

| Project Details |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Project Code    | NMH27Ba Halligan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Title           | Transdiagnostic mental health interventions for adversity affected youth                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Research Theme  | Neuroscience & Mental Health                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Project Type    | Dry lab                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Summary         | <p>Young people exposed to adversity are at risk of a range of mental health problems including anxiety, depression and conduct-related problems, making adversity a 'transdiagnostic' risk factor for mental disorder. Given this, transdiagnostic interventions that target shared underlying processes (e.g., dysregulated emotions, negative self-beliefs) could be appropriate but remain underexplored. Many adversity-affected youth are supported by third-sector organisations (e.g., charities), where mental health provision varies widely and focused intervention elements could be especially beneficial. This project will explore potential for embedding core transdiagnostic intervention components for youth affected by adversity into such provision, thereby enhancing this key source of support.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Description     | <p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Substantial evidence has accumulated linking childhood trauma and adversity to poor mental health across the lifespan. The effects of early adversity appear to cut-across traditional diagnostic boundaries, rather than predisposing young people to specific psychological disorders. Thus, longitudinal evidence by our team and others demonstrates that trauma exposure is associated with elevated rates of anxiety, depressive, conduct and attention-related disorders among youth, with limited evidence of differential associations.</p> <p>Given these findings, transdiagnostic approaches may be appropriate for supporting mental health among adversity-affected youth, as they can target key underlying, shared processes. For example, negative self-appraisals could be one such process, since they can develop following adverse experiences and have been strongly associated with mental disorders including PTSD, anxiety and depression. Similarly, emotional dysregulation has been identified as a key transdiagnostic factor that may be shaped by early adversity and elevate risk of psychopathology. Despite evidence of these and other cross-cutting processes, application of transdiagnostic approaches remains limited, with most interventions continuing to target specific disorders despite the highly comorbid difficulties experienced by adversity-exposed youth.</p> <p>Notably, many youth who are coping with the effects of adversity are poorly-served by standard mental health provision or educational providers. Consequently, they frequently receive support from third sector organisations, including mental health or wellbeing support and alternative educational provision. The enormous and often under-recognised contribution of charitable and volunteer organisations to the youth mental health landscape presents both opportunities and challenges. Trauma-affected youth who struggle to access/engage with traditional interventions can benefit from alternative provision, which may serve to build resilience and supportive relationships in positive, creative ways. Nonetheless, such provision is highly varied in terms of the support being offered and the training/supervision of staff, and is typically not Care Quality Commission registered</p> |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>(<a href="https://amhp.org.uk/mental-health-sector-mapping/">https://amhp.org.uk/mental-health-sector-mapping/</a>). These factors could mean that key opportunities to maximise the mental health benefits of the support provided are being missed. Modular interventions provide a potential means to address this issue, as they provide individual intervention components that focus on transdiagnostic processes rather than disorders, are highly adaptable to individual or organisational factors, and have proven suitable for delivery by non-specialists.</p> <p>Research question/objectives</p> <p>This PhD will focus on understanding the opportunities to deliver a transdiagnostic, modular intervention approach to adversity-affected youth, embedded within third sector organisations.</p> <p>Research question:</p> <p>How can transdiagnostic intervention approaches be used to enhance the support provided to trauma-affected youth by third sector organisations?</p> <p>Specific objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To characterise the key processes that transdiagnostic interventions for trauma-affected youth should target and identify associated intervention components.</li> <li>2. To investigate the feasibility of embedding a modular, transdiagnostic intervention within third sector provision for adversity-affected youth.</li> <li>3. To provide preliminary evidence of the likely utility of a modular intervention targeting the mental health of trauma-affected youth when delivered by third sector providers.</li> </ol> <p>Approach</p> <p>The approach taken in this research will ultimately be student-led. However, the following could be included.</p> <p>Objective 1: Characterising key processes and associated intervention components</p> <p>An initial review of the evidence will identify the core, transdiagnostic processes that are relevant to mental health among adversity-affected youth. Subsequently, the student will undertake primary research with trauma-affected youth, using ecological momentary assessment methods to characterise the core psychological processes that are most frequently associated with transdiagnostic symptoms in this group. Finally, intervention components that target those processes will be extracted from existing modular treatment approaches/research evidence, providing a preliminary framework.</p> <p>Objective 2: Feasibility of embedding modular interventions within third sector provision</p> <p>The student will use implementation science approaches with third sector partners to examine potential for the embedding of modular intervention components within their services, including focus groups/interviews with representatives from relevant organisations, and/or document review to understand what is currently being offered. This work would identify key factors relevant to implementing a modular intervention in this context, including in relation to feasibility, acceptability, delivery approach, and need for training/support.</p> <p>Objective 3: Generating preliminary evidence of acceptability/utility</p> |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             | <p>Based on the outcomes of objectives 1 and 2, the student will identify a maximum of three modular intervention components that could be suitable for delivery by third sector partners. Depending on the number/nature, the student could engage a range of approaches to generate initial data on acceptability/utility, ranging from using a multiple baseline experimental design with young people, to providing and evaluating training elements for third sector partners.</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement</p> <p>Robust engagement with young people and key stakeholders will inform the research questions, design and dissemination, to maximise relevance to the target groups. This component will benefit from the infrastructure established through the NIHR funded Bath Mental Health Research Group (MHRG: e.g., young people's advisory group and other stakeholder activities).</p> |
| Can be completed part time? | Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Supervisory Team            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Lead Supervisor             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Name                        | Professor Sarah Halligan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Affiliation                 | Bath                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| College/Faculty             | Humanities and Social Sciences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Department/School           | Psychology                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Email Address               | s.l.halligan@bath.ac.uk                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Co-Supervisor 1             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Name                        | Professor Pamela Jacobsen                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Affiliation                 | Bath                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| College/Faculty             | Humanities and Social Sciences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Department/School           | Psychology                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Co-Supervisor 2             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Name                        | Dr Emily Hards                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Affiliation                 | Bath                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| College/Faculty             | Humanities and Social Sciences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Department/School           | Psychology                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Co-Supervisor 3             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Name                        | Dr Becky Mars                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Affiliation                 | Bristol                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| College/Faculty             | Bristol Medical School                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Department/School           | Population Health Sciences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |