



## **Service users needed to join the Mental Health and Justice study Service User Advisory Group (SUAG).**

### **Introduction**

We are looking for eight people with mental health problems to join the Service User Advisory Group (SUAG) for a new international study entitled 'Mental Health and Justice'. The study is about understanding what legal and other support people with mental health problems need to lead full and independent lives. The following [video](#) gives a useful introduction to the study.

Applicants will ideally have some experience of being detained under the [Mental Health Act](#), being placed under a [Community Treatment Order](#), or have been judged as lacking capacity under the [Mental Capacity Act](#). Applications are also welcome from people with mental health problems who have provided advice or information on mental health law (such as an advocate).

### **Summary of the Mental Health and Justice study**

The following text has been adapted from an [article](#) about the study by Silvia Camporesi.

'The research will address the central dilemma in mental health, ethics and law: the tension between protecting a person and respecting their decision making. As law in this area commits to human rights and as the international dimension presses, sharp new challenges are arising. The project focuses on two fundamental concepts – support in decision-making and decision-making ability. The study is made up of a number of different 'work streams', focusing on: exploring and facilitating decision-making support, both nationally and internationally; advance directives; insight; metacognition; contested capacity assessment.

Overall, the collaboration involves leading clinical experts, lawyers, philosophers, neuroscientists and social scientists in a research network that will be delivering practical guidelines, enhancing policy engagement, advancing interdisciplinary working and developing innovation in service-user involvement in research and public engagement.'

The study lead is Dr Gareth Owen from the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology, and Neuroscience (IOPPN). The research is funded by the Wellcome Trust.

## **What is the Service User Advisory Group (SUAG)?**

The Service User Advisory Group (SUAG) will consist of ten people in total. The group will be co-chaired by Dr Tania Gergel and Thomas Kabir. Meetings will be attended by members of the research team and others as needed.

The group will:

- Link up all the service user involvement activities in each of the six study work streams.
- Assist in producing study participant information sheets, consent forms and other documents.
- Review any documents that are produced for the public from any of the study work streams.
- Comment and contribute to the work of the study work streams.
- Troubleshoot any ethical or practical issues that may arise during the course of the study
- Contribute towards producing a study wide dissemination strategy.

The SUAG will need to consider a wide range of ethical, legal, and practical issues.

## **What will be required?**

The following will be needed:

- Attending face to face meetings of the SUAG three times a year in London throughout the five year study.
- Reading complex papers ahead of meetings and with other group members providing expertise to support the wider study. Due to the nature of the study such documents will sometimes cover legal issues.
- Constructively raising any concerns that you might have and offering possible solutions.
- Responding to occasional correspondence between meetings of the group.

**Payment for this work will be offered and reasonable travel expenses (up to an average of £40 per meeting) will be reimbursed.** The rate of pay is £100 per meeting. This includes preparation and meeting time.

By agreement members will be asked to carry out ad-hoc pieces of work from each of the work streams. Additional payment will be offered for such work.

Applicants will need to be comfortable in using email. Some knowledge of mental health research would be desirable (although not essential). Having some experience of mental health law is essential. Such experience could include:

- Being detained under the Mental Health Act ('sectioned');
- Being placed under a Community Treatment Order (CTO);

- Being subject to the Mental Capacity Act. If this applies to you, it may have meant that you had an [Independent Mental Capacity Advocate](#), or your finances or affairs may be handled by someone else under a Court of Protection order. You may have been detained in a care home or hospital under the 'deprivation of liberties' sections of the Act;
- Providing advice on mental health law in a professional capacity (such as being an advocate or a solicitor).

### **How to apply**

To apply please complete the application form and email to Thomas Kabir ([thomaskabir@mcpin.org](mailto:thomaskabir@mcpin.org)) **by 5pm on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2017**.

If you have any questions please contact Thomas Kabir using the email address above, or phone 0207 922 7874.

**The Mental Health and Justice study is funded by the Wellcome Trust**

