Culture of Care

Peer Support Implementation Space

Thursday 19 February 2026, 2pm - 4pm

NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Neurodiverse Connection

Global Black Thrive

NCISH

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Culture of Care

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Culture of Care

Housekeeping

- Please mute your microphone unless you are speaking.
- Cameras on or off, whatever is comfortable.
- We will not be recording today's session.
- If you would like to ask a question or leave a comment, please use the raise hand or chat function within the meeting
- If you experience any technical difficulties, please email: cultureofcare@rcpsych.ac.uk

Shared principles

Collaborative learning – *Make the most out of the session, whatever that looks like for you.*

Respect privacy – *Protect carefully the privacy of people's stories. Ask what parts, if any, you can share with others.*

Approach with kindness and curiosity – *We've all been through stuff so let's look after each other in this space.*

Diversity of views **–** *respecting different viewpoints and experiences and being okay with sometimes disagreeing.*

Language is important – *If you want to improve culture, the way you speak to and about the people around you needs to support the building of trusting relationships.*

Be kind to yourself – *take breaks if needed*

Schedule

Time	Event
14:00	**Housekeeping**
14:10	**Introductions**
14:25	**Presentations**
14:55	**Break**
15:05	**Discussion Space: Problem Solving and Sharing Successes**
15:50-16:00	**Closing**

This is based on feedback on what people most wanted from these sessions.

1. Knowledge sharing about practical issues and good practice (with some inpatient specificity)
2. Space for connection and problem-solving discussions

Introductions

- Name
- What brings you here today
- What would you most like from the session?

Evaluating peer support working

Dr Simon Bradstreet

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Evaluation can be described as the systematic assessment of the quality, value, or effectiveness of something, such as a programme, policy or intervention to determine whether it meets its intended goals.

Is this working?

How well is it working?

And how do we know?

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Meaningful & Proportionate

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Why evaluate peer support?

- The moral imperative
- Own our outcomes and control the narrative
- Peer support under the microscope
- Stop doing what doesn’t work
- Add to (real world) evidence base

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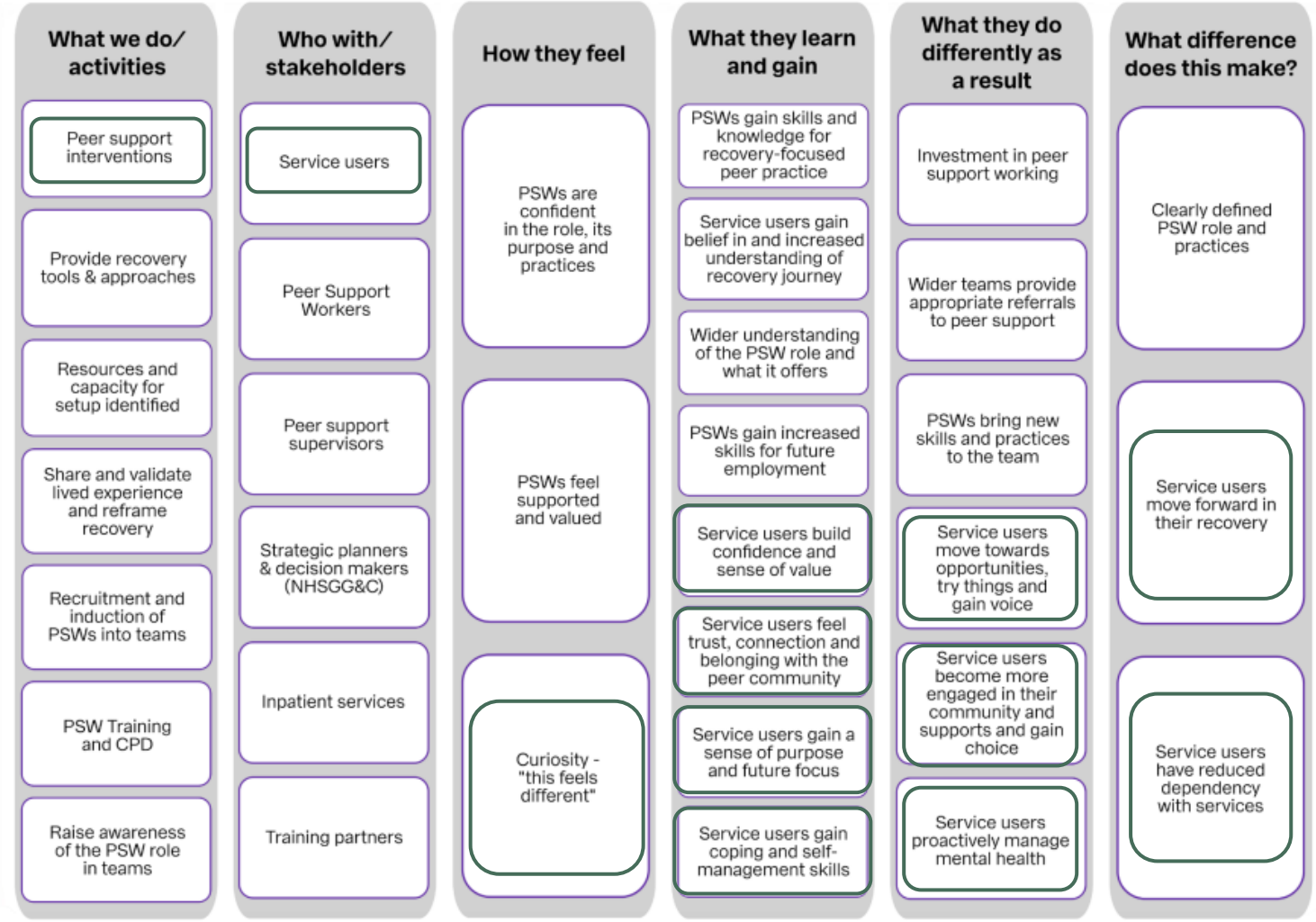
Questions, questions..

- What to evaluate (and how)?
  - Many different types of evaluation
  - Process, implementation, outcomes etc
  - Above all fit the method and tools to the questions
  - Role of the evaluation framework
- When to evaluate?
  - Formative and summative approaches
  - An event or a mindset and practice?
- Who evaluates?

Evaluating peer support working

- Ethics
- Learning cultures
- Capacity
- Find allies and partners
- Learning needs change over time – don’t keep proving things
- Follow the evidence
- Participatory approaches to theory building
- Have a plan and framework

Our outcome map



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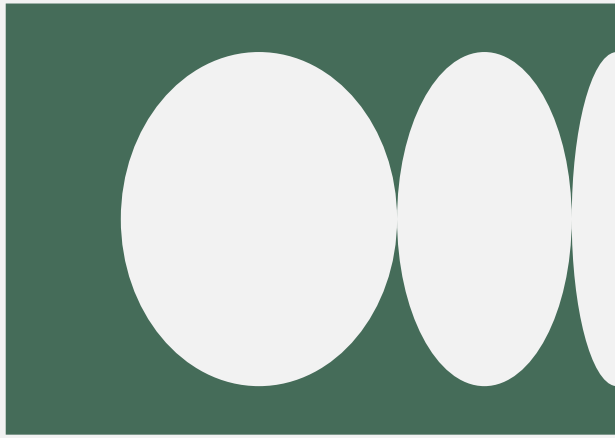
Some evaluation resources

- Matter of Focus – legacy website and resources
- UK Govt guidance on evaluation design (The Magenta Book)
- Innovative Methods for Evaluating Complex Interventions
- Complex Systems Frameworks Collection
- Session Lab library of facilitation techniques
- The data playbook and free team resources
- Resources on dealing with complexity in M&E
- Causal pathways case studies
- Collaborative for Implementation Practice knowledge bank



Converge Evaluation and Research Team

insight through experience

The Converge Evaluation and Research Team

Who are the Converge Evaluation and Research Team?

- The **Converge Evaluation and Research Team (CERT)** is a **York St John University** research group founded on the belief that **lived experience is essential to mental health research**.

- CERT researchers approach their work **through the lens of their lived experience**.

CERT's background: Part of a creative learning community

- CERT is part of **Converge**, a project based at **York St John University**.
- Converge is a **creative learning community** that offers free, university-based educational courses to adults with mental health challenges.
- In spring 2025, Converge in York had 255 students enrolled, spanning 23 on-campus courses and seven online courses covering art and design, creative writing, music, theatre and performance, social sciences and study skills.

Converge
AT YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

CERT

What does CERT aim to do?

- For CERT, **the lived experience** of both our research participants and CERT researchers is key to **overcoming many challenges of traditional approaches** to mental health research.

- In this way, CERT aims to **produce high quality, participatory, ethical, and epistemically-just mental health research** (Berenstain, 2016; Fricker, 2007).

- Qualities that CERT aims to live out with its researchers include **kindness, compassion, humaneness, gentleness, neurodiversity-affirmation, and care**.

CERT's dual perspective

- With a **dual perspective** as both **researchers** and **individuals with lived experience** of mental health challenges, CERT researchers aim to bring **understanding and empathy** to mental health research.

- CERT believes that such attributes **build trust and engagement** with research participants and develop a research culture **founded on ethical rigour, reflexivity and inclusion**.

- CERT has developed a model that can **challenge traditional hierarchies, reduce bias, enhance innovation** and **address inequalities** in mental health research.

- CERT researchers are ***researchers***, not patients, service users or contributors to Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) initiatives.

Research Methods training

- CERT delivers a training course in **Community Research Methods** for Converge students and other community researchers, via YSJU's Institute for Social Justice (ISJ).
- This course offers a broad introduction to research with a focus on epistemic justice, creative methodologies and methods, and research ethics.
- In 2025, the Community Research Methods course was **accredited by the University,** making it the first Converge course to offer students the opportunity to gain 20 credits at university foundation level.
- A **brief/bespoke** version of this training is now offered to community partners/NHS/VCSEs

Which projects does CERT take on?

- The majority of our projects are **paid commissions**, for example, evaluating mental health related community projects, or consultancy roles, for example, supporting NHS services.

- Some projects are **generated by ideas** from CERT researchers and the wider Converge community.

- CERT has close links and a positive working relationship with TEWV as both researchers and consultants.

TEWV projects

- **Original research** exploring mental health waiting rooms.

- Work with the **Peer Support Programme**

NHS
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust

CERT

Waiting rooms project

This project was **generated by Converge students**:

- A welcoming, kind and respectful receptionist
- A sense of privacy and dignity
- Easy access to the building, including obvious signage
- Pleasant, bright and roomy space
- Useful and effective distractions (e.g., radio, magazines, TV)
- Comfortable seating
- Knowing the waiting time and being kept informed
- Refreshments available

Peer Support Programme projects

- CERT has **two strands of work** with the TEWV **Peer Support Programme:**
    - Consultancy work in which we are collaborating with Peers to develop a comprehensive bespoke evaluation package for the programme (covering service users, Peers and colleagues).
    - Documenting the history of the Peer Programme, particularly the development of Peers within secure services.

Peer Support: service user feedback

Thank you for providing feedback. Your feedback will help us improve our services and may be used in reports and shared with relevant stakeholders.

1. How would you rate your experience of working with a Peer Support Worker? Please circle:

Very bad | Bad | Average | Good | Excellent

2. The work we did together was helpful — Agree | Not sure | Disagree

Would you like to tell us more about how your Peer Support Worker helped you?

3. What was good about seeing a peer support worker?

4. What, if anything, would make your experience of working with a Peer Support worker better?

5. Is there anything else you want to tell us about your experience of Peer Support?

Please circle any words which reflect your experience of Peer Support

Encouraging
Honest
Safe
Friendly
Dishonest
Discouraging
Unfriendly
Unsafe
Sympathetic
Motivates me
Caring
Did not motivate me
Supportive
Unsympathetic
Uncaring
Compassion
Unsupportive
Trustworthy
Untrustworthy
Professional
Uncompassionate
Compatible
Frustrating
Unprofessional

Any other words you would like to use:

Service/Team/Peer name:

Tees Esk Wear Valleys NHS Peer Support

CERT

NHS
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust

CERT

Any questions?

Ruth Lambley, CERT Co-ordinator

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References

- Berenstain, N. (2016) Epistemic Exploitation. *Ergo: An Open Access Journal of Philosophy*, 3, 569–590. DOI: 10.3998/ergo.12405314.0003.022.

- Fricker, M. (2007) *Epistemic injustice: Power and the ethics of knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Break (10 mins)

Whole Group Discussion:

Upcoming Sessions

Session	Hour 1	Hour 2
1	Opening the Space (this session)	
2	Preparation	Problem solving / sharing successes
3	Recruitment	Problem solving / sharing successes
4	Workforce Development	Problem solving / sharing successes
5	Cultural Competency, Peer Support Commissioning & Workforce Diversity	Problem solving / sharing successes
6	Developing Career Structures	Problem solving / sharing successes
7	Evaluation	Problem solving / sharing successes
8	**Developing Peer Leaders & Peer Networks** Friday 13 March, 2pm – 4pm	Reflections & what next?

With gratitude

- Thank you so much for coming today and for your contributions to this space!

- If you could kindly scan the QR code and provide your feedback. This really helps us shape the session to your needs!

- Please contact mark.allan1@nhs.net if you would like further support, or if you would like to share at a future session.

- We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at the next session

Feedback Form - Culture of Care Peer Support Implementation Space - 19 February 2026 – Fill in form