



ARC North East and North Cumbria

HEAR study

2023



Implementation of mental health urgent and emergency care interventions for frequent service use: An evaluation study (HEAR)

High Intensity User (HIU) services offer an intervention for people who frequently use Urgent and Emergency Care. This is achieved by providing both social support and guidance so people can seek and receive the right care from the right service. HIU services can be found in the NHS, local authorities and the third sector

What was the aim of the project?

To evaluate the implementation, normalisation and embedding into practice of HIU services

What did we do?

We designed a multiple mixed methods study with three research questions:

- How are HIU interventions implemented to support people?
- How do service users experience care prior to, during, and on completion of the intervention?
- What outcomes are perceived to be important to staff and service users?



How did we involve people?

We invited staff members to take part in an interview and complete online surveys; and asked staff to invite service users to take part in an interview.

We tried to involve more people who use HIU services, but this was a challenge due to the recruitment technique, and services struggled to find time to recruit into the study.

We found barriers to a national survey, including lack of understanding of our aims. This changed our focus to services within the North East, giving local insight into services.



What did we learn?

To be flexible in recruitment methods and to expect the unexpected!

Challenges within services impact involvement with research.

To communicate aims clearly with potential participants.

Sometimes change within study protocols offers an interesting new direction.

What next?

We will continue to collect data through semi structured interviews and online surveys, with HIU staff and service users.

Analysis of data and writing up will begin in August 2023.

Findings will support understanding of HIU service provision in England, and allow future research into the most effective way to measure outcomes to support staff and service users.

Who are we?

The NIHR ARC North East and North Cumbria is one of 15 NIHR ARCs in England.

We bring together six regional universities, health and social care providers, local authorities, the VCSE sector and public and community groups, to support 'better fairer health and care at all ages and in all places'.

We also lead national ARC work around health inequalities, and prevention and early intervention.

Find out more about the ARC North East and North Cumbria

www.arc-nenc.nihr.ac.uk

Twitter: @NIHR_ARC_NENC

Email: arcnenc@cntw.nhs.uk

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