ISRCTN27739943 https://doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN27739943

An investigation of the frequency of social communication problems among adults admitted to acute mental health wards

Submission date
03/06/2019

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
10/06/2019

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
01/02/2022

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[ ] Results
[ ] Individual participant data
[ ] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Problems with Social Communication (PSC), including Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD's), are lifelong and associated with difficulties in social interaction, communication and restricted, repetitive behaviours. Most research has focused on these issues in childhood. Little is known about how common ASD's and other PSC are among adults, including those admitted to psychiatric hospitals.
Identifying people with ASD's and other PSC will enable them to access services appropriate for their needs that can improve their quality of life. There is a risk that these people are otherwise incorrectly diagnosed with other mental disorders, and offered treatments unlikely to be helpful for them. Nevertheless, some people have both PSC or ASD and other mental and physical health conditions (comorbidities), though the extent of this problem is poorly understood.
This study aims to:
(1) Estimate how common ASD's are amongst adults who have been admitted to psychiatric hospitals
(2) Examine the association between other mental and physical health conditions in this population.

Who can participate?
Anyone aged over 18 who is or has been a psychiatric inpatient on an acute mental health ward

What does the study involve?
We will collect data on patient's social communication, quality of life and physical and mental health (Phase 1). A subgroup of patients, selected via stratified random sampling according to Autism Quotient score, will be invited into Phase 2, involving comprehensive autism diagnostic criteria testing.
Patients with intellectual disabilities will bypass Phase 1 tests, progressing directly to Phase 2. All Phase 2 patients will also be given a standardized interview regarding their physical and mental health. Following the Phase 2 interview, checklists for internationally recognised diagnostic criteria for autism will be completed by the assessing member of the research team, to establish whether the patient satisfies such criteria.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Individuals who participate in this study cannot be assured that they will directly benefit from the research themselves. However, the findings of this study will add to the currently limited evidence base in terms of the prevalence of autism among adults admitted to psychiatric hospitals, and the healthcare needs of this group.
In terms of risks, the study does not involve any invasive tests, such as blood testing. However, whilst most people enjoy completing the questionnaires and taking part in the interviews, some people can find certain questions potentially upsetting.

Where is the study run from?
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, UK

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
March 2019 to June 2021

Who is funding the study?
National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), UK

Who is the main contact?
Dr Samuel J Tromans,
sjt56@leicester.ac.uk

Study website
http://www.forensiclearningdisability.com

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

Contact name
Dr Samuel J Tromans

ORCID ID
http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0783-285X

Contact details
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust
Agnes Unit
400 Anstey Lane
Leicester
United Kingdom
LE7 7GL
01162955098
st386@leicester.ac.uk

Additional identifiers

EudraCT/CTIS number
Nil known

IRAS number

ClinicalTrials.gov number
Nil known

Secondary identifying numbers
40960

Study information

Scientific Title
The Prevalence of Social Communication PRoblems in Adult Psychiatric INpaTients: the SPRINT study

Acronym
The SPRINT Study

Study objectives
The research aims to estimate the prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD's) amongst adults who have been admitted to psychiatric hospitals (including those with intellectual disabilities) and examine the association between other mental and physical health conditions in adults who meet diagnostic criteria for ASDs with those who do not meet such criteria (all of whom have been admitted to a psychiatric hospital) and other psychiatric and physical comorbidities within an adult psychiatric inpatient population.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 22/02/2019, (East of England – Essex Research Ethics Committee, The Old Chapel, Royal Standard Place, Nottingham, NG1 6FS; nrescommitteee.eastofengland-essex@nhs.net; 0207 104 8115), ref: 19/EE/0009.

Study design
Observational; Design type: Cross-sectional

Primary study design
Observational

Secondary study design
Cross sectional study

Study setting(s)
Other

Study type(s)
Diagnostic

Participant information sheet

Not available in web format, please use the contact details below to request a patient information sheet

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Psychiatric disorder requiring hospitalisation

Interventions
Adult patients (over 18 years of age) who have spent time on an acute mental health ward in a psychiatric hospital in Leicester will be invited to participate in the study.
Phase 1 of the study will involve completion of questionnaire tests, including the Autism Quotient (AQ), the Adult Social Behaviour Questionnaire, (ASBQ, which will be completed by both the patient as well as an informant who knows them well, such as a close relative or long-term partner), EuroQol-5D-5L (EQ-5D-5L, completed by both participant and informant) and the informant version of the Social Responsiveness Scale, 2nd edition Adult (SRS-2). They will complete these questionnaires independently, and either post them back to the research team or make them available for a member of the research team to collect (if they are still in hospital). Patients with intellectual disabilities will not undertake the Phase 1 questionnaire tests and they will instead progress directly to Phase 2. Further information regarding all patients will be collected from them directly, using a standardised form designed by the research team. The information collected will include the following:
Basic information:
1. Date of birth
2. Sex
3. Postcode
4. Ethnic group
5. Employment status
6. Relationship status
Mental health (psychiatric) history:
7. Date of most recent psychiatric hospital admission
8. Discharge date of most recent psychiatric hospital admission (where applicable)
9. Total number of inpatient psychiatric admissions
10. Mental health diagnoses (ICD-10)
Physical Health (Medical History):
11. Physical health diagnoses (ICD-10)

A sample of patients without intellectual disabilities (selected according to their AQ test score) and all patients with intellectual disabilities, will be invited into Phase 2 of the study, involving further comprehensive autism diagnostic testing, including the diagnostic algorithm and forensic items for the Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders (DISCO-A), which will be undertaken with an informant for the patient, as well as the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS-2), the Autism Spectrum Disorder interview within the Schedules for Clinical Assessment in Neuropsychiatry version 3 (ASD-SCAN-3). Patients with intellectual disabilities will not undergo ASDSCAN-3 testing, and will instead be tested with the Stigma Questionnaire for people with Intellectual Disability (SQID).
All patients will also be interviewed on the Physical Health Conditions and Mental Illness Diagnoses and Treatment sections of the 2014 Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey (APMS), in order to provide information about their mental and physical health needs.

Following the Phase 2 interview process, checklists for internationally recognised diagnostic criteria for ASD (the 10th revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems Diagnostic Criteria for Research [ICD-10-DCR] and the 5th edition of

the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders [DSM-5]) will be completed by the assessing member of the research team, to establish whether the patient satisfies such criteria.

Intervention Type
Other

Primary outcome measure
The primary outcome measure for the study will be the absence or presence of meeting internationally agreed diagnostic criteria (ICD-10-DCR and DSM-5) for ASD. This will be after Phase 2 clinical assessments have been completed (i.e. Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders, Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule and the Autism questions for the Schedules for Clinical Assessment in Neuropsychiatry version 3), at which point the assessing member of the research team will establish whether the participant meets the diagnostic criteria through the use of ICD-10-DCR and DSM-5 diagnostic criteria checklists.

Secondary outcome measures
Extent of other mental and physical health conditions in adults in who meet diagnostic criteria for autism, compared with those who do not meet such criteria (this information will be obtained from data obtained on the standardized Phase 2 interviews regarding physical and mental comorbidity).

Overall study start date
02/05/2017

Completion date
30/06/2021

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. 18 to 65 years of age (on the date of psychiatric hospital admission)
2. Being or having been a psychiatric inpatient on an acute mental health ward
3. Understand written and/or verbal English

Participant type(s)
Patient

Age group
Adult

Lower age limit
18 Years

Sex
Both

Target number of participants
Planned Sample Size: 200; UK Sample Size: 200

Key exclusion criteria

1. Clinical diagnosis of dementia
2. Patients lacking capacity will be excluded if they become distressed by the assessment process (at any point) or if their guardians are not in agreement with them remaining in the study.

Date of first enrolment
06/03/2019

Date of final enrolment
31/12/2020

Locations

Countries of recruitment
England

United Kingdom

Study participating centre
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust
Riverside House
Bridge Park Plaza
Bridge Park Road
Thurmaston
Leicester
United Kingdom
LE4 8PQ

Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Leicester

Sponsor details
Academic Department (Ground Floor)
Leicester General Hospital
Gwendolen Road
Leicester
England
United Kingdom
LE5 4PW
01162584099
uolsponsor@le.ac.uk

Sponsor type
Hospital/treatment centre

ROR
https://ror.org/04h699437

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
NIHR Central Commissioning Facility (CCF)

Results and Publications

Publication and dissemination plan
Planned publication in a high-impact peer-reviewed journal

Intention to publish date
31/03/2022

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The current data sharing plans for this study are unknown and will be available at a later date

IPD sharing plan summary
Data sharing statement to be made available at a later date

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Protocol file	version v1	14/02/2019	14/06/2019	No	No
Protocol article	protocol	23/12/2019	05/11/2020	Yes	No
HRA research summary			28/06/2023	No	No