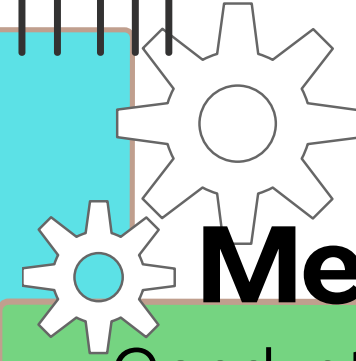
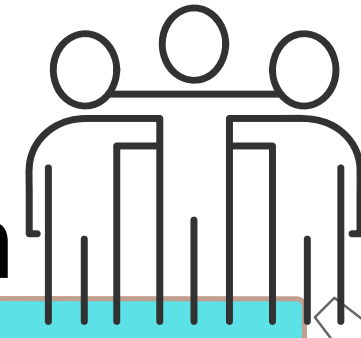


Background

Without informal carers within all aspects of healthcare, the health sector would simply collapse. So why do we pay little attention to this? In the UK, around 1.5 million people provide unpaid care for somebody with a mental health problem. Carers are the key support for patients, proving to be excellent to help improve the quality of care in mental health. Despite this, carer involvement in research is minimal and many are hard to engage with.

Aim

Identify the most successful approaches to involvement and recruitment of informal carers in mental health research



Methodology

- Conduct an integrative review of published research
- Conduct a grey literature search
- Analyse and evaluate results from data extraction
- Connect with the NHS research team and arrange meetings to engage with the carers

Results

Most successful methods

Recruitment

Face-to-face

- At clinics
- Patient's consent to contact caregiver
- Various media (posters, social media)

Which countries?

USA, Japan, Singapore, Mexico, Turkey, Italy, UK

Data collection method

Interviews and Questionnaires

Participants

- Predominantly women and spouses or parents
- BAME backgrounds discussed in only some studies

Lack of

involvement

- Patients not consenting to contact caregiver
- Not fit for inclusion criteria
- Geographical distance
- Language barrier (jargon)
- Time availability

Incentives

Most voluntary, small number had a money incentive

Conclusion



Unpaid carers do not adequately take part in mental health research. Those that do primarily come from the USA and various non-European countries, closely followed by the United Kingdom.

What needs to be done to improve involvement and recruitment?

-Engagement

Healthcare researchers need to increase their engagement with the network and carry this out early on within the period to keep the participants interest.

- Policies

Improvement of policies and guidelines for health care researchers to follow to maximise

recruitment success. Participants must work in collaboration with the services and practices to be fully engaged.

-Language

Using the right language and avoiding unnecessary jargon.

Explain to the participant in a person-centred way what the research entails (e.g., different interpretations of 'carer')

- Increase in effort for the research operations