

Project 4: Digital Wearables to help young people who self-harm: public engagement project

REASON FOR FUNDING:

The aim of the research project is to increase knowledge and understanding of proximal factors that maintain self-harm in young people (YP) in hospital settings. This will be achieved through co-productive design and implementation of new software/smart watch devices that enable young people to self-report their thoughts and feelings through the cycle of self-harm (before, during and after the urge to harm oneself), in the moment.

USE OF FUNDING:

The impact project progressed the intended impacts by creating a bridge from prototype development to larger scale research grant application, by:

- Enabling public engagement (PPIE) evidence
- Building non-academic partnership development
- Developing new means of covid-proof public engagement, essential for grant application and longer-term impact demonstration.

OUTCOMES AND FUTURE IMPACT:

1) Development of AV public engagement materials

Five professionally produced and animated videos have been developed. The first is for use on social media platforms to disseminate the idea/concept to young people and to promote/invite engagement in the project through contributing to the co-productive testing and design process. The remaining four videos have been designed to help young people participating in consultation activities to learn how to use the devices and software system independently, as a strategy for managing the fact that face-to-face consultation and testing has not been possible.

2) Blended approach to public engagement/consultation

Using the AV materials, limited face-to-face engagement (in accordance with Covid restrictions/procedures, and online platforms for meeting), we were able to revise a method for identifying and supporting young people to take part in the consultation and testing process.

3) PPIE data needed for larger competitive grant application

Consultation and testing work has been undertaken with 29 young people (plus 1 parent). The benefit for the University has been generation of PPIE data needed to support research grant applications, along with confirmation of the feasibility/acceptability of the product and greater awareness in the community of the work of UoS. The impact for the guides and scouts has been a greater understanding of the research process and awareness of the University.

4) Refinement of the prototype design

Data from the consultation project has been collated and a table of changes identified to refine and improve the prototype system. This means that the system and device will be more fit for purpose when it is piloted/trialled.

5) Identification of a non-academic partnership for grant application

A practice-research partnership has been established with Care in Mind, a CQC/Ofsted approved NHS and social care provider of residential settings, for young people with complex mental health needs.