

Mental Health Research: Working in Networks

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AWP Research and Development (R&D)

- Specialist mental health services to people across the Avon and Wiltshire areas, and more specialised services to people further afield.
- 4,200 staff
- 143 projects live in 2007/8
- University Links
- Board-approved R&D Strategy and R&D within Trust Strategic Objectives

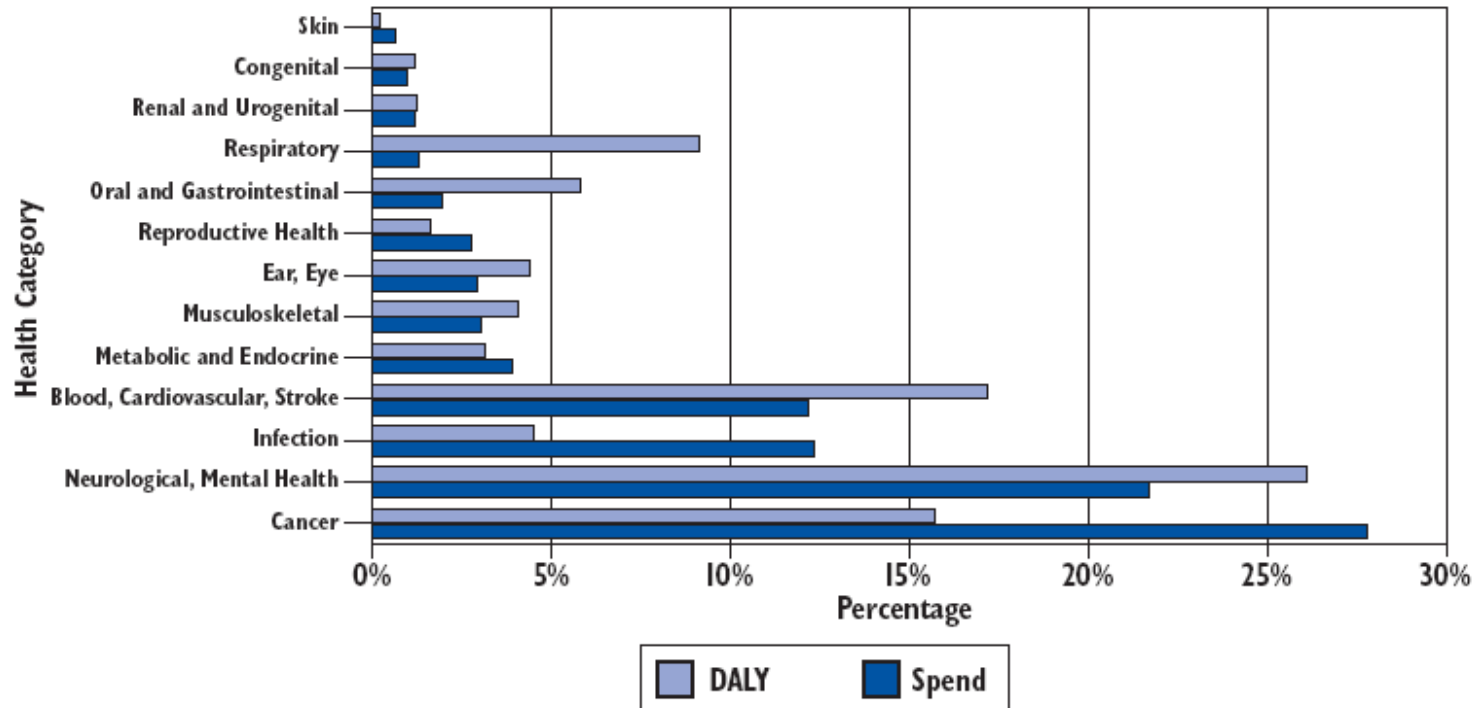
AWP R&D

- Host two research networks across South West
 - Mental Health Research Network
 - Dementias and Neurodegenerative Diseases Research Network

Why research networks in mental health R&D?

- Government health priority
- High (and rising) incidence/prevalence of mental health disorders
 - 1 in 4 British adults experience at least one diagnosable mental health problem in any one year (ONS 2001)
 - Mental health problems account for up to 1/3 GP consultations in Europe (WHO 2003)
 - Approx. 450m people worldwide (WHO 2001)
 - Alzheimer's Society estimate that over 700,000 in UK suffer from Alzheimer's, 18,500 <65 age. In addition, it is also estimated that around 1m people act as carers
- Research funding cf burden of disease

Chart 2.4: Proportion of combined spend on health specific categories compared with DALY rates



Source: UKCRC Health Research Analysts.
Estimated DALYs for United Kingdom 2002 (WHO Global Burden of Disease Project).
Note: Data excludes R&D support for NHS providers funded by the UK Health Departments, core support costs and research taking place outside the UK.

**A review of
UK health research funding, Sir David Cooksey 2006**

Why research networks in mental health R&D?

Historic high profile treatments and RCTs

- Insulin coma therapy
 - Treatment of choice for schizophrenia after its introduction in 1933
 - After an RCT ([Ackner & Oldham, 1962](#)) showed that it conferred no benefit....soon abandoned.
- ECT
 - MRC study of the treatment of depressive illness ([Medical Research Council, 1965](#)). RCT compared efficacy of ECT, imipramine, phenelzine and placebo. Established the efficacy of imipramine.

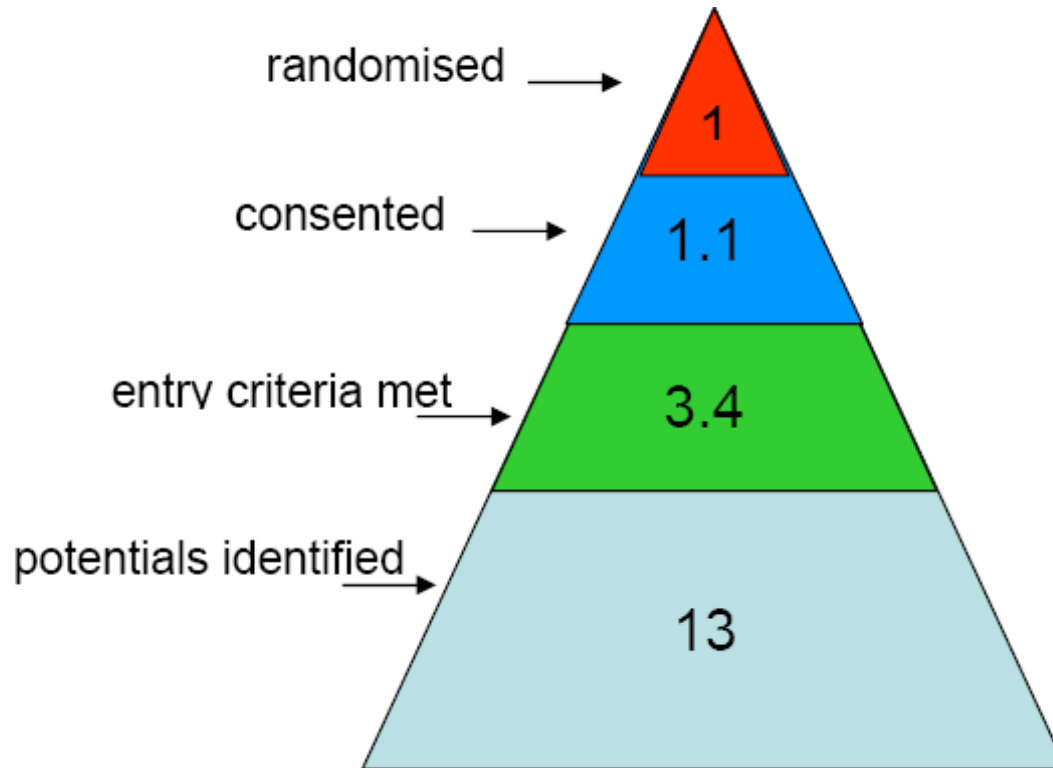
Why research networks in mental health R&D?

- Psychosurgery: lobotomy
 - The Portuguese neurologist Egas Moniz, won the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1949
 - Estimated 50,000 procedures in UK
- Psychological debriefing
 - 16 RCTs shown that psychological debriefing after a trauma does not work, and in fact probably increases the risk of PTSD (BPS, 2006)
- In psychiatry, the first controlled clinical trial published by Davies & Shepherd (Lancet 1955).
 - double blind study reserpine v placebo in anxiety/depression

Why research networks in mental health R&D?

- Relatively low evidence base for treatments
- Perceived and real difficulties of undertaking research and RCTs in mental health
 - Ethics and principles of randomisation
 - Informed consent
 - Staff and service users attitudes to research and especially RCTs
 - Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) - seroxat (children)
 - Recruitment

Why research networks in mental health R&D?



Work involved to recruit participants to a pilot therapy trial (taken from MHRN review, 2007)

Why research networks in mental health R&D?

- Large number of small, non-generalisable, low-powered studies
- Methodological issues of RCTs in mental health
 - outcome measures, follow-up

Achievements of networks in mental health

- MHRN
 - Increased centres participating
 - 62% of our portfolio is generated from outside the mental health research concentrated areas of the South London-Manchester axis
 - 10 studies (20% of the portfolio) have sites outside England
 - Average number of MHRN hubs per study = 3 hubs.
- The median sample size of studies: now 234; 5 times previous average for a mental health study
- Recruitment to target
 - **91% studies (n=11) recruited to funder's target, 3 exceeded recruitment**

Examples of AWP R&D supported by MHRN in AWP

- 18 adopted projects over 3 years
- Support provided:
 - Art therapy and activity groups for people with schizophrenia (NIHR)
 - Risperdal ConstaTM vs oral atypical antipsychotics (Janssen)
 - Inpatient staff morale (SDO) - promoting 20 team to complete questionnaires
 - Involve Outcomes of involuntary hospital admission in England (DH) – 154 service users
 - R&D Set-up

Examples of AWP R&D supported by DeNDRoN in AWP

- 6 adopted projects in AWP over 2 years
- Support provided:
 - Commercially-funded
 - Undertook assessments
 - Paid for research nurse time to identify potential participant
 - Non-commercial
 - Donepezil and memantine in moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease – directly assisting clinical teams to identify potential participants

NHS
*National Institute for
Health Research*

60 years of research in
the NHS benefiting patients

