



Newsletter with updates from the ODDESSI Research Programme

News in Brief

- We have now recruited our target of 460 new participants into the trial. We will finish recruitment at the end of this month. See overleaf for a timeline of the next phase of the project.

-The final follow-up assessments with participants are now underway, with the first one completed in Devon. We would like to thank our first participants for providing valuable information and sharing their time over the course of the past two years.

-The researchers from across sites met face-to-face (most for the first time) for a team-building afternoon in Hyde Park.

ODDESSI Shout-Outs

- **#DitchIt4David** has so far managed to raise £530 for the '**The Pepsi Max Challenge**' in memory of David Cousins. All money will be donated to Rethink Mental Illness- Canterbury & Coastal, a charity close to David's heart. Donations are still welcome on [justgiving.com](https://www.justgiving.com), or see **#DitchIt4David** on twitter.

-We wish the best of luck to Dr Claire Melia, who has now finished working on the Process Evaluation after securing a role in the civil service.

-Welcome to new Assistant Research Practitioner, Tamsin Hayes, who has joined the team in Devon.

-Congratulations to Research Assistant, Emma McKenzie, who will be starting her PhD alongside ODDESSI in the Autumn.



From 21st-23rd June the first online global research conference of the Open Dialogue community took place. The conference, which was designed to promote a culture of learning and growth, was the first with all presentations peer reviewed within the Open Dialogue community.

Presentations and workshops took place over the course of the three days from researchers, clinicians, and those with lived experience from around the world. This included speakers from ODDESSI, presenting on various topics associated with the trial, such as carer involvement, the challenges of carrying out fidelity interviews, and the practicalities of delivering the trial in the real world. We were also able to hear about some exciting research in the pipeline related to both ODDESSI and Open Dialogue.

The keynote speech on the second day was by ODDESSI Chief Investigator Professor Stephen Pilling and co-applicant and NELFT Principal Investigator Dr Russell Razzaque. They, along with Katherine Clarke (Trial Manager) presented the work that has gone into the ODDESSI research programme so far, and the work still to be done as we enter the 2-year follow-up period of the trial.

Whilst we all spent the week wishing we could have attended in person (the weather in Rome was much sunnier than here in the UK!), it was fantastic to see new and familiar faces, and to learn and share ideas about Open Dialogue on such a large scale. A selection of the presentations from the conference can also be viewed on the conference organisers' YouTube channel 'HOPEnDialogue project'.

A big thank you to the conference organisers, Rafaella Pocobello and Francesca Camilli and their colleagues.

Georgie Parker, UCL Research Assistant



The researchers (above) met face-to-face all together for the first time this year.

The ODESSI trial: The follow-up period

Whilst recruitment is due to end shortly, the ODESSI trial is far from over. Here is an overview of what will be happening over the next two years:

August 2021: Recruitment in all six trial sites is due to wrap up.

August 2022: The last 12-month follow-up assessments with participants are due to take place.

May 2022: The final 24-month fidelity interviews with sites in the trial are due to take place.

November 2022: The final 30-month fidelity interviews with sites in the team are due to take place.

August 2023: The last 24-month follow-up assessments with participants are due to take place. This means that our primary outcome of relapse and recovery can be assessed for the final participants in the trial.

Following the final 24-month assessments, the research team will work to analyze the data and produce materials and reports detailing the results of the trial.

Georgie Parker, UCL Research Assistant

The role of Carers in ODESSI

It is well established that carers provide a unique, powerful, and varied insight into service design and delivery, so it comes as no surprise that we are recruiting them for ODESSI.

As a researcher in the Devon site, I have recruited and interviewed several 'carers', although we often use the broader term 'supportive person' to include caregivers, family members, friends, partners, or whoever the participant and carer identifies as in a 'supportive role' in terms of their mental health.

For our presentation at the Open Dialogue conference, I spoke to several of our carers, asking them about their experiences in being involved in ODESSI. Below are some snippets of what they told me:

"The research questions are cathartic"

"It's a reflective space... It's a reflective time for myself... we are fortunate to have this space, it is our space"

"I always enjoy our chats; it keeps me going... It's part of our wellbeing by giving our experiences to others- the trial was perfect for this"

"I wanted to do anything I could to support them... if this helps you to assess open dialogue, ... long term it'll help lots of other people"

With involvement in the trial lasting for two years, we can build a strong rapport with our carers. We are able to listen to their experiences, and as we aren't involved in their clinical pathway and have the luxury of time. We can provide a compartmentalized space where carers can expand upon their experiences and thoughts. Whilst we have to gather data from their answers to the research questions, I often find we spend a lot longer talking about their experiences and other aspects of their role.

I was incredibly touched that our carers spoke so highly of their participation in the trial; I was also struck by just how insightful they were into the research process. It is always a pleasure to speak with them, so I was heartened to see that this was reciprocated. Carers are such an important part of ODESSI, and through their participation we can provide more bespoke research- I cannot overstate how valuable their input is.

I am looking forward to many more carer interviews over the next couple of years, and indeed to continue working on ODESSI!

Daniel Scott, DPT Research Assistant

Would you like more updates on the ODESSI trial, or to get in touch? Search for ODESSI at www.ucl.ac.uk, email us at odessi@ucl.ac.uk or find us on Twitter at @ODESSI_UCL.