

# Role Description: Research Service User Consultant - OPTiMiSE Study

## About this role

This is a role for two people who have used services to be part of a research team which is recruiting people experiencing their first episode of psychosis.

## Support in this role

There will be support for people who take on this role. A member of staff at the meeting will take on the role of providing an induction for you and working with you/supporting you to make sure you are able to be fully involved, that you have a positive experience of the role and that the role helps you develop and learn. We are recruiting two service user consultants, so you will have peer support from a fellow service user consultant.

## What is the OPTiMiSE study?

Optimise is a large international research project that aims to improve treatment for people with symptoms of psychosis. OPTiMiSE is funded by the European Commission and is taking place in several countries across Europe, Australia and Israel. Optimise brings together 18 world-leading centres for Psychiatry. In total, 350 participants will take part in the study.

The goals of the optimise study include:

- **Improve treatment guidelines by finding the best way to use existing medications**
  - All participants will start on Amisulpride (medication), which is one of the most effective medications available.
  - If people's symptoms do not significantly improve after a few weeks of taking Amisulpride, OPTiMiSE tests whether it is best for patients to switch to a different medication (Olanzapine), or give the first medication some more time to work.
  - If symptoms still do not get better, participants will be offered a third medication (clozapine) to try instead.
- **Making medication choices to suit individual patients.**
  - Blood tests and brain scans will be used to investigate whether it is possible to predict which medication will work best for an individual.
  - This research will help medication choices to be tailored to individual needs in the future.
- **Finding new treatments**
  - The brain scan and blood tests will be used to help find new ways to develop new medicines.

- **To test an educational program designed to help people stay healthy.**

-This will include sessions to talk about medication and well-being and optional text messaging reminders.  
There's also opportunity for family involvement if desired.

### **What's the aim of involvement in the study/research?**

Service user consultants in this research will:

- a) Advise on the recruitment process and put forward suggestions to aid recruiting participants.
- b) Provide feedback on presentations, posters, leaflets etc from a service-user perspective.
- c) Give a service user perspective on other issues that may arise in the study over time.

### **What responsibilities will you have?**

- ◆ To attend the research summary meetings, which will be every three months
- ◆ To help the team consider how the study is implemented to considers service users' perspectives and local priorities
- ◆ To occasionally comment via email on questions or decisions outside of the meetings
- ◆ To provide feedback to the Service Users Advisory Group (SUAG) on the work of the research, and occasionally attend the SUAG meeting.

### **What skills and experience do you need for this role?**

- ◆ Experience of using mental health services
- ◆ It would be helpful if you have used Psychosis Services in the last 3 years
- ◆ A real interest in the subject area
- ◆ Experience of meetings (it would be helpful if you have been part of strategic meetings but it is not essential if you have the potential to develop in this area)
- ◆ Ability to think beyond your own experience and be an ambassador for fellow service users
- ◆ Some interest and experience in the area of research would be helpful but is not essential

### **How many hours would you do?**

Up to 2 hours per month for a period of six months to start with.

### **How much would you be paid?**

For meetings you will be paid at £10 per hour and your travel expenses will be reimbursed.

### **How long does the role last?**

The role will be reviewed in partnership between Paola Dazzan, one of the OPTiMiSE study Leads, and the Service User Advisory Group after 6 months. It is likely that the role will continue beyond this review period into an ongoing role.

### **How do you apply for this role?**

Call or email Anne Kirby, Patient and Public Involvement Lead for the Psychosis CAG:

[anne.kirby@slam.nhs.uk](mailto:anne.kirby@slam.nhs.uk) / 07989652482

Anne will talk to you about your experience and interest. Then Paola Dazzan, Anne and an experienced Service User Consultant/s will make a decision about whom to appoint. It is important that the appointed people can meet the requirements of the role and it is hoped that two people will be appointed.

### **What is the deadline for applications?**

25<sup>th</sup> may 2012