

THE MONTHLY LINKAGE

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RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT – SHARON STEVELINK

This month's research spotlight focuses on a data linkage study led by Dr Sharon Stevelink, that looks to explore the impact of the UK benefits system on people with mental health problems. Some of you may have participated in discussions some years ago when we explored the challenges and opportunities that this linkage would bring.

We are very pleased to inform you that we successfully linked 418,413 mental health records from patients accessing the South London and Maudsley (Slam) NHS Foundation Trust with benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions, resulting in a linkage rate of 93%.

Initial findings that focused on people who accessed Slam specialist services indicated that 83% had received some sort of a benefit over a period of 15 years. Benefits most often received included those related to unemployment benefits (e.g., employment support allowance, job seekers allowance), income replacing disability benefits (e.g., disability living allowance, incapacity benefits) and income support. The team is now looking to explore how benefit receipt may differ by type of mental health diagnosis, patterns of benefit and what interventions are most effective to support return to work for patients who are able to.

10 YEARS LATER

This year marks 10 years since the Clinical Data Linkage Service was founded. To see a full timeline of CRIS events. See our CRIS Timeline below: [CRIS: a timeline \(nihr.ac.uk\)](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/about/cris-a-timeline).

PPI ADVERT

We have an exciting opportunity for a co-researcher to take up a key role within our team. We are particularly interested in applications from people who have personal experience of mental ill health and/or the benefits system or who care for someone who has, to help us carry out research (e.g. to help inform research questions, interpret study findings and co-present at meetings). For more information, please see the attachment in the newsletter or get in touch with sharon.stevelink@kcl.ac.uk

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next meeting will be held on 12th January 2023. The agenda for this meeting will be sent closer to the date.

(If you wish to not be included in future meetings or to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please send an email to lara.brooks-simpson@slam.nhs.uk)