**Physical health of young people in inpatient mental health services: a 6-month study**

**Who is conducting the research?**

This research is being conducted by Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation trust led by Dr Rebekah Carney, who is based at the Youth Mental Health Research Unit. It is being conducted in conjunction with the University of Manchester and funded by ARC GM.

**What is the study about?**

There is increasing evidence that adolescents who are admitted to inpatient mental health units experience poorer physical health than their peers and live an unhealthy lifestyle. They also have additional restrictions placed on them including lack of access to outdoor space, reduced opportunities to exercise and limited access to a range of healthy foods.

There is less known, however, about how a young person’s physical health could change following admission to an inpatient unit and the differences between those who remain as inpatients and those who are discharged to the community. To learn more about this, this research will examine the impact the inpatient care environment has on the lifestyle behaviours of adolescent inpatients over a 6-month period and explore their experiences and beliefs about their physical health.

**Why is this important?**

What we learn from this study could provide important new information that could be used to improve the physical health care of young people admitted to inpatient units. It could also help young people make healthier lifestyle choices and prevent them from going on to develop physical health problems.

**Who can take part in the study?**

Anyone who is aged 14-18 and has been staying on an adolescent inpatient ward for less than 6 weeks.

**Who is not able to take part?**

* Anyone who is unable to give informed consent
* Those with severe anorexia which significantly compromises their physical health and who is receiving active treatment

**How can young people join the study?**

Participant information booklets will be available on the unit for anyone who is interested in taking part in the study. Young people can refer themselves to the study or this can be done by a member of staff – you will find our contact details below.

**What does taking part in the study involve?**

* A researcher will arrange to meet the young person in a private room on the unit or via remote methods (e.g. Videocall or over the phone). The researcher will answer any questions the young person has about the study and if they agree to take part, they will be asked to sign a consent form.
* The young person will fill out questionnaires about their physical health, mental wellbeing and lifestyle behaviours (e.g. diet, exercise). The researcher will also collect the results of the routine physical health assessment that the young person had when they were first admitted to the unit and may arrange to collect any that have been missed e.g. blood tests, and may arrange for these to be carried out in the service.
* The young person will be asked to complete the assessment again on two other occasions, in 3 months and 6 months. This will help us compare any differences in the physical health of young people who remain as inpatients with those who have been discharged. The researcher will also arrange for the young person to give a blood sample, either on the unit or in the community/GP surgery if they have been discharged.

**Where will the study take place?**

All the assessments will take place in a private room or a health assessment room either on the inpatient ward or, if participants have been discharged, in a private room at a community centre or local NHS Primary Care service.

**How long will the study take?**

The study will take 6 months and each assessment will last no longer than 90 minutes.

**Will participants receive anything for taking part?**

As a thank you for their time and effort, we will give participants a £10 voucher for a high street store after each assessment they complete. We will also be able to cover travel expenses to appointments.

**Interview study**

Participants who have been recruited to the main study will also be invited to take part in an interview with one of the researchers. This will help us explore in more detail the experiences and beliefs young people have about their physical health.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this information. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need more information booklets or would like to let us know about someone who is interested in taking part in the study. Our contact details are below.**

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