

# UKRI MENTAL HEALTH NETWORKS

## MARCH NETWORK – CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ASSETS AND MENTAL HEALTH

**Led by:** Dr Daisy Fancourt, University College London (with 6 co-investigators); also Louise Baxter, Research Associate for the MARCH network

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**Online discussion forum:** Basecamp

**Network signup:** [www.surveymonkey.com/r/M-ARC-H](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M-ARC-H)

**Twitter:** @NetworkMARCH

### **Description:**

The '**MARCH**' Network proposes that **Assets for Resilient Communities** lie at the centre of **Mental Health (M-ARC-H)** and is dedicated to advancing research into the impact of these assets in enhancing public mental health and wellbeing, preventing mental illness and supporting those living with mental health conditions. Specifically, MARCH focuses on social, cultural and community assets including the arts, culture, heritage, libraries, parks, community gardens, allotments, volunteer associations, social clubs and community groups, of which there are an estimated 1 million in the UK.

### **Priorities:**

- Bring together international leaders in mental health and community assets research and facilitate the development of meaningful partnerships with policy makers, commissioners and third sector organisations.
- Run a series of planned 'core' activities (roundtables, consultations and focus groups) to identify and address these identified research challenges leading to four co-produced evidence and methodology reports.
- Distribute c.£300,000 of 'plus' funds for new research projects and activities for identified research gaps.
- Host a rich portfolio of impact and engagement activities to translate the research findings into policy and practice, and encourage greater public engagement with community assets.
- Design and deliver a training and support programme to develop cross-disciplinary skills and expertise amongst the next generation of researchers.

## TRIUMPH NETWORK – YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

**Led by:** Dr Jo Inchley , University of Glasgow

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**Twitter:** [@TRIUMPHnetwork](https://twitter.com/TRIUMPHnetwork)

**Sign up to network:** <http://triumph.sphsu.gla.ac.uk/membership/>

### **Description:**

In today's society young people face extraordinary pressures to maintain their mental health. They live in an ever-changing environment, driven by changes in technology, communications and the media. These changes have coincided with an increase in mental health problems amongst young people, especially girls. In this network academics will work with young people, health practitioners, policymakers and voluntary organisations to find new ways to improve mental health and wellbeing, especially among vulnerable and disadvantaged populations.

## LONLINESS AND SOCIAL ISOLATION IN MENTAL HEALTH

**Led by:** Professor Sonia Johnson, UCL

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### **Description:**

The negative effects of loneliness and social isolation on physical and mental health are increasingly recognised. People with mental health problems are at high risk of loneliness and social isolation. However, we do not have a good understanding of how some people with mental health problems come to be lonely, or how they feel about it. Reducing loneliness and social isolation may be a way to improve lives of people with mental health problems, or even of preventing these problems. Our network brings together experts and people with lived experience to research how to achieve this.

## VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH: OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

**Led by:** Professor Louise Howard and Dr Sian Oram, King's College London

**Coordinator:** Anjali Kaul - [anjuli.1.kaul@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:anjuli.1.kaul@kcl.ac.uk)

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**Twitter:** @VAMHN

### **Description:**

The Violence, Abuse and Mental Health Network is focused on understanding, preventing and reducing the impact of violence and abuse on mental health. People with mental health problems are more likely to have been victims of domestic or sexual violence, and/or witnessed or experienced violence or abuse as a child. This network will bring together experts on violence, abuse and mental health to investigate the impact of domestic and sexual violence and abuse on mental health and wellbeing and evaluate potential interventions. The three main themes of the network are; Measurement, Understanding and Intervention.

### **Our priorities:**

- The creation of an online data resource for violence and abuse
- Small grant competitions
- ECR engagement
- Hosting a number of network activities to engage members such as sandpits, workshops and conferences
- Creation of an online forum to connect ECR's, researchers, policymakers, practitioners etc.

## SMARTEN: STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH NETWORK

**Led by:** Dr Nicola Byrom, King's College London

**Coordinator:** Laura Beswick

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### **Description:**

There is increasing concern for the mental health of university students. The number of students seeking help for mental health problems has increased dramatically, as have the number of students with mental health problems dropping out of university. Some reports suggest that the mental wellbeing of university students

may be among the lowest in the population. However a lack of strong data in this sector presents a barrier to implementing an evidence based strategic response to concerns. The aim of this network is to address this gap, and change the higher education experience to support strong mental wellbeing for all students.

## THE NURTURE NETWORK: PROMOTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH IN A DIGITAL WORLD

**Led by:** Professor Gordon Harold, University of Sussex

**Coordinator:** Dr. Sui-Mee Chan

**Website:** <https://www.enurture.org.uk/>

**Twitter:** @enurturenetwork

**Instagram:** @enurture\_network

### **Description:**

How do we equip parents, teachers, practitioners, policy makers and young people with the information, support and resources they need to promote positive mental health in our modern digital age? This multidisciplinary e-Nurture network will explore how the digital environment has changed the ways in which children experience and interact with their family, school and peers, and what effect this has on their mental health.

## EMERGING MINDS: ACTION FOR CHILD MENTAL HEALTH

**Led by:** Professor Cathy Creswell, University of Oxford

**Coordinator:** Emily Lloyd [emily.lloyd@psych.ox.ac.uk](mailto:emily.lloyd@psych.ox.ac.uk)

**Twitter:** @EmergingMindsUK

**Website:** [www.emergingminds.org.uk](http://www.emergingminds.org.uk)

### **Description:**

Approximately one in ten children and young people have a diagnosable mental health problem. Research has shown that there are clear indicators that predict the emergence of these conditions in children, but despite this only a small minority of children receive effective support.

This Emerging Minds network is focused on reducing the prevalence of mental ill health in children and young people. We will do that by bringing researchers, young people, their families, policy makers and practitioners together across disciplines and sectors to collaborate on research into mental health promotion, prevention and early treatment.

Overall research questions are:

- How can positive mental health in children best be promoted at scale and in ways that stick?
- How can prevention and early treatment & help for child and adolescent mental ill health be implemented to maximise engagement, reach and sustainability?

## CLOSING THE GAP NETWORK: IMPROVING HEALTH AND REDUCING HEALTH INEQUALITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS

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**Website:** <https://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/closing-the-gap/>

**Network signup:** Join the network button on the front page of the website  
<https://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/closing-the-gap/>

**Twitter:** @CTGNetwork

### **Description:**

Life expectancy is reduced by 20 to 25 years among people with severe mental ill health. This profound health inequality is mostly due to physical health problems such as heart disease, diabetes or cancers associated with lifestyle factors. Rates of smoking and obesity are also much higher in this population, housing is often poor, and people do not benefit from the opportunities offered by exercise and interaction with the natural environment. This network will facilitate interdisciplinary research to understand and close this mortality gap.