

Subject: MHRUK Newsletter - August 2022

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Newsletter - August 2022.

Dear Supporter

Summer greetings to you all. I hope you are coping with the heatwave. As predicted, 2022 is proving to be another challenging year for many, with the lingering effects of the pandemic and the current financial situation. This is impacting on mental health and the need for Mental Health Research UK to continue its work is greater than ever. We have been working hard to try and do our bit by funding important and impactful research and building the next generation of young mental health researchers.

As part of the development of our new strategy we thought that we should clearly articulate our Mission, Focus and Vision and make some clear statements about our Values. I think it is vital that we can be clear about who we are and what we stand for and also about the sort of organisation we are and aspire to be. These statements are all now on our website and you can see them [here](#). They were based on the feedback we received as part of our strategy review from those who know us best: our supporters, volunteers, trustees and scientific committee. One of our new trustees, Wunmi Ademosu, worked particularly hard to help us develop and refine these and I am very grateful to her for this. I hope you find these statements helpful and that they give a clear picture of what Mental Health Research UK aspires to achieve and the sort of organisation we want to be. This is part of our efforts to build the scope of Mental Health Research UK so that we can fund more research, and we are currently developing plans to improve our communications and fundraising which I will update you on in future newsletters.

We held our annual scholars' day on the 21st April. This was attended by all our scholars, who were introduced by one of their supervisors. We also had some of our supporters with us as well as trustees, members of the scientific committee and volunteers. Once again, we were inspired by the quality, energy and commitment of the scholars and by the progress they are making in their research. If you follow the [link](#) you can watch videos of the presentations and discussions that followed. You can also read more about our scholars and follow their progress through the blogs section of our [website](#).

We are also working through the process to put in place the next round of scholarships that will commence in 2023. In my last newsletter I announced that the topics for these will be:

- Early intervention in psychosis (John Grace QC Scholarship 2023)
- Health inequalities and mental illness. (Mental Health Research UK PhD Scholarship 2023).

As I explained then, these are both timely and important areas in which new knowledge and insights are badly needed, and which offer good prospects for making a real difference to the lives of those with mental health conditions. I am pleased to say that we have had many strong applications from universities across the UK. Our scientific committee will be choosing the successful applicants, informed by expert review, and the awards will be announced in the Autumn.

If any of you would like to donate to support these important projects please click [here](#).

As well as funding PhD scholarships, we also fund a small number of MD(Res) students. These are awards for early career psychiatrists to undertake research. I am pleased to say that the first student in this programme, Nuala Kane has recently graduated. Nuala's work, at King's College London, aimed to design and develop educational material to help practitioners make difficult decisions about assessing capacity for treatment and other decisions. This can be a difficult area where the rights of individuals with mental health conditions and the responsibilities of practitioners both need to be considered. Nuala's research has contributed to the development of a guide <https://capacityguide.org.uk/about/> that sets out research-based recommendations, which are designed, in particular, to support greater transparency and greater accountability in the assessment of and recording of

capacity. I think this shows how the research we fund can impact positively in practice.

In February. I announced that Relay Riders UK have nominated us as charity of the year. I am pleased to say that they have achieved over 60% of their target of £10 000 so far. If any of you would like to donate on their page, click on the [link](#).

Given the lingering impact of COVID, many are still concerned about taking part in mass events. However, some of you have been doing your own [fundraising challenges](#). We are very grateful for these efforts and hope that they may inspire others to create their own bespoke challenges. Of course, you don't need to undertake a challenge to donate. All you have to do is follow this [link!](#) I can't stress strongly enough how much we rely on our supporters and donations of any size are welcome. I realise that these are difficult and uncertain times for everyone, but the impact on mental health will be felt disproportionately in some people and we need to keep up our efforts to support much needed research.

We will once again be selling Christmas cards and will email you very shortly with the design and order form.

Many thanks for your continuing support for MHRUK.

With best wishes

Mike Owen
Chair of Trustees.



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