

Investigating and improving care (education) and treatment reviews (C(E)TRs)

Submission date 28/09/2026	Recruitment status Recruiting	☐ Prospectively registered ☐ Protocol
Registration date 30/09/2026	Overall study status Ongoing	☐ Statistical analysis plan ☐ Results
Last Edited 30/09/2026	Condition category Other	☐ Individual participant data ☒ Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Care (Education) and Treatment Reviews, or C(E)TRs, were introduced in England in 2015 to help people with a learning disability and autistic people get the right support in the community and avoid unnecessary admission to a mental health hospital. However, there is limited evidence about how well C(E)TRs work. This study aims to find out whether community C(E)TRs reduce hospital admissions and improve people's health, wellbeing and care.

Who can participate?

The study is for people aged 14 years or older who have a learning disability and/or are autistic, are receiving support from an NHS community mental health services, and are considered at increased risk of admission to a mental health hospital. Family members and paid carers of participants can also take part.

What does the study involve?

People with a learning disability and autistic people from different parts of England will be recruited to the study and followed-up over time. Researchers will collect information about hospital admissions, mental health, behaviour, quality of life, medication, use of health and social care services, and the care and support people receive. The information will be collected at the point of recruitment, at 6 months, and at 9 months. The information will be collected by questionnaires that a researcher will go through with the participant. The data that are collected will allow researchers to compare people who have a C(E)TR with people who do not.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

People taking part may not receive a direct personal benefit. However, the information they provide may help improve C(E)TRs and the support provided to people with a learning disability and autistic people in the future.

The study is considered to be low risk. Completing questionnaires and assessments will take some time and may be tiring. Interviews may involve discussing difficult experiences, including times when community care has broken down or when hospital admission has been needed, and this could be upsetting. Participants can take a break or stop an interview if they wish, and the research team will help them access appropriate support if needed.

Where is the study run from?

The study is led by King's College London (UK), in partnership with Queen Mary University of London and other universities and NHS organisations. Participants are being recruited through NHS services in different parts of England so that the study includes people from a range of geographical areas and communities.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

August 2025 to February 2028

Who is funding the study?

The study is funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Health and Social Care Delivery Research Programme (reference NIHR158490)

Who is the main contact?

Dr Rory Sheehan, opticatstudy@kcl.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)

Principal investigator, Scientific, Public

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Additional identifiers

Integrated Research Application System (IRAS)

335048

National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)

158490

Study information

Scientific Title

Optimising community C(E)TRs through understanding the experience of people with learning disability and autistic people and investigating their impact on care

Acronym

OptiCaT

Study objectives

1. Do C(E)TRs reduce hospital admissions (primary outcome) and duration of hospital stay in people with learning disability and/or autistic people who are at risk of psychiatric hospital admission?
2. Do C(E)TRs improve other clinical, health and social outcomes?
3. Are C(E)TRs cost-effective?

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 31/07/2025, Leeds West Research Ethics Committee (NHSBT Newcastle Blood Donor Centre Holland Drive, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4NQ, United Kingdom; -; leedswest.rec@hra.nhs.uk), ref: 25/YH/0119

Primary study design

Observational

Secondary study design

Longitudinal study

Study type(s)

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Intellectual (learning) disability or autism spectrum disorder

Interventions

This is an observational prospective cohort study recruiting people aged 14 years and over with a learning disability and/or autism who are considered at increased risk of psychiatric hospital admission (as identified by being rated red or amber on the Dynamic Support Register [DSR]). Participants will be recruited through NHS community mental health services across diverse areas of England. Family or paid carers may also take part.

Participants will complete assessments at the start of the study and again at 6 and 9 months. Information will be collected from participants, carers and clinicians about psychiatric hospital admissions, mental health and behaviour, quality of life, unmet needs, use of health and social care services, medication and restrictive practices. Assessments can be completed face-to-face, by telephone or online. We would expect some people to receive a C(E)TR during follow-up and others will not.

The main outcome is admission to psychiatric hospital during follow-up. Secondary outcomes include psychiatric symptoms (measured by the Moss-PAS Check), behaviour that challenges (Behaviour Problems Inventory - Short form), unmet need (CANDID-R), quality of life (WHOQOL-DIS), health-related quality of life (EuroQoL Five Dimensions), service use (contacts with health and social care using a modified version of the Adult Service Use Schedule), all of which will be completed by the participant with learning disability or autism. Family carers who are enrolled will complete measures of family carer distress (Kessler Psychological Distress Scale), and carer health-related quality of life (EQ-5D-5L). Clinicians providing care to recruited participants will

provide information on participant symptom severity (using the Clinical Global Impression-Severity scale), participant health and social functioning (measured with Health of the Nation Outcome Scale, HoNOS), use of restrictive practices (i.e. Mental Health Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards), psychotropic medication, and whether a C(E)TR was conducted.

The main outcome will be psychiatric hospital admission during follow-up. Outcomes will be compared between participants who receive a C(E)TR and those who do not, to investigate whether C(E)TRs are associated with a reduced likelihood of hospital admission and better health and care outcomes.

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

1. Admission to psychiatric hospital measured using the modified version of the Adult Service Use Schedule (AD-SUS) and also provided by the clinician at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Psychiatric symptoms measured using the Moss Psychiatric Assessment Schedule - Check (Moss-PAS (Check)) at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
2. Behaviour that challenges measured using the Behaviour Problems Inventory - Short Form (BPI-S) at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
3. Unmet care needs measured using the Camberwell Assessment of Needs for Adults with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities - Research version (CANDID-R) at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
4. Quality of Life measured using the 13-item WHOQOL Disabilities module (WHOQOL-DIS) at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
5. Health-related quality of life measured using the EuroQoL Five Dimensions - Three Levels questionnaire (EQ-5D-3L) at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
6. Service use (health and social care contacts) measured using a modified version of the Adult Service Use Schedule (AD-SUS) at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
7. Family carer distress measured using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6) at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
8. Family carer health-related quality of life measured using the EuroQol 5-Dimension 5-Level questionnaire at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
9. Clinician-rated participant symptom severity measured using the Clinical Global Impression-Severity (CGI-S) Scale at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
10. Clinician-rated participant health and social functioning measured using the Health of the Nation Outcome Scales (HoNOS) at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
11. Clinician-rated participant exposure to restrictive practices (physical, mechanical, or chemical restraint) measured using a questionnaire created by the research team at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months
12. Psychotropic medication prescribing measured using a questionnaire created by the research team at baseline, 6 months, and 9 months

Completion date

29/02/2028

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Children/adolescents (aged between 14 and 17 years, inclusive) or adults (≥ 18 years) with a clinical diagnosis of learning disability (of any degree) or autism (diagnosis based on service records, expected to conform to ICD-10 chapter F7- criteria for learning disability or ICD-10 F84 criteria for autism)
2. Under the care of a community mental health service (e.g., Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services [CAMHS], Community Learning Disability Team [CLDT], Community Mental Health Team [CMHT]) in a participating Trust
3. Rated as red or amber on the Dynamic Support Register (DSR)
4. Provide informed consent to taking part or, where an adult lacks capacity to consent to participate, a personal or nominated consultee has signed a declaration form or, in the case of children/adolescents (< 18 years), a parent/guardian has signed a consent form

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Mixed

Lower age limit

14 Years

Upper age limit

99 Years

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

0

Key exclusion criteria

1. No clinically-confirmed diagnosis of learning disability or autism
2. Not on the Dynamic Support Register
3. Currently admitted to a psychiatric hospital
4. Does not provide informed consent or, where an adult lacks capacity, there is no consultee declaration or, in the case of children/adolescents (< 18 years) a parent/guardian has not signed a consent form

Date of first enrolment

01/08/2025

Date of final enrolment

28/02/2027

Locations**Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
Pinewood House
Pinewood PLACE
Dartford
England
DA2 7WG

Study participating centre
South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
Bethlem Royal Hospital
Monks Orchard Road
Beckenham
England
BR3 3BX

Study participating centre
North London NHS Foundation Trust
4th Floor, East Wing
St. Pancras Hospital
4 St. Pancras Way
London
England
NW1 0PE

Study participating centre
East London NHS Foundation Trust
Robert Dolan House
9 Alie Street
London
England
E1 8DE

Study participating centre
Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
Trust Headquarters
350 Euston Road
Regents PLACE
London
England
NW1 3AX

Study participating centre

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Hq

NHS Foundation Trust

Carholme Court

Long Leys Road

Lincoln

England

LN1 1FS

Study participating centre

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Trust Hq

Swandean

Arundel Road

Worthing

England

BN13 3EP

Study participating centre

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Carew House

Beacon Technology Park

Dunmere Road

Bodmin

England

PL31 2QN

Study participating centre

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Trust Headquarters Redesmere

The Countess of Chester Health Park

Liverpool Road

Chester

England

CH2 1BQ

Study participating centre

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

Trust Headquarters

West Park Hospital

Edward Pease Way

Darlington
England
DL2 2TS

Study participating centre
Hertfordshire Partnership N H S
Harper Lane
Shenley
Radlett
England
WD7 9HQ

Study participating centre
North East London NHS Foundation Trust
Goodmayes Hospital
157 Barley Lane
Ilford
England
IG3 8XJ

Study participating centre
Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Trust Hq
18 Mole Business Park
Randalls Road
Leatherhead
England
KT22 7AD

Study participating centre
South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust
Springfield Hospital
61 Glenburnie Road
London
England
SW17 7DJ

Sponsor information

Organisation

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

ROR

<https://ror.org/015803449>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Funder Name

National Institute for Health and Care Research

Alternative Name(s)

National Institute for Health Research, NIHR Research, NIHRresearch, NIHR - National Institute for Health Research, NIHR (The National Institute for Health and Care Research), NIHR

Funding Body Type

Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype

National government

Location

United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available