



## Welcome from Dr Georgina Blakely, School Director of Teaching, Learning and Student Experience

"I am delighted and honoured to be asked to write for the latest edition of the School's Public Partnership Group (PPG) newsletter. The PPG has continued to provide a range of support to curriculum development and delivery in the School and play a vital role in the School's continued growth agenda. As the School that never sleeps, this is a major undertaking for such a small team and they have done all of this successfully while managing the move to working online.

"January 2021 saw a new cohort of BSc Nursing students commence their studies including an innovative blended-learning route. In September 2021, we shall see a new BSc Paramedic Science and a new BSc Speech and Language Therapy welcome their first students. This is complex provision. All of these courses have to meet not just the requirements of the University but also those of their respective regulatory and professional bodies. These bodies, in endorsing the School's health programmes, require that the curriculum is designed, developed and delivered in partnership with service users

and carers and practice partners. None of this new provision would have been possible without the contribution of our PPG colleagues to curriculum development and validation.

"The new BSc Speech and Language Therapy course, as you can read in this newsletter, presents an example of excellent practice in terms of working with the PPG. Their approach viewed the involvement of service users and carers not as an 'add-on' or 'optional extra' but as something that drove the development of the course from the start. Laurette Tahmassian-Zarneh, who led on this work, notes that 'the PPG provided a supportive space through which to appreciate the importance of involving service users and carers, as well as the practicalities of how to do so. This led to receiving a commendation by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists at the University validation event.' Nor does the relationship with the PPG end with a successful validation. Laurette explains 'It is envisaged that upon the foundations of our symbiotic relationship, we will

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continue to work with the PPG to involve service users and carers – as experts by experience, within all aspects of the programme, far beyond the limits of an accreditation or approval visit.’ In a nutshell, we might accurately say that the PPG is for life not just for validation!

“The PPG is also integral to the success of our growing apprenticeship provision. Current apprentice provision includes Trainee Nurse Associates, Registered Nurse Associates, Degree Nurse Associates, Paramedics, Advanced Clinical Practice, Operating Department Practice and Podiatry. From September 2021, the School will be welcoming apprentices in Midwifery, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy. All of these latest apprenticeships were supported by PPG colleagues in terms of their development and successful validation.

“In addition to their work on curriculum development and delivery, the PPG are also woven into the fabric of the School in terms of supporting teaching, learning and assessment. Most recently, PPG colleagues have also participated in a ground-breaking project working in collaboration with Mental Health Nursing and Applied Theatre students. The project involved working on a range of scenarios, role-played by the drama students, to help prepare mental health nursing students for situations they may encounter in practice. Six of the PPG’s members shared their experiences to help shape the scenarios and to ensure they were authentic in representing the complexities of people’s lived experience of mental health issues.

“The hardest part of this welcome message, and the only section I really did not want to write, is to bid farewell to Christine Rhodes who has been involved with the PPG from its inception. In fact, without Christine, there would probably be no PPG. Christine has been tireless in her efforts to



establish the PPG and ensure that it thrives. Christine’s championing of the vital work that the group does is such an essential and integral part of the School. Such has been Christine’s impact on the success of the PPG, that it is easy to forget that her work with the PPG was just a small part of her transformative work within the School. To say Christine will be missed by the PPG and the wider School is the understatement of the year. Nobody, of course, is irreplaceable but Christine comes very close. I would like to wish Christine on behalf of the PPG and the wider School the happiest of retirements. We look forward to featuring some photos of Christine’s camper van adventures in subsequent issues of this newsletter. Go well my friend.”

## Note from the Editor



**Rob Moriarty, member of the PPG**

“It’s an irrefutable understatement to say amidst this global pandemic we’ve faced together, finding ways of keeping our education system going for the benefit of the next generation has been one of the most challenging issues. Embracing the greatest single shift to online learning has been as much of, if not more of a challenge for our members, as it has for the University. We have worked hard to ensure our involvement at the University remains as effective and engaging for students as possible.

“Sharing anything personal can be hard, emotional and often overwhelming and this is more difficult to convey using a distant, impersonal online platform.

“Whilst we echo the world’s hopes to return to a sense of face-to-face normality later this year, technology has proved it has an integral role going forwards in all our lives. It is our hope we can not only enable more PPG members to contribute and participate through new “blended learning” approaches, but also work with students and embrace technology to its

maximum effect for their future working practice.

“Looking to the future, we must also bid a fond ‘official’ farewell to Christine Rhodes, who retired in May. She has been a fantastic ambassador for Service User and Carer involvement across the School at the University, and whilst her professional input will be sorely missed, she will still be a valued member of the wider PPG. On behalf of everyone involved throughout the School and the PPG, thank you for everything you’ve done Christine and enjoy your well-earned retirement!

“And to everyone else, happy reading.”



(Photo credit: Chris Montgomery on Unsplash)

## About the PPG



(Photo credit: the University of Huddersfield)

The School of Human and Health Sciences believes it is of great value to the education of its students by involving a wide range of people who have experience of health and social care. This includes users of services, their immediate relatives or carers. Such involvement in education and research is an opportunity to make a lasting difference and influence future health and social care.

‘Real life’ experiences can help students understand the needs and expectations of the individuals they will be working with and enable them to develop the right values, knowledge and attitudes to support their client group. In doing so they are ultimately putting the person at the centre of their care. Students gain a better understanding from ‘Experts by Experience’ of what it is like to be on the receiving end of health and social care. Working alongside academics, it helps students apply and relate theory and research to practice.

The PPG committee meet regularly to discuss and formulate the overall direction and plans of the PPG. The network of individuals who are willing to share their experiences continues to grow and they can be involved as much as they wish.

Learning in the School is a joint endeavour between our ‘Experts by Experience’, students, academics and practice colleagues, working in partnership to achieve the goal of continuous improvement to care delivery.



## Service user and care involvement from 2004 to 2021 - Where are we now?

Dr Christine Rhodes summarises her perception of progress with public involvement during her 17 years of working as an academic in the School.



**School's Committee 2013**

(Photo credit: the University of Huddersfield)

“When I came to work at the University in 2004 there was some involvement in the School primarily in mental health nursing and social work, however there was no infrastructure for Service User and Carer Involvement (SU&CI), no specific budget, and a reliance on staff enthusiasts. This situation gradually began to change, largely due to professional body requirements for SU&CI in health and social care courses, and the ethos of patient centred care.

“Significant progress was made during 2006 to 2009, when we were involved in a large project called the Assessment and Learning in Practice Settings (ALPS) Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning which had a SU&CI strand. This project provided some funding, which gave us the opportunity to work collaboratively with five other universities. As a result, SU&CI moved on a pace. However, once completed with no ongoing funding, it was difficult to keep the momentum going. This

caused frustration among many of the people involved.

“That said, after a lot of toing and froing and the determination of several service user and carer and staff enthusiasts, I am so pleased to see that we have finally arrived at a position where SU&CI and the PPG have a renewed place in the School. The PPG is now aligned to teaching, learning and student experience, and is identified as one of the core support services. Importantly, the PPG is maintaining its links with School research and external engagement. We now have two fabulous members of staff, Alison Morris and Chris Essen, who are in substantive posts (1.4 full time equivalent), and the agreement for some dedicated admin support.

“The PPG has taken ownership of its work, is gaining confidence, and portraying a more

Continued ....

## Service user and care involvement continued...

organised and planned approach. As a result, the PPG is starting to be recognised for its expertise in this area of work. It has an operational budget and a dedicated office. An action plan has been developed and progress is being made in working with course teams to increase the range of SU&CI opportunities for students. The PPG has a core committee and an increasing number of service user and carer members.

“While challenging, the pandemic over the last year has provided the impetus to look for alternative ways of bringing in the service user and carer voice. Included in this is the promotion of existing online resources, the development of new online resources and the linking of these to teaching packages with pre-work for students, along with live workshops with participation from PPG members. There has also been substantial growth in the type and number of health and social care professional education courses in the School, requiring a range and variety of SU&CI opportunities. The plan going forward is to provide comprehensive online and face-to-face SU&CI opportunities for students, throughout their student journey. The planning for a Health and Wellbeing Academy and Health Innovation Campus is in progress and should also provide further exciting opportunities into the future.

“I retired from my post at the University at the end of May and, despite the ups and downs, SU&CI remains my passion. So, I do intend to remain involved in a voluntary capacity. I am convinced that SU&CI has an important role to play in preparing students for their professional practice and if undertaken properly it can have



(Photo credit: Christine Rhodes)

a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the service users and carers involved, supported by the findings of my own PhD and the increasing evidence published in the literature. So, my message to the PPG is to be proud of what you have all accomplished. Remember to celebrate your successes and what has been achieved, rather than what hasn't been done. Keep on going, the future is bright with increasing SU&CI opportunities, more collaborative working and the development of models of good practice to share.

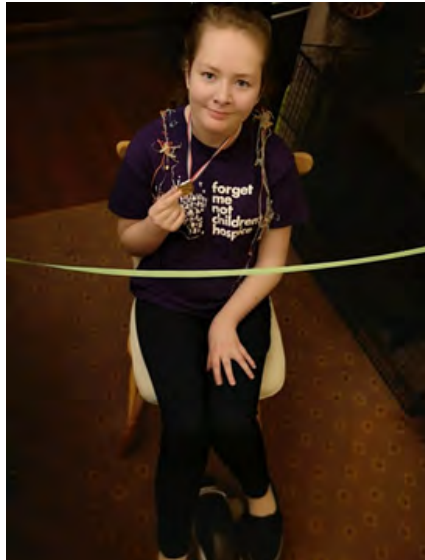
“As I start a new chapter of my life, I take many fond memories with me and it is au revoir not goodbye.

“With very best wishes,

Dr Christine Rhodes, University Teaching Fellow and Strategic Lead for Service User and Carer Involvement”

## The importance of communication

Jessica and Sally Thomasson were invited by Angela Darvill to talk about their experiences as a young patient (aged 15) and parent on how communication affects the whole medical experience.



(Photo credit: Sally Thomasson)

“The MSc Child Nursing First Years were treated to Jessica’s debut appearance as a member of the team.

“The first years were preparing to go on placement with a session about the importance of communication. Jessica was asked questions about how she liked to be talked to, whether she preferred knowing about unpleasant procedures beforehand, and what we felt was a key question that whether there had been anything that a nurse had done that she didn’t like and so they shouldn’t do.

“The session ended with trading jokes with a medical theme that the nurses could use! It was lovely to watch how the group made Jess feel comfortable and how interested they were to hear her views.

“Jessica said that the group was really friendly and she’d like to meet them again as nurses.

“The MSc Students said the session was so useful and the experience of talking to Sally and especially Jess isn’t something that lecturers can teach. Everyone said how valuable it was to talk to them both”.

“The students then made a substantial contribution to Jessica’s 10k Challenge fund where she has been cycling for the Forget Me Not Children’s Hospice and we wish to thank them again for this kind and wonderful surprise.

“We wish them all the best in their placements and continuing studies. We will always remember this class.”

## Spotlight: COVID-19 perspectives

In our last issue several PPG members gave updates on what life has been like for them during the lockdown. Here are some updates for you from them.



**‘Where flowers bloom, so does hope’ – Lady Bird Johnson.**

(Photo credit: David Emrich on Unsplash)

### Jackie

“I am recovering from COVID-19 where I live in residential care. The last 10 months have been taken up with hard work focused on walking and breathing because one affects the other. Without inhalers I’m too breathless to manage this but I am grateful for making progress. I recently attended my first Microsoft Teams meeting with the PPG.

“We discussed how we can incorporate involvement across the nursing programs. I have learnt the importance of what pacing myself means. I am very aware that my limits are different now in terms of work and how I engage with projects. It is great that there are much more opportunities to be involved online and I hope that this can continue.”

Continued.....



Spotlight continued...



**Janet's garden**

(Photo credit: Janet)

## Janet

"In March 2020, as the virus gained ground Mum fell flat on her face returning from the bathroom. A trip to Accident and Emergency (A&E) showed no broken bones, no head injury, but very badly bruised. We started a dual lockdown as we could not leave her alone, so we pulled together a makeshift 24/7 rota as we waited to see what would happen next – globally and in our lives.

"In April, the season turned and the world slowed down. In our little bubble including me, our two carers and the Marie Curie night sitters, we rolled and hoped by some strange miracle Mum would recover from the fall.

"In June, gradually and inevitably, Mum's life force ebbed away and on the summer equinox she peacefully took her leave of us.

"July was a month of looking forwards and backwards. The multidisciplinary team had moved on, but we three carers still met weekly to share a laugh, a few tears as we loosened the knots created by two years focusing on Mum. But it was also the time where David and I could act on or pledge to each other that, when the time was right,

we would find our imagined house with a view of the water. And shockingly, there it was, beckoning us from the pages of Rightmove.

"From August to the next February, there was a seven month roller-coaster familiar to anyone buying and selling in lockdown, involving successes and failures, nail biting delays but finally it was done.

"In this March, in gales and torrential rain we moved in. Two weeks later the sun started to shine, the estuary calmly glided out to sea and the garden revealed new secrets each day. The memories of this amazing year do not leave me, but are woven into the fabric of our next adventure."

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Spotlight continued...



(Photo credit: The home school table with a jack o lantern make do pencil pot. Courtesy of the author)

### Anonymous PPG member

“I write this at 10am on a Monday morning. Today is my day off. I do not work on Mondays. I have no children in the house as they are back in school. They love being in school. The dishwasher is at peace and I am all alone in the house. It’s wonderful.

“Since I last wrote, life has changed, but the virus still rages on. I don’t work at 2am anymore. I soon realised the practicalities of working the graveyard shift amidst home-schooling during the day, navigating the internet for goods and food and trying to get my head around what was going on in the world. It all became too much to manage. Needless to say, we as a family had to work a few things out.

“My partner has continued to work throughout which meant I was mostly on my own spinning plates. I am still spinning, but not as much. I

realised I can’t do everything and so I don’t. There has been much in the news about the role of women in the world during the pandemic and how unpaid domestic and care work has increased. Workload has increased for everyone, but women are still taking care of the lion’s share (Whose time to care? UN WOMEN Nov 2020).

“We all have chores. My boys have chores. They ‘do the curtains’, tidy their rooms, make sure all the devices are charging and keep the hamster food topped up. Shopping online is a breeze now as the slots are easier to come by. Our shopping is a weekly sit down with the laptop where everyone shouts out what food they want. Crisps are a big winner in the house. “Home-schooling in the first lock down was fun but I was glad when the term finished. We had our own award ceremony. I won a few awards: the best teacher, the best pencil sharpener, and the best storyteller.

“Last November we all got COVID-19 which was petrifying. My biggest worry was how my children would react to it, mostly for my son who has had heart surgery and a history of respiratory infections. I think of the virus like a game of leapfrog, jumping from one to the other. Soberingly, for some it’s a deadly game and that is why I feel very lucky that we got off lightly from this spell of the virus. My partner was in bed for a few days. I was in bed for 2 weeks which drained me. I took about 2 months to recover in full. My boys were ok with very slight colds. I was proud of them. They had it and fought it.

“We are very aware that we are the lucky ones. This realisation hits me daily. It hangs there like a helium balloon in the air. Things could have gone so differently for us. Life is precious and fleeting and we must grab it and make it amazing. This piece is dedicated to all those families of loved ones, around the world, where sadly things did go very differently for them.”

Continued.....

Spotlight continued...



### Rob's online Zoom social club

(Photo credit: Sidcity.net)

### Rob

"I'm incredibly grateful my care package and Personal Assistant (PA) team have stayed intact over the last 12 months. The plans I put in place have worked with only two PAs directly having Covid. I had to persist for 10 months before high level spinal injuries were recognised as clinically extremely vulnerable, but eventually had my vaccine in February. Through my NHS England work I've become a voice of lived experience on the Social Care COVID-19 vaccine stakeholder group to ensure all PAs were considered key workers and able to access the vaccine too.

"A year ago, I was concerned the lived experience voice would fall silent whilst the NHS went into the pandemic crisis mode. Instead, our workload has gone through the roof proving such representation has been more vital than ever. It has been amazing to see our input producing

results within days and weeks rather than months and years as everyone pulls together in one unified cause. It has kept me mentally sane too with a weekly Zoom social community started by an actor I have admired for many years. I've got to know people all over the world as part of his effort to prevent prolonged social and mental isolation."



## Working with Social Work

Ben Raikes is a Lecturer in Social Work, leading on the “Working with Service Users and Carers” module.



**One of Ben’s social work lectures**

(Photo credit: the University of Huddersfield )

“The Working with Service Users and Carers module has been running for Social Work students for well over ten years, and I feel very privileged to be the current module leader.

“It was set up in partnership with service users and is largely taught by service users. Each week a different service user shares their lived experience. The experience shared is very diverse, ranging from the impact of a life changing accident, living with a health condition, the reality of being homeless, becoming a full-time carer, to living with fluctuating mental health issues.

“Students are required to write a reflection on three of the presentations. They are asked to consider their pre-existing knowledge and attitudes about the issues discussed, and then identify ‘lightbulb’ moments that have changed their thinking and views. The objective is then for students to identify how they will practice differently as a result of what they have heard.

“Hearing from service users directly means that the module moves beyond being purely academic

by engaging the students’ hearts and minds. In this way it has a huge positive impact on the way the students practice in the future. They gain insight into what truly person-centred practice involves and how discrimination and oppression is experienced by service users and carers.

“This year we have had lectures from many members of the PPG group, all of whom have shared on a very personal level. In doing so they have greatly enriched the student experience, for which I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation.

“It is very encouraging to receive positive feedback from both students and the PPG members who have contributed:

““Taking part in the module was such a rewarding experience for me. This lecture gave me a chance to step back and look at my condition through a different lens. The Q&A section was a standout

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Working with Social Work continued...



moment for me with so much fun, the students were really responsive... and the level of appreciation at the end overwhelmed me. I would do it all again in a half-a-heart beat!' (PPG group member)

“For me, listening to the PPG members gives great insight into subjects you think you know something about but really their stories make you consider and question the things you thought you already knew. Their lived experience, a combination of struggles and strength, helps build understanding, empathy, and awareness.’(Year 1 Social Work student)”

## Speech and Language Therapy involvement



**Laurette Tahmassian-Zarneh**

(Photo credit: Laurette Tahmassian-Zarneh)

“The involvement of service users and carers within the development, design and delivery of health professional education is a regulatory and professional requirement. For a Speech and Language Therapy programme, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as regulatory body and the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) as professional body stipulate that service users and carers as a broad term that encompasses those who have had experience of a healthcare profession must have the opportunity to contribute. No further guidelines are provided other than ensuring support to do so is available, and a plan in place to monitor and evaluate such involvement.

“As an Adult Speech and Language Therapist with no particular experience of higher education (other than as a learner), this was no mean feat when I took up the position in early 2019 to co-develop a Speech and Language Therapy programme at the University. However, in January 2021, at our accreditation and

approval visit where the HCPC and RCSLT would decide whether to validate us meaning that we could officially run our programme in September, we received a commendation from the RCSLT. Specifically, a commendation for the work of involving service users and carers.

“Proud does not even come close to describing how I feel. Not because of anything that I have done. But what we - the Public Partnership Group (PPG) and members of, have achieved together. Was this involvement something that I had to do in order to meet the requirements when setting up a new programme? Yes. But was it something that I wanted to do? Absolutely. Involvement shouldn't be about ticking a box. It should be authentic. It shouldn't be something seen as one of a kind. It should be embedded as best-

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practice; it should be normalised. How can we educate learners as future healthcare professionals without involvement in that teaching and learning experience by the very people that will be at the heart of everything that we do?

“I could say so much more on the specifics of the involvement, for example how we achieved what we have, how our mapping document is now being used across other disciplines within the University, how we are sharing our work at a national conference and most importantly how we will continue with this involvement far beyond the limits of any accreditation or approval visit.

“But for now, I will express my sincere gratitude to both the PPG and our small (but extremely mighty) group who have achieved something very special here. Something that will entail others within health professional education to reflect on what they have, and perhaps haven’t done, and start to think about what they should and could

be doing. Only time will tell, but I promise you that this is now our time for appropriate, authentic and influential involvement by those and for those who matter. All I ask is that you watch this space.”

## Conference presentations

The Public Partnership Group were delighted to present at the Renowned Authenticity into Action Conference, hosted by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) in March 2021



(Photo credit: the University of Central Lancashire)

“This was the 6th conference that UCLan have staged and as is required at this time, their first online conference. The conference celebrates the involvement and inclusion of the public and patient voice within health and social care teaching in higher education.

“The last two decades have seen a welcome growth in creative and innovative involvement. We are encouraged that service user and carer involvement can continue to thrive even through a global pandemic when social distancing and virtual blended learning have become normal practice. The conference aimed to celebrate and provide a forum for all those involved in this work, including learning from our community partners. We examined new innovations, critically reflected upon the impact of involvement, network and shared our ideas.

“Institutions and organisations from around the country and internationally were invited to

speak which showcased some amazing work and demonstrated the high quality of involvement and engagement work that people all over the world are contributing to. There is a rich array of perspectives that students are receiving in their teaching and learning within health and social care which will have a lasting impact upon their professional development.

“The PPG presented two abstracts to the conference. Sally (PPG member) and Laurette Tahmassian-Zarneh, Lecturer and Admissions Tutor for BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy, presented an innovative and excellent piece on the involvement of PPG members in the collaboration of the new Speech and Language Therapy course curriculum. Laurette has written

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Conference presentations continued...



a piece in this newsletter which details how this collaboration worked.

“Ben (PPG member), Will (Applied Theatre student), Bridie Moore (Senior Lecturer in Drama Theatre and Performance) and Chris Essen (Service User and Carer Development Lead) presented a piece which showcased some groundbreaking work that PPG members have been involved in regarding a collaboration with Applied Theatre Students, Mental Health Nursing Students and PPG members. This project was developed to assist the Mental Health Nursing students with their simulated patient examination and the Applied Theatre students who due to the pandemic were unable to go out into community placements to work with specific groups. In this newsletter, you will find an article focusing on this project and explaining further details about the important role of PPG members.

“Both presentations were well attended and

generated lots of questions from colleagues. Despite the conference being online it was excellent and a shining example of the versatility and ability to adapt to the current situations. Thank you to the Community Engagement and Service User Support (COMENSUS) team at UCLan for their hard work in making the conference a success. We look forward to the next one.”

## Mental health focus for nursing and drama students collaboration

By Tim Oscroft – University of Huddersfield

Nursing and drama students from across the University of Huddersfield are collaborating on a ground-breaking project where role-playing could reap benefits for mental health patients. The students, from the Nursing (Mental Health) BSc and Drama BA courses, have worked on a range of scenarios involving patients, healthcare professionals and carers to help prepare the nursing students for situations they could encounter both during placements and after graduating. The drama students have also learned about how to apply their acting skills in unexpected areas, and the hope is that like their nursing counterparts, this will help prepare them for their professional career.

### Reaching out to local community helps with understanding

The project is also involving the University's Public Partnership Group (PPG), which includes people with lived experience of mental health issues and of working in health and social care in the local community. The PPG's input has helped both sets of students to gain a better understanding of the complexities and nuances around working with mental health issues.

Another key facet of the project is the use of 'Applied Theatre', the practice of applying theatre and drama to non-traditional settings. Previous versions of the role-play scenario for the Nursing course included using staff or external theatre companies, until the onset of COVID-19 provided an opportunity for this interdisciplinary collaboration.

"Using staff to 'act' was too exhausting, we were spending too much time and money going down that route," says Dr Clementinah Rooke, Senior Lecturer in Mental Health Nursing.

"Eventually, the penny dropped that we have

our drama students here at the University, plus the PPG - could we not engage with them? In addition, because of COVID restrictions drama students were in need of a group to work with to complete their applied theatre studies; so it was a win-win."

### Real world scenarios

Initial sessions involved members of the PPG so that realistic situations that covered genuine, real-world mental health scenarios could be developed, giving the drama students a depth of knowledge that help them and the nursing students. The method draws upon the concept of 'Forum Theatre', a radical role-playing approach developed by Brazilian practitioner Augusto Boal in the 1970s.

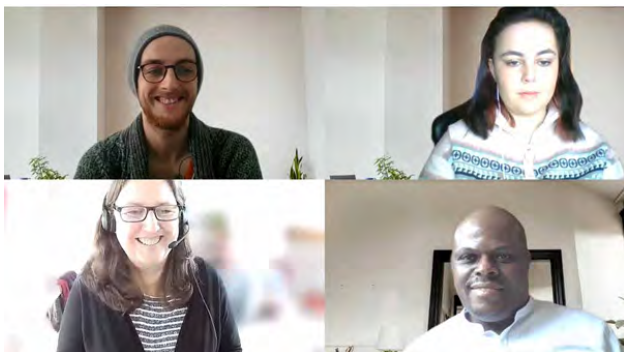
"Boal's Forum Theatre is the centre-piece of most of this kind of work," adds Dr Bridie Moore, Senior Lecturer in Drama Theatre and Performance. "Our students work on what is known as an 'anti-model' - a scenario which takes the wrong approach.

"They perform this to the nursing students, and it provokes a response about what should be done or said in that situation, for instance, when a carer feels the health worker is shutting them out. The nursing students would discuss how they would react if they were the carer. They would suggest how it should be played out, giving them insight into a carer's feelings and attitudes.

The drama students were assessed for these Forum Theatre sessions, while in April they have portrayed mental health patients in scenarios that will form part of exams for their nursing counterparts.

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Mental health focus for nursing and drama students collaboration continued...



**The planning session with Bridie Moore (bottom left), Joseph Sengu (bottom right) and Applied Theatre students**

(Photo credit: the University of Huddersfield)

“The nurses need to draw out a patient’s past history, medication, current situation and their future hopes,” adds Dr Moore.

“Our drama students have learned about these kinds of scenarios thanks to information from the PPG and Clementinah. These include issues like reducing medications, thinking about a patient’s back story and their history of mental health issues. It all helps so that our students can authentically act as patients, which also helps the nurses in their learning.”

### **Further benefits across and outside the University**

The concept could also have benefits for other areas of nursing, as Dr Rooke explains: “We will certainly be using it with our international students, as it helps address the nuances of culture, language and intonation.

“It could help as students coming from overseas to work in the NHS probably won’t have the knowledge of little cultural or national characteristics here in the UK. These sessions are a way to help address these issues, help the

students, and ultimately help their patients. Bridie’s students said how well they had learned from this, and my students felt it helped them to prepare.”

The success and potential of the project is echoed by Dr Moore, who adds, “My students have had their eyes opened to a whole new way that drama can engage with the public and the community. Making these connections with the two departments has been great and will bear fruits for the future.

“Working with the PPG has helped, as normally this could have been remote research by the students. Members of the group have critiqued their work, developed scripts that have been authenticated by people with these lived experiences, and have worked with people they would never have met.

“They are applying their skills to a real-world situation and exploring issues around communications and the needs of both the student nurses and people living with mental health issues.”

Alison Morris, Service User and Carer Involvement coordinator for the PPG, commented that, “Six of our members came along to share their experiences, and instil a sense of authenticity to the students regarding the realities of mental health illnesses.”

“The sessions worked superbly,” added Service User and Carer Involvement development lead Chris Essen.

“Our members were able to share experiences and contribute to the development of the scenarios which were presented in the forum theatre. We very much hope that the PPG can be involved with more sessions like this in the future.”

## Contact the PPG



**Chris Essen, Service User  
and Carer Involvement  
Development Lead**



**Alison Morris, Service User  
and Carer Involvement  
Coordinator**

Please contact Alison or Chris if you would like to:

- Work with a Service User or Carer Group Member
- Find out more about the PPG
- Become a member of the PPG
- Obtain copies of any items mentioned in our newsletter
- Obtain copies of our previous newsletters
- Attend one of our meetings or social events
- Receive a large print of any items mentioned in our newsletter or the newsletter itself

### Ideas for future publications

If you have any suggestions or ideas about what you would like to see in future publications of this newsletter please email us.

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