reviews have raised concerns about the quality of these models in certain areas. We will consider how PPI can reduce research waste and improve the quality and applicability of such models.

12:30pm – **Marcos Del Pozo Banos**  
12:35pm Swansea University

**Five key challenges of AI in mental healthcare and research** AI promises to transform mental healthcare, but its integration must align with established epidemiology and clinical research practices. High-dimensionality, sparsity, bias, interpretability and clinical relevance are five key challenges. By addressing these issues head-on, we can start building AI tools that are not only powerful but also safe, effective, and trustworthy.

12:35pm – **Paul Jenkins**  
12:40pm Warwick University

**Prob\_AI: Improving AI-based modelling through interdisciplinary collaborations.** Probabilistic AI involves embedding probabilistic models, probabilistic reasoning, and measures of uncertainty within AI methods. The EPSRC-funded Prob\_AI Hub aims to bring together researchers in Applied Mathematics, Probability, and Statistics to tackle challenges in probabilistic AI. Collaborations with the Mental Health Platform could be critical to build safer, fairer, and more reliable AI models for the mental health domain. These models could finally unite the inputs of clinicians, people with lived experience, and researchers, being able to turn uncertainties and metrics of confidence into core signals for decisions.



12:40pm – **Antonio Pardiñas**  
12:45pm Cardiff University

**AI readiness in the Brain and Genomics Hub and beyond.** The Brain and Genomics Hub is gathering a large sample of people with psychosis, who are undertaking detailed research interviews, cognitive testing, and assessments such as bloods, genomics, and brain imaging. Each data modality that is being generated has its own best practices for curation and analysis, but future-proofing the resource includes ensuring its suitability, as a whole, for novel developments at the frontiers of generative and probabilistic AI. Through a consistent application of the FAIR principles, it is possible to generate multimodal datasets that are ready for newer generations of AI models, including agents with improved capabilities to interact with data.

12:45pm – **All**  
1:00pm

General Discussion and Exploration of potential work and applications

Elder Provost Room

## **Parallel C: *Social and Emotional Health***

Chairs: Jennifer Lau & Richard Byng

### **Exploration of how social, neurobiological and psychological mechanisms co-act to contribute to mental wellbeing and illness**

**Jennifer Lau**, Queen Mary University London  
**Richard Byng**, University of Plymouth

This workshop will engage participants in identifying pressing research questions about underlying mechanisms and pathways linking social, neurobiological and psychological mechanisms within mental health and illness, particularly, how these generate health inequalities.

Participants will include those with expertise from across academic disciplines and lived experience of receiving and delivering support.

## 1:00pm – 1:45pm: Lunch

Lunch will be served buffet-style in the Playfair Library Hall.

Please take this time to view the posters, and vote for your favourite, using the QR code here and around the room.

Jess Campbell and Vaughn Feuer will give a 15-minute talk in the Raeburn Room on the history of Edinburgh and its place in psychiatric history.



## 1:45pm – 2:55pm: Core Session 2

*Co-chairs: Robin Flaig & Sarah Rae*

15 minute talks + Q&A with our Hub Directors, who share the exciting research happening across the UK.

### **Ed Bullmore, ImmunoMIND**

ImmunoMIND is based in Cambridge and led by Professor Ed Bullmore. The team combine knowledge from an international network of scientists with the expertise of people with lived experience to better understand the connection between physical and mental health. Researchers aim towards developing new and precise treatments for severe mental illness specifically targeting the immune or metabolic systems.

### **Daniel Smith, Metabolic Psychiatry**

The Metabolic Psychiatry Hub is based in Edinburgh and led by Professor Daniel Smith. The hub takes several approaches to understand the link between severe mental illness and metabolic conditions. They bring together researchers from different disciplines and people with lived experience, and focus on novel metabolism-based treatments to advance this emerging field.

### **Jennifer Lau, Social Health**

The Social Health Hub is based at Queen Mary University of London and led by Professor Jennifer Lau. Research focuses on non-medical factors influencing severe mental illnesses, including how people are born, grow, work, live, and age. Some of these reflect economic and physical aspects of the environment, others reflect interpersonal relationships and networks.

## 3:00pm – 4:00pm: Parallel Session 2

Please sign up for one of these Parallel sessions at the registration desk. This is offered on a first-come first-served basis.

Each panel discussion is led by partners of the Mental Health Platform and will focus on an important aspect of mental health research:

**PPIE** with McPin Foundation

**Mental Health Data Science** with MQ and DATAMIND

**Working with Industry** with Medicines Discovery Catapult

Elder Provost Room

### **Parallel D: *The Power of Lived Experience in Mental Health Research***

Chair: Vanessa Pinfold, McPin Foundation

This panel will be of interest to researchers seeking to maximise the impact of their work, particularly for early career researchers looking for strategies to embed impact effectively into their research.

Curious about how and why Public and Patient Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) is shaping the future of mental health research? Designed and led by our **Mental Health Platform PPIE Steering Group** in collaboration with the **McPin Foundation**, this dynamic panel will explore an often-overlooked topic: the *positive* aspects of lived experience and how they can transform the way we approach research.

Expect thought-provoking discussion as the panel tackles key questions like:

- What is the true goal of PPIE in mental health research?
- Why do people with lived experience choose to get involved – and what do they hope to achieve?
- How can these unique perspectives make research richer, more relevant, and more impactful?

At MHP we integrate PPIE across all our work. Whether you're new to this approach or looking to strengthen your practice, this session will leave you inspired and equipped with fresh ideas.

Playfair Library Hall

## **Parallel E: *Enriching Mental Health Research: Beyond Healthcare Data***

Co-chairs: MQ/DATAMIND Science Committee

This panel discussion will explore how sources beyond traditional healthcare data deepen our understanding of mental health, to generate richer, more meaningful insights for research

### **Meet the panel:**

**Dr Aideen Maguire** is a Psychiatric Epidemiologist and Reader in Social Epidemiology within the School of Medicine at Queen's University Belfast. She is Director of the Administrative Data Research Centre Northern Ireland, leading a team of research specialists from Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University to deliver high-quality, impactful evidence to support policy and practice.

**Dr Livia Araujo de Carvalho** is a Senior Lecturer in Clinical Pharmacology at the William Harvey Research Institute, Queen Mary University of London, Co-Deputy Director of the Social Health Hub, and Social Inequalities Cross-Hub Lead. Her research focuses on uncovering and validating cellular and immune mechanisms underlying major psychiatric disorders, particularly treatment-resistant depression.

**Dr Robin Flaig** is Co-Director at the UK Longitudinal Linkage Collaboration (UK LLC) and Operations Manager with Generation Scotland. She oversees applications, communications, public involvement, and Scottish data linkages, drawing on over 20 years' experience with longitudinal population studies.

**Michael McTernan** is a lived experience expert for DATAMIND and the Mental Health Platform, advocating for accessible mental health support. A specialist in digital health and AI, he founded UB-OK, collaborating with NHS Grampian to improve mental health services for young people. With over 20 years of senior management experience, Michael provides strategic advice to startups across the UK and Europe, and also works part-time as a psychotherapist, specialising in ADHD.



Read the Panel's full Bios:

## **Parallel F: *Reframing Priorities in Mental Health Drug Discovery: Challenges, Systemic Barriers, and Opportunities for Innovation***

Co-Chairs: Sara Imarisio (MDC) and Vanessa Bennett

This panel discussion will convene experts from across the sector to map the current mental health drug discovery landscape through a priority-setting lens.

The development of new treatments for psychiatric disorders has historically lagged behind other therapeutic areas, despite the immense burden of mental health conditions worldwide.

The discussion will explore:

- Scientific and systemic reasons for stalled progress, including mechanistic blind spots, lack of preclinical-to-clinical rationale and cultural disincentives
- Priority areas for innovation, from novel targets and translational tools to embedding lived experience
- Pathways to accelerate discovery, including learning from abandoned drug programmes, harnessing data to inform future research, and utilising strategies for repurposing existing drugs alongside novel approaches
- Partnership and collaboration models that can facilitate progress, share risk, and enable more integrated approaches to discovery and translation.
- The incentive structures needed to attract sustained investment and risk-taking, including financial, regulatory, cultural, and patient-centric drivers.

By surfacing unmet needs, systemic barriers, and pragmatic opportunities, this session will generate collective insights into how to realign priorities, rebuild confidence, and reinvigorate mental health drug discovery.

4:00pm – 4:15pm: Break



4:15pm – 4:45pm: Keynote Talk

Chair: Andrew McIntosh

**Professor Paul Harrison: *From big data to biology: cognitive impairment after COVID-19 infection***

Professor Paul Harrison is Professor of Psychiatry; Associate Head of Department (Research), Chair of the Oxford Neuroscience Committee, Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist at Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, and Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson College. He is a Theme Leader at the NIHR Oxford Health Biomedical Research Centre and Group Leader at the Oxford Wellcome Centre for Integrative Neuroimaging, specialising in translational psychiatric neuroscience.

His research investigates how genetic risk factors affect brain development, plasticity, and function, with a focus on identifying potential treatment targets such as voltage-gated calcium channels.

His current research spans functional neuroimaging (fMRI and MEG), experimental medicine, randomised clinical trials, and large-scale epidemiological studies. Ongoing projects include understanding the psychiatric and neurological consequences of Covid-19 and the mechanisms which underpin this.

Professor Harrison's work has had global impact, advancing the understanding of psychiatric disorders and informing potential new treatments.



4:45pm – 5:00pm:  
Prizegiving and Closing Remarks

Andrew McIntosh  
Director, Mental Health Platform



Website



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