

Subject: Mental Health Research UK, December 2021 Newsletter

From: Mental Health Research UK <trustees@mhruk.org>

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To: <administrator@mentalhealthresearchuk.org.uk>



December 2021 Newsletter

Dear Supporter

The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have continued to impact across society and, as I am sure you are aware, the mental health of many has been adversely affected. The impact has been great on those with pre-existing mental health problems, but it has also impacted more widely through many factors such as isolation, worries about loved ones, economic challenges, balancing working at home with home schooling and so on. It has also had a huge impact on our Scholars whose research has been affected by things like laboratory closures and difficulties in conducting interviews and assessments. Many have had to adjust their research projects and deal with the stresses and strains of uncertainty over the past 18 months and even now the future course of the pandemic is uncertain. Several of them have written about these challenges in their blogs that you can read on the [website](#). We have done as much as we can to help them through this difficult period and have provided extra funding support to those who have needed it.

This time last year Clair was able to report that the expected impact of the pandemic on fundraising had not materialised. This year, I'm afraid, the picture is not quite as rosy. Despite the heroic efforts of [many of you](#) our income over the first half of this financial year is down at around £60,000. This is still an amazing amount given the challenges of the pandemic and we are hugely grateful to all of you who have contributed. We are hopeful that things will begin to pick up as we move into 2022 but realise that these are difficult times for many people financially.

Anticipating that fundraising might be impacted by the pandemic, we decided that we would award only [two scholarships this year](#), after the last bumper year when we funded four. However, the good news is that we had excellent applications and have awarded one on new approaches to treating schizophrenia and the other on the impact of COVID-19 on different racial groups.

The pandemic also posed challenges for our Scholars' Day but the virtual meeting we held in April was a great success. We had excellent attendance and participation from scholars, supervisors and supporters and went away inspired by the quality of the scholars and their [research](#). You can also read more about our scholars and follow their progress through the blogs section of our [website](#).

This year we have appointed eight mid- and early- career scientists to our new [Scientific Committee](#). We were delighted to get many strong applications and believe we have been able to assemble a very strong group to help us prioritise the best scholarships for funding. We also plan to call on the Scientific Committee to advise us on academic issues and help us maximise our impact on mental health research over the coming years.

Again with an eye to the future, we have appointed three new trustees specifically to oversee marketing and fundraising (Andrew Paterson), PR and communications (Peter Knott), and strategy (Wunmi Ademosu). Andrew is Head of Principal Gifts at Cambridge University and has an impressive record of fundraising for academic projects, Peter is an Associate Director at Lansons and brings extensive expertise in reputation management and Wunmi is a Senior Global Marketing & Business Manager with Unilever with a strong background in strategy and marketing. All are highly committed to helping us realise our goal of funding mental health research. Details of these exciting appointments will be released on the website shortly, but we are planning to work with the new trustees to increase our profile and fundraising ability and to build further on the progress we have already made, with your help, to support mental health research. Recent events have made clear to many the importance of mental health and the need for

research has never been clearer. While there are many calls on people's generosity, we want to ensure that mental health research gets its fair share.

Next year we will be awarding scholarships as usual. We will award at least two but hope to award more if funds allow. Please consider supporting us or encouraging others to do so. There are a series of [Ultra Challenges](#) starting in January and a host of other ways you can raise money for us. Alternatively, you can just make a [one-off donation](#) or join our campaign for [1000 supporters](#).

Donate

I am attaching our e-Christmas Card to this email. Please feel free to use it to send to family and friends – if you would like to donate in lieu of the postage saved that would help Mental Health Research UK. Finally, I would like to wish you all the very best for the Holiday Season and the New Year. These have been trying times for many of us and underlined how much we depend on each other.

Very best wishes

Mike

Mike Owen
Chair of Trustees.

