

# Phone Pal: volunteering via smart-phone for people with psychosis

<b>Submission date</b> 22/09/2018	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 28/09/2018	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 03/03/2026	<b>Condition category</b> Mental and Behavioural Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

People with psychosis are commonly socially isolated, both due to their own condition, but also due to the stigma towards them. Although several volunteering programmes exist in the community that could potentially help patients, many expect in person meetings, requiring a greater effort of availability and commitment from participants, which may be difficult for them to fulfil. Therefore, there is a need for more flexible, easily accessible support for people with psychosis.

This study aims to find out the acceptability and the feasibility of remote digital volunteering over a smart-phone for people with psychosis, exploring its potential impact in participants (patients and volunteers).

### Who can participate?

**Patient participants:** Adults with psychosis, receiving care in secondary NHS mental health services, who have sufficient command of English to complete the measures and have capacity to provide informed consent.

**Volunteer participants:** Adult volunteers, who have sufficient command of English to complete the measures and have capacity to provide informed consent.

### What does the study involve?

A patient participant will be matched with a volunteer participant. Each patient-volunteer pair will be encouraged to communicate during 12 weeks with each other through a smart-phone that they will receive. Participants are encouraged to send texts, WhatsApp messages, e-mails, make audio or video phone-calls, according to their preference, once per week.

### What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Participants may benefit from getting in contact with their match over smart-phone. Participants will be reimbursed for their time spent completing the baseline and follow-up measures. We will provide training at the beginning of the study, and support throughout whenever required. There are no known risks to participants taking part in this study.

### Where is the study run from?

East London NHS Foundation Trust (UK)

When is study starting and how long is it expected to run for?  
May 2018 to October 2019

Who is funding the study?  
East London NHS Foundation Trust (UK)

Who is the main contact?  
Dr Mariana Pinto da Costa  
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## Contact information

**Type(s)**  
Scientific

**Contact name**  
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## Additional identifiers

**Protocol serial number**  
012393

## Study information

**Scientific Title**  
Phone Pal: a mixed methods exploratory study of an intervention for people with psychosis to get in contact with a volunteer via smart-phone

**Acronym**  
Phone Pal

**Study objectives**  
The overall aim of this study is to assess the acceptability and the feasibility of remote digital volunteering over smart-phone for people with psychosis, exploring its potential impact.

**Ethics approval required**

Old ethics approval format

## **Ethics approval(s)**

Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Research Ethics Committee, 22/08/2018, ref. 18/EE/0196

## **Primary study design**

Interventional

## **Study design**

Interventional single-centre pre-post feasibility study with an internal pilot

## **Study type(s)**

Treatment

## **Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Psychosis

## **Interventions**

A patient participant will be matched with a volunteer participant. Each patient-volunteer pair will be encouraged to communicate during 12 weeks with each other, through a smart-phone, once per week, conducting informal conversation. Participants can send texts, WhatsApp messages, e-mails, and make audio or video phone-calls, according to their preference. Follow-up assessments will be done within 2 weeks of the end of the intervention.

## **Intervention Type**

Behavioural

## **Primary outcome(s)**

Feasibility and acceptability of the intervention will be evaluated by assessing the patterns of smart-phone usage (texts, WhatsApp messages, e-mails, make audio or video phone-calls) within each patient-volunteer pair, and interviewing participants at the end of the study.

## **Key secondary outcome(s)**

The following are assessed at the baseline and at the end of the study for both patients and volunteers.

For patient participants:

1. Smart-phone preferences usage, assessed by self-reported smart-phone usage
2. Step count, assessed by the smart-phone
3. Quality of life, assessed using the Manchester Short Assessment of Quality of Life (MANSA)
4. Physical activity, assessed using the International physical activity questionnaire (IPAQ)
5. Self-esteem, assessed using the Self-Esteem Rating Scale – Short Form
6. Social comparison, assessed using the Social Comparison Scale
7. Attachment, assessed using the Revised Adult Attachment Scale (RAAS)
8. Strength of social network, assessed using the 7-days Social Contacts Assessment
9. Psychiatric symptoms, assessed using the Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS)
10. Therapeutic relationship, assessed using the Scale to Assess Therapeutic Relationships – Patient Version (STAR-P)

For volunteer participants:

1. Smart-phone preferences usage, assessed by self-reported smart-phone usage
2. Step count, assessed by the smart-phone

3. Quality of life, assessed using the Manchester Short Assessment of Quality of Life (MANSA)
4. Physical activity, assessed using the International physical activity questionnaire (IPAQ)
5. Self-esteem, assessed using the Self-Esteem Rating Scale – Short Form
6. Social comparison, assessed using the Social Comparison Scale
7. Social distance, assessed using the Social Distance Questionnaire (SDQ)
8. Therapeutic relationship, assessed using the Scale to Assess Therapeutic Relationships – Volunteer Version (STAR-V)

**Completion date**

01/12/2019

## Eligibility

**Key inclusion criteria**

Patients:

1. Aged 18 years or over
2. Clinical diagnosis of schizophrenia or a related psychotic disorder (ICD 10: F20- 29)
3. Interested in having a volunteer with whom they would be in contact through a smart-phone for 12 weeks
4. Receiving care in secondary NHS mental health services
5. Capacity to provide informed consent
6. Sufficient command of English to complete the measures

Volunteers:

1. Aged 18 years or over
2. Interested in having a patient with whom they would be in contact through a smart-phone for 12 weeks
3. Capacity to provide informed consent
4. Sufficient command of English to complete the measures

**Participant type(s)**

Patient

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

**Age group**

Mixed

**Lower age limit**

18 Years

**Upper age limit**

120 Years

**Sex**

All

**Total final enrolment**

36

## **Key exclusion criteria**

Patients and volunteers:

1. Unable to use smart-phones, even if provided with appropriate assistive technology

## **Date of first enrolment**

01/10/2018

## **Date of final enrolment**

01/10/2019

## **Locations**

### **Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

### **Study participating centre**

**East London NHS Foundation Trust**

Trust Headquarters 9 Alie Street

London

England

E18DE

## **Sponsor information**

### **Organisation**

Queen Mary University of London

### **ROR**

<https://ror.org/026zzn846>

## **Funder(s)**

### **Funder type**

Not defined

### **Funder Name**

East London NHS Foundation Trust

# Results and Publications

## Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

### 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?
<a href="#">Results article</a>		01/06/2023	04/07/2023	Yes	No
<a href="#">Results article</a>		12/01/2024	15/01/2024	Yes	No
<a href="#">Results article</a>		11/12/2024	27/12/2024	Yes	No
<a href="#">Results article</a>		04/02/2026	03/03/2026	Yes	No
<a href="#">Protocol article</a>		30/11/2021	20/12/2021	Yes	No
<a href="#">HRA research summary</a>			28/06/2023	No	No