

# PharMed

Pharmacy Research Medication

## Who are we?

Introducing the PharMed research team



### **CHIEF INVESTIGATOR - Dr Ian Maidment**

*Ian is an Academic Clinical Pharmacist leading both MEDIATE & RESOLVE. Prior to moving to academia, he spent nearly 25 years in practice mainly within mental health services*

### **MEDIATE RESEARCH ASSOCIATE - Jo Howe**

*Jo is a healthcare researcher with a background in Neuropsychology. She defended her PhD in April 2022!*



### **RESOLVE RESEARCH ASSOCIATE - Dr Gurkiran Birdi**

*Gurkiran is a post-doctoral researcher with a background in Health Psychology. She has also worked as a university lecturer for several years*

### **MEDIATE & RESOLVE RESEARCH ASSISTANT - Hafsah Habib**

*Hafsah is a pharmacy graduate who is new to realist research. Her current focuses are grey literature searching as well as the use of social media for dissemination*



### **RESOLVE RESEARCH ASSOCIATE (TEMPORARY) - Dr Sally Lawson**

*Sally has a practitioner and management background in health and social care, and was the research associate for MEMORABLE*

## *The Background story:*

MENTAL HEALTH  
AND MEDICATION

*Mental illness affects 1 in 4 people and represents 28% of the UK disease burden. Severe mental illness (SMI) such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder can have a devastating impact on an individual's life. Many people who have SMI are on medication to manage their mental health condition. These medications can have debilitating side effects such as significant weight gain and the development of conditions such as diabetes. As such, those with SMI may be on complex medication regimens in order to address both their mental health needs as well as additional physical health needs. These side effects can really and truly affect an individual's quality of life – they may not look and feel how they'd like to and may start to develop other symptoms that they didn't have before they started taking these medications.*

2 problems that we have identified from this:

1. These factors may lead a person with SMI to stop taking their medications as prescribed by their doctor – termed ‘non-adherence’. This can in turn lead to a relapse of their mental illness

2. The side effect of gaining weight can in itself have devastating consequences – up to 80% of people who have SMI such as schizophrenia are overweight or even obese. The weight gain associated with antipsychotics can be very significant with weight gains of up to 33.4kg being reported

***In this issue we would like to introduce to you our two linked projects:***

***MEDIATE: MEDication optimisATIon in severE mental illness***

***&***

***RESOLVE: REalist Synthesis Of non-pharmacologicaL interVEntions for antipsychotic-induced weight gain (RESOLVE) in people living with Severe Mental Illness (SMI)***

### **How can MEDIATE help?**

Best practice healthcare guidelines state that individuals should be involved in the decision making process for optimising their medication in order to achieve better patient outcomes.

### **So what is ‘Medication Optimisation’?**

Medication optimisation is “a person-centred approach to safe and effective medicines use, to ensure the best possible outcomes”.

MEDIATE is a 1 year long project which explores how a collaborative approach, such as shared decision making, between healthcare professionals (HCPs) and those with SMI can hold promise for reducing non-adherence and improving quality of life for those living with SMI.

### **How can RESOLVE help?**

Though many non-pharmacological (not based around the use of medication) interventions have already been tried to limit and manage weight gain associated with antipsychotics, there is no clear framework on what works, for who and in which circumstances.

RESOLVE is a 2 year long project which aims to understand the how's and the why's; How and why different non-pharmacological interventions work or don't work in certain circumstances or for certain groups.

## ***A bit on our methods!***

Both projects will involve us studying academic papers as well as other literature such as blogs and reports from charities (grey literature) to explore what is already known. We will also speak to “key stakeholders” in both projects at regular intervals to discuss our findings from the literature and to gain an insight from their expertise. RESOLVE will consist of an additional step where we will conduct interviews to gather more data which may provide support to/refute or further refine our findings!

Who are these “key stakeholders”?

These are experts-by-experience and are split into 2 groups - a Lived Experience Group (LEG) and a Practitioner group.

Your chance to get involved! You can be a stakeholder and can provide invaluable input into this research! Get in touch if you are (contact details below):

- A HCP working with those who have SMI and can provide an insight into MEDIATE / RESOLVE
- Live with SMI or are the family/carer of someone living with SMI
- Take or have taken antipsychotics and have experienced weight gain (or feeling hungry) due to taking these medications or are the family/carer of someone who has experienced these problems

**Keep your eyes peeled for the next issue for updates on MEDIATE on RESOLVE. For regular updates follow us on twitter at @PharMed\_**

Contact us: i.maidment@aston.ac.uk | j.howe1@aston.ac.uk | g.birdi3@aston.ac.uk | h.habib2@aston.ac.uk | s.lawson3@aston.ac.uk