

SEPSIG14: How to influence research and promote fitness interventions for mental health

Friday 31 March 2023, 9am – 4.30pm

**Institute of Sport Exercise & Health
170 Tottenham Court Road
London
W1T 7HA**

Symposium 1:

The morning session will explore the evidence base for using different forms of physical activity to enhance cognition and manage severe mental illness. We will hear from leading researchers and clinicians in this exciting space. The session will include a practical breathwork session and will hopefully leave delegates with lots of take-a-way ideas to safely embed within their own areas of work!

Symposium 2:

The afternoon session will provide leading insights into how to get involved with the growing area of Sport & Exercise Psychiatry research. This will include an interactive, group work through a workshop.

Programme:

- **9.00am - Registration**
- **9.15 - Welcome by Dr Amit D. Mistry (chair)**
- **9.30 - Symposium 1: Dance and Exercise for mental health**
- **Keynote talk: Dr Brendon Stubbs**
- **10.15 - Dr Claire Gillvray: Cognitive Sports Therapy**
- **10.45 - Breath work practical**

- **11.00 - Break**
- **11.15 - Dr Cath Lester**
- **11.45 - Dr Nicole Lekka**
- **Panel Q&A (15 minutes)**
- **12.30pm - Lunch**
- **1.30 - Symposium 2: Sports Psychiatry Research Symposium by Prof Alan Currie**
- **Chair: Dr Carolyn Nahman**
- **Dr Alan Currie presentation on approaches to involvement in research**
- **2.00 - Small group workshops - how to ask research questions?**
- **2.30 - small group feedback**
- **3.00 - Break**
- **3.15 - Business meeting and updates**
- **4.30 - End of conference**
- **Networking at the Northumberland arms after the event**

Symposium 1: Dance and Exercise for mental health

Speaker profile: Dr Brendon Stubbs

Dr Brendon Stubbs is a clinical-academic physiotherapist, NIHR clinical lecturer at Kings College, London with expertise in physical activity & mental health, the mind-body interface, healthy ageing and meta-research. He is in the top 1% of highest cited researchers and has co-authored over 700 academic papers. Dr Stubbs co-published the first evidence based book on the use of physical activity for the treatment of people with mental illness.

Keynote: Dr Stubbs will provide an overview on the growing evidence base for physical activity in severe mental illness. He will provide fascinating insights into some of his latest pioneering work with Asics to explore how exercise impacts on cognitive ability.

Speaker profile: Dr Claire Gillvray, MBChB MRCPsych MRCPGP MScSEM DCh

Dr Gillvray is dual trained in General Practice and Psychiatry and has worked across both disciplines both privately and in the NHS for over 20 years. As a competitive triathlete representing both Great Britain and more recently Ireland, in her age group, at all distances up to Ironman, she became interested in the world of sports psychiatry and completed her MSc in Sports Medicine at Bath University in 2010. Her published research is in the area of sports addiction and eating disorders.

Dr Gillvray founded her own company in partnership with yoga teacher and breathwork coach Lucy Hibben called Cognitive Sports Therapy, bringing together all aspects of lifestyle medicine, including physical activity and breathwork, to help improve and treat mental health disorders and protect mental wellbeing. Her company provides free training for sports coaches and fitness professionals in mental health and also promotes corporate wellbeing. She also founded Time to Talk CST, a Community Interest Company, supporting free community walking, running and cycling groups, and an educational podcast. She is the team doctor for Cambridge University Boat Club. Dr Gillvray is the Exercise and Mental Health lead for SEPSIG promoting access to exercise and movement for those with mental health disorders.

Session:

Dr Gillvray will outline how she founded Cognitive Sports Therapy to provide individuals with less severe depression non-pharmacological treatment options such as exercise, mindfulness and meditation. This is based on the latest NICE guidance (June 2022) on depression management.

The session will explore how we are practically trying to do this in primary care alongside a review of the evidence for the six pillars of lifestyle medicine and its role within mental health. The final part will look at some of the other great ventures that are happening across the UK in this space and think about how we can bring this evidence based learning into secondary care.

Before the break, Lucy Hibben from Cognitive Sports Therapy will briefly introduce breathwork and how it can help our mental health. She will then lead us in a breathing exercise and show us how we can practically guide our patients on how to use breathwork to help their mental health.

Speaker profile: Dr Catherine Lester

Dr Catherine Lester completed her medical degree at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. In 2007, she moved to the United Kingdom where she completed a Master's in Sports and Exercise Medicine at QMUL and completed her specialist training to become a consultant. She has a portfolio career including Elite sports, MSK clinics and exercise medicine. She is the team doctor for Northampton Saints, is a consultant lead for Moving Medicine, works as a consultant for the MOD in a regional rehabilitation unit and is a senior clinical lecturer at Queen Mary University London.

Session:

Dr Lester will outline her leading work with Moving Medicine. Moving Medicine is an award-winning resource to help healthcare professionals integrate physical activity conversations into routine clinical care. We have consultation guides for adult anxiety and depression and mental health in children and young people.

Moving Medicine provides staff with accessible, evidence based, [condition specific information](#) to help give advice on physical activity at all stages of children, young peoples and adults treatment pathways. We also provide our toolkit for hospitals to help people be more active during and after their time in hospital The project has been developed in collaboration with experts, professional bodies and charities representing patients and healthcare professionals in each disease area.

Speaker profile: Dr Nicoletta P. Lekka (MD, MSc, PhD)

Dr Lekka is a Consultant Psychiatrist in SHSC acute inpatient services, Honorary Senior Clinical Teacher in Medical Education, Sheffield University, and ILM Accredited Coach. She is a member of the Executive Committee of RCPsych's SEPSIG in the role of Aesthetic Sports and Dance Liaison. She is also a member of the International Association for Dance Medicine & Science (IADMS) Dance for Health Committee and the IADMS Mental Health Work Group.

Session:

Dr Lekka will discuss how the unique experience of dance can benefit health and wellbeing. She will introduce Dance for Health, explore its positive impact on mental wellbeing, cover the latest research on this topic, and describe evidence-based interventions. She will talk about her work with IADMS's mental health work group and the Dance for Health

committee. Short films will showcase how dance can play a valuable role in health and wellbeing.

Symposium 2: Research in Sports & Exercise Psychiatry (60 minutes)

Chair: Dr Carolyn Nahman

Speaker profile: Dr Alan Currie, MB ChB, MPhil, FRCpsych

Alan is a psychiatrist in a specialist mood disorders treatment and research centre in Newcastle and visiting professor at the University of Sunderland. His research interests include mood disorders, sports psychiatry, recovery and social inclusion with over 50 peer reviewed publications: many as lead author and including original research. He has edited or co-edited three textbooks including the highly commended handbook of Sports Psychiatry (2016) and a collection of Case Studies in Sports Psychiatry (2020). He is a consultant to both UK antidoping (UKAD) and the International Testing Agency (ITA) in Lausanne and a former chair of SEPSIG. In 2019 he joined the International Olympic Committee mental health working group and was appointed to the Mental Health Expert Panel of the English Institute of Sport. He is chair of the Scientific Committee of the International Society for Sports Psychiatry.

Session:

Alan will begin by providing an overview of the current research landscape. This will include a summary of what is known about mental health concerns in athletes and examples of gaps in the evidence base. He will then discuss some general issues that arise when conducting research and provide some tips for those who are just getting started in this field. Delegates will then be asked to form small groups and consider how they might approach designing a research project relevant to athlete mental health. The session will conclude with a facilitated discussion on how to progress sports psychiatry research projects.

1. Presentation by Dr Currie (30 minutes)
2. Mini groups and discussion points with group feedback
3. Q & A session