



# Virtual Conference

## 30 March 2021





# Agenda: Virtual Conference

## 30th March 2021

1.00- 1.55pm	Welcome by CEO Simon Kitchen Introduction to and launch of the Bipolar Commission by Co-chairs Dr Clare Dolman & Prof Guy Goodwin Sir Norman Lamb, interviewed by Leah Charles-King
1.55-2.00pm	Break
2.00-3.00pm	Bridging the Research Gap (plenary session)
	Break- out sessions in Zoom -full descriptions pages 2-5)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experiences of Bipolar in the LGBTQ+ Community</li><li>• Women and Bipolar</li><li>• Experiences of Bipolar in Black and Minority Ethnic Communities</li><li>• Men and Bipolar</li><li>• The Needs of Young People and Their Families When Living with Bipolar</li><li>• How to Get a Diagnosis</li><li>• Bipolar Basics - Everything You Need to Know</li><li>• Employment and Bipolar: Work and Disclosure</li></ul>
3.00-3.30pm	Break with music from Diversity Radio, featuring artist Eugene Ankomah
3.30-3.55pm	Panel Discussion 1 - Stigma: a Discussion. Hosted by Leah Charles-King with lived experience panellists: Emma Belle, Luyando Malawo, Nicky Chinn and Sarah Owen
3.55-4.00pm	Break
4.00- 4.25pm	Panel Discussion 2 - Recovery From the Mental Health Effects of the Pandemic. Hosted by Leah Charles-King with Professor Allan Young and lived experienced panellists: Amanda Saunders, April Kelley, Dean Clarke and Mohini Morris
4.25 - 4.30pm	Closing remarks Simon Kitchen

# Break-out sessions

## Bridging the Research Gap - plenary

Professor Hamish McAllister-Williams (Professor of Affective Disorders, Newcastle University) and Dr Stuart Watson (Academic Clinical Senior Lecturer, Newcastle University), Emma Belle (Bipolar UK Ambassador) and Robert Westhead (former Bipolar UK Trustee)

In this session, Prof Hamish McAllister-Williams and Dr Stuart Watson will focus on drug treatment. They will be supported by former Bipolar UK Trustee Robert Westhead who will talk about his experience of participating in clinical trials. Expect Hamish and Stuart to review the available treatment options and to check out whether their understanding of current research needs accords with the bipolar community. They will also talk about ongoing clinical trials, including PAX-BD which is looking to see whether the apparent positive impact of a drug called pramipexole holds up in a large clinical trial. Emma will be chairing the Q&A with questions from the audience.

## Experiences of Bipolar in the LGBTQ+ Community

April Kelley (Bipolar UK Ambassador), Jonny Benjamin (Mental Health Campaigner MBE) and Carrie Lyell (Editor DIVA Magazine)

Sexuality and bipolar disorder are both on a spectrum and sometimes for better or worse these collide. This will be explored with Jonny Benjamin and Carrie Lyell and hosted by Bipolar UK Ambassador April Kelley, a bisexual woman who considers herself a Mighty Bi-Bi.

# Break-out sessions continued

## Women and Bipolar

Dr Clare Dolman (Patient and Public Involvement Lead, Section of Women's Mental Health, King's College London), Natasha Naomi Rea (Bipolar UK Ambassador)

Dr Clare Dolman from King's College London will be focusing on the impact of pregnancy, postpartum and menopause, and she'll be joined by Bipolar UK Ambassador and actor Natasha Naomi Rea, who is a parent living with bipolar

## Experiences of Bipolar in Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

Leah Charles-King (Bipolar UK Ambassador), Dr Marvin Iroegbu (Psychologist), Charlie Aretuemhen (Men's lead for Sakura Well-being), Nash Momori (Founder of Diversity Radio), Marsha Antoine (Mental Health Social Worker) and Georgia Bobb (TV presenter)

This interactive forum, chaired by Leah Charles-King, will feature a cross section of panellists who will explore the stigma that exists within the Black community and other ethnic minority groups.

## Men and Bipolar

Dean Clarke (Bipolar UK Ambassador), Dr Karine Macritchie (Consultant Lead Psychiatrist) and Samantha Rickwood (Senior Nurse) OPTIMA Mood Disorder Service, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

Join Lead Consultant Psychiatrist Dr Karine Macritchie and Senior Nurse Samantha Rickwood from OPTIMA at the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust to learn more about how bipolar affects men. They will be joined by Bipolar UK Ambassador Dean Clarke who will discuss stigma and how it can be a barrier to men seeking help. Dean will share his journey of living with bipolar up until his diagnosis, living with bipolar now and how his mental health improved once he broke down his own personal stigma.

# Break-out sessions continued

## The Needs of Young People and Their Families When Living with Bipolar

Dr Aditya Sharma (Clinical Senior Lecturer and Honorary Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry), Dr Lynn Baron-Millar (Research Associate, Newcastle University) Nicky Chinn (Bipolar UK Ambassador), Emily, Lee and Wendy Kitching

The session will focus on the experience of a family living with bipolar combined with research data collected using in-depth interviews. The session will provide perspectives on the journey of families supporting young people being assessed for bipolar by separating this into: life before diagnosis, around the time of diagnosis and after the diagnosis. Songwriter Nicky Chinn will also discuss his experience of bipolar disorder, particularly his diagnosis at 16 in 1961.

## Getting a Diagnosis

Professor Guy Goodwin (Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, Oxford University) and Luyando Malawo (Bipolar UK Ambassador)

The session will address the delays and difficulties that can prevent early diagnosis of bipolar disorder. It will be considered from the point of view of patient and doctor and presented as an interactive discussion between Luyando Malawo and Prof Guy Goodwin.

## Bipolar Basics - Everything You Need to Know

Professor Ian Jones (Director/Clinical Professor, National Centre for Mental Health) and Alice Roberts and Holly Pearce

Prof Ian Jones from Cardiff University will focus on self-management and the facts you need to know about bipolar, especially if you are new to the condition.



# Break-out sessions continued

## Suicide Prevention: supporting a loved-one

Mohini Morris (Bipolar UK Trustee), and Sarah Skelton (Head of Programme Development at Papyrus-Prevention of Young Suicide)

Sarah Skelton from PAPRYUS and Bipolar UK Trustee Mohini Morris will be talking about the work of PAPYRUS and issues relating to suicide and self-harm in young people. The focus will be on how to support a loved one who is experiencing suicidal thoughts.

## Employment and Bipolar: Work and Disclosure

Lucy Hassall, (Peer Support Officer: Work and Learning & eCommunity Moderator, Bipolar UK) and Leah Milner (Financial and Mental Health Journalist)

In this session Lucy Hassall (Peer Support Officer for Work and Learning) and freelance financial and mental health journalist Leah Milner will be talking about workplace disclosure of bipolar and other health conditions. They will include a Q&A segment at the end where the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions about disclosure. Leah has been covering money and consumer issues for more than a decade and has also written about her bipolar diagnosis and the financial impact this has on her personally.

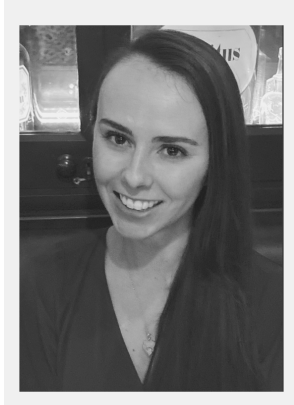
# Speaker Biographies

Dr Aditya Sharma



Dr Sharma is a Clinical Senior Lecturer at the Newcastle University and Honorary Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. His areas of clinical academic interest area are bipolar disorder impacting on children and adolescents and complex neurodevelopmental disorders. His areas of expertise also include co-design and co-production in mental health and use of m-health technologies which has led to the development of C.A.L.M. App which aims to empower and improve the lives of young people (16-25) living with bipolar disorder.

Alice Roberts



Alice is a psychology research assistant working with the National Centre for Mental Health at Cardiff University. As part of her role she has been involved in delivering the Bipolar Education Programme Cyrmu, a psychoeducation programme for people living with bipolar disorder. She has found it particularly rewarding to deliver this over zoom in recent months to provide support for people during the pandemic.

Professor Allan Young



Professor Allan Young is Chair of Mood Disorders and Director of the Centre for Affective Disorders in the Department of Psychological Medicine in the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience at King's College London, where he is also Head of School and Vice-Dean for Academic Psychiatry. He is the clinical academic lead in the Psychological Medicine and Integrated Care Clinical Academic Group in the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust, where he is also Consultant Psychiatrist and Head of the Affective Disorders Service. Professor Young's research interests focus on the cause and treatments for severe psychiatric illnesses, particularly mood disorders.

## Amanda Saunders



Amanda Saunders is a writer and head of communications at UK Parliament (in a politically neutral civil service role), and the co-author of 'Bipolar Disorder - The Ultimate Guide' (Oneworld Publications, 2019) with her cousin Sarah Owen. Four generations of their family have or have had bipolar - their shared grandfather, Amanda's mum, Sarah's dad, Amanda (who has cyclothymia), Sarah's sister and Sarah's son.

## April Kelley



April is an award winning actor, producer and the co-owner of Mini Productions. Her work has been screened around the world, picking up a wonderful array of accolades, whilst working with some of the greatest talents the UK has to offer. A huge chunk of her proudest work has been that with Bipolar UK as well as the advocacy around bisexuality. After finally being diagnosed at the age of 28, she found a voice becoming an Ambassador for Bipolar UK. Her mission is to bring comfort to others living with this tricky superpower. There's a spark of genius in us all, and through the highs, lows and whatever that in-between bit is, we can learn together.

## Charlie Aretuemhen



Charlie is passionate about creating a platform where everyone feels comfortable and safe to speak openly about mental health. For years he found it difficult to express what he had been experiencing due to the fear of being judged and being perceived as “weak” to others. Bottling up his thoughts and feelings has been detrimental to how he approached various situations. He has come to value the strength of being vulnerable and the freedom you can experience by speaking up about what you are facing. By being able to provide a platform for others to voice out he hopes, one voice at a time, we will be able to tackle the stigma against mental health.

## Carrie Lyell



Carrie Lyell is a writer, media commentator and editor-in-chief of DIVA, the world's leading magazine for lesbians, bi women and non-binary people. Passionate about amplifying the voices of those from marginalised communities, she has written about LGBTQI+ mental health for publications including the Independent and Metro. In 2021, she was named one of Attitude Magazine's 101 LGBTQ trailblazers changing the world.



## Dr Clare Dolman



Clare Dolman is a journalist and researcher whose PhD focused on women with bipolar disorder's decision-making regarding pregnancy and childbirth. She is a Patient and Public Involvement Lead for the NIHR-funded ESMI project on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of perinatal mental health services, based part-time at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience at King's College London. She also lectures on the Royal College of Psychiatrists' training courses on service user perspectives. Clare, who has a personal interest in this subject, is a trustee of the [MMHA: Maternal Mental Health Alliance](#) and of the charity [APP - Action on Postpartum Psychosis](#), and an Ambassador for [Bipolar UK](#).

## Dean Clarke



From the age of 16 Dean spent 8 years in the British Army, completing operational tours across the world including both Iraq and Afghanistan. After 6 years of struggling with his mental health after leaving the army he was diagnosed with bipolar and PTSD. Since his diagnosis Dean has come to realise that with the right support, talking openly and understanding his illness he can live a great life alongside bipolar. Being a man and being open about his struggles with his mental health was not an easy process. He believed that he had to fit a role of what man should be like. Dean wants to help men build their confidence and understanding that being open about their mental health and their struggles is the right thing to do.

## Emma Belle



Emma Belle is a Podcast Host and Mental Health Advocate. Emma is 39, originally from Brighton, UK, and has lived in Paris, Geneva and now Dubai. Diagnosed with bipolar disorder ten years ago, following a breakdown, Emma now shares her story and experience for managing mental health and trauma recovery with daily practices, tips and resources through her social media platforms, blogs and podcast.

## Eugene Ankomah

Eugene Ankomah also known as EA is seen as one of the most exciting, gifted and versatile young artists in the UK. A former child prodigy, he is a respected international multi-disciplinary Visual Artist and personality. His innovative, challenging and ever evolving work has included Painting (his primary practice), Design, Installation, Costume, Set design, Digital Art, Sculpture, Print Making, Performance, Sound Art and writing. Ankomah is also well known for creating different often challenging "characters" or "personas" designed to front his powerful but often political, social and community cohesion focused works. He was nominated for a BEFFTA Award. as 'Man of The Year' 2020/2021

## Georgina Bobb



Georgina Bobb is an award-winning TV professional with 15 years of experience working in television and Media. Holding over 50 broadcast credits and as seen on the BBC, Channel 5 and featured in The Independent she is proud of being diagnosed with Bipolar after an episode of psychosis and speaks openly about her personal experiences. She believes the condition shouldn't stop you from achieving your dreams and aiming for the best in life.

## Prof Guy Goodwin



Guy Goodwin, FMedSci is Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Oxford, Oxford, UK. Prof Goodwin's research interests are in the treatment of bipolar disorder and the application of neuroscience and technology in understanding the neurobiology of mood disorders, with a focus on developing new treatments. He is a Fellow of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, and has previously held the position of President of the British Association for Psychopharmacology (2004–2005). He is past president of the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP) and a Senior Investigator on the faculty of UK National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). He is a Thomson Reuters highly cited researcher (top 1% in field).

## Prof Hamish McAllister-Williams



Prof McAllister-Williams obtained his qualification in medicine, and a PhD in Neuropharmacology, at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He moved to Newcastle University in 1995 and was awarded a UK Medical Research Council Clinician Scientist Fellowship to investigate the pathophysiology of affective disorders, completing a research MD degree. In 2004 he was appointed a Reader in Clinical Psychopharmacology and then in 2017 Professor of Affective Disorders. He is the Lead for the Mental Health, Dementia and Neurodegenerative Disorders Research Theme. Clinically, he leads a tertiary level specialist affective disorders service in the Cumbria, Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust where he is also Deputy Medical Director for Research.

## Holly Pearce



Holly is a Senior Psychology Assistant at Cardiff University, working for the National Centre for Mental Health (NCMH). Holly currently oversees the recruitment of service users into the NCMH study through the NHS across England and Wales. Holly is also involved in co-facilitating the Bipolar Education Programme Cymru (BEPC) sessions.

## Professor Ian Jones



Ian Jones is Professor of Psychiatry and Honorary Consultant Perinatal Psychiatrist at Cardiff University. He is Director of the National Centre for Mental Health and with colleagues leads the Bipolar Disorder Research Network. NCMH has recruited over 20,000 people with mental health problems to its research cohort and BDRN has involved over 7,000 people with bipolar disorder from around the UK in research. He leads the Cardiff University Psychiatry Service (CUPS) and a clinical service offering pre-conception counselling to women with severe mental illness. He is Director of BEP-C, a group psychoeducation programme for bipolar disorder. He is a Trustee of The Maternal Mental Health Alliance and a Trustee and Scientific Advisor to Action on Postpartum Psychosis. His research focuses on bipolar disorder and postpartum psychosis. He has authored or co-authored over 300 publications and book chapters. He has been awarded the Marcé Medal for his research on Postpartum Psychosis and was named Academic Psychiatrist of the Year at the RCPsych Awards 2013. In 2014 BEP-C was awarded the British Medical Journal (BMJ) award for innovation in medicine.



## Jonny Benjamin



Jonny Benjamin MBE is an award-winning mental health campaigner, film producer, public speaker, writer and vlogger. At the age of 20 he was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder, a combination of schizophrenia and bipolar, and later began making films on YouTube about the condition that have been watched by millions of people. Jonny now speaks publicly about living with mental illness and has written articles and given various interviews on TV, radio and in print around the world to help educate and break stigma. He has also produced and presented documentaries on BBC Three and Channel 4 on the subjects of mental health and suicide. His 2014 social media campaign with Rethink Mental Illness to #findMike, the man who talked him out of jumping off a bridge when he was suicidal, went viral and led to Jonny becoming a prominent spokesperson on the subject of suicide. In 2016 he launched ThinkWell, a mental health programme for schools, which has so far been reached thousands of young people in secondary schools across the UK. He has also written 2 books. His second book, *The Book Of Hope*, is published in Spring 2021. Most recently, Jonny has setup a new mental health charity, Beyond, which aims to provide better mental health support to young people around the country.

## Dr Karine Macritchie



Dr Karine Macritchie studied physiology and medicine at the University of Glasgow. She specialised in mood disorders during her training in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She was awarded a Doctorate in Medicine with Commendation for work in brain white matter structure in bipolar disorder at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She undertook a period of post-doctoral study in mood disorders at the University of British Columbia. She has worked as lead consultant psychiatrist at the innovative OPTIMA Mood Disorder Service, part of the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust for the past six years.

## Kate Fallon



Kate works for the National Centre for Mental Health as a psychology assistant. At the beginning of the pandemic, she was fortunate enough to become involved with Bipolar Education Programme Cymru and deliver some much needed 'booster' sessions to graduates of the programme. Since then, she has helped transition the BEPC programme into an online format and helped deliver the very first e-BEPC! She's found it very rewarding being part of the BEPC team and being able to provide support for people throughout lockdown and the pandemic.



## The Kitching Family

### Emily



### Lee and Wendy



Emily is 22 and has a diagnosis of bipolar disorder. She has always been a very creative person and after completing her A-Levels at Sixth Form, she decided to study the Foundation Art & Design course at Sunderland University. Afterwards, she went on to study BA Hons Glass & Ceramics (Also at Sunderland University) and graduated in 2020. She now has a studio in Sunderland, where she keeps her potter's wheel and makes artwork. She is currently working towards making small-scale sculptures for an upcoming exhibition at the National Glass Centre in Sunderland. Emily will be sharing her lived experience in the young person session along with her parent's Lee and Wendy. Lee is a Biomedical Scientist in a Biochemistry Lab and her Wendy is a self-employed handbag designer.

## Leah Charles-King



Leah Charles-King has over 30 years' experience of media and the entertainment industry as a music artist, TV and radio presenter, producer, live host and public speaker. She is also the founder and public speaking coach at The Red Carpet Academy which teaches on-camera skills to spokespeople and influencers. Her music career began in the 1990's as one third of the girlband 'Kleshay' signed to Sony Music, and enjoyed two UK chart singles as well as a successful arena tour as supporting act for Lionel Richie. In 2001 Leah began her presenting career as the first (and only to date) Black female continuity presenter on CITV (Children's ITV) in its 40 year history. Leah enjoyed four years as host and producer of the flagship radio show, "Leah CK Drive Time" on The Beat London 103.6fm. The show swiftly became the station's most listened to broadcast and won many coveted industry awards. In 2019, Leah spoke publicly for the first time of her secret battle since being diagnosed with bipolar and generalised anxiety disorder seven years ago.

Leah Milner



Leah Milner is an award-winning consumer, money and property journalist. She also writes and speaks publicly about mental health, drawing upon on her personal experience of living with bipolar.

Dr Lynn Baron-Millar



Dr Baron-Millar is a mixed methods researcher with interests in global mental health, quality of life, digital health and healthy ageing. She currently hold posts within the Evidence Synthesis team and Academic Psychiatry. Prior to this she completed a PhD in healthy ageing and mortality risk at Newcastle University following two years as a Research Assistant working on quality of life and neuropsychological function in mental health disorders.

Lucy Hassall



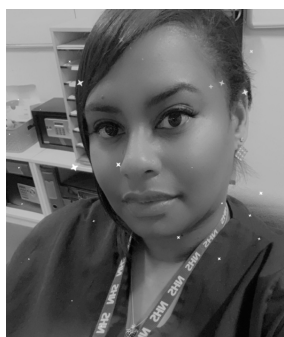
Lucy is a Peer Support Officer for Work and Learning, and eCommunity Moderator. She joined Bipolar UK in 2016, when she authored our Employee and Employer guides on Bipolar and Employment. She developed and ran the Bipolar UK Employment service offering workplace advanced statements and training for a number of years. As Peer Support Officer, Lucy regularly operates our specialist online support sessions, under the peer support services model at Bipolar UK. As speaker Lucy has representing Bipolar UK at many national events, such as the Health and Wellbeing event at the NEC in Birmingham and Peerfest.

## Luyando Malawo



Luyando is a 31 year old woman who was detained under the Mental Health Act in 2014 and then diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Determined to dispel myths and shame around mental illness, she went public with her story on social media and continues to champion this cause.

## Marsha Antoine



Marsha has a passion for improving mental health and social care for communities she holds an undergraduate degree in Psychology and a Masters in Social work together with a qualification in CBT. She is a registered practicing Social Worker and Approved Mental Health Professional with over 10 years experience

## Dr Marvin Iroegbu



Marvin Iroegbu is a clinical psychologist with a keen interest in supporting people overcoming trauma. Prior to obtaining his qualification, Marvin worked for 10 years across many facets of mental health including personality disorder, bipolar disorder and psychosis. It was through this experience that Marvin's passion for promoting the importance of good mental health grew. Marvin is passionate about mental health being understood as an important part of daily living. He created the @Marvzmind Instagram page; a platform dedicated to removing the associated stigma of mental health. The page also aims to normalise the conversation of mental health, particularly within Black and minority ethnic communities.

## Mohini Morris



Mohini Morris is a Trustee at Bipolar UK and received support from the charity, having experienced bipolar in her family. She subsequently pursued academic study in the field and has also facilitated support groups. In her day job she works in national government on social policy.

## Nashiru Momori



Nash is an Expert User Consultant and the founder of Real Insight - a User led Consultancy. He works with fellow peers (experts by experience), frontline staff and senior management teams across a range of organisations and NHS Trusts as a consultant, trainer and advisor. Nash assists organisations towards a shift in structure and practice to a fully diverse and inclusive culture. Nash is also Founder of Diversity Radio. Diversity Radio is a group of consultants with lived experience of multiple and complex needs. With this unique perspective, they developed a strong belief in service-user involvement leading to their aspiration to give people more control over their health and care.

## Natasha Naomi Rea



Natasha is an actress for TV and theatre, having starred in BBC Three's *Burn It 2*, as regular character Gemma, BBC One's daytime drama *Doctors* and has had small roles on some of Britain's best loved soaps playing Carmel in *Coronation Street* and Crystal in *Emmerdale*. Natasha is diagnosed with bipolar and released her debut book, *Me, Myself and Bipolar Brenda* at the end of January 2020. The book inspired interest to use Natasha's experiences of bipolar to develop a TV series. She is now co-writing with Mark Catley who is a double BAFTA winning writer/producer and a story consultant and writer for *Eastenders*. The book also inspired her one woman show which will be on next year. Natasha is also an Ambassador for Bipolar UK.



## Nicky Chinn



Nicky Chinn is an English songwriter and record producer. Together with Mike Chapman he had a long string of hit singles in the UK and US in the 1970s and early 1980s, including several international number-one records. The duo wrote hits for The Sweet, Suzi Quatro, Mud, New World, Arrows, Racey, Smokie, Tina Turner, Huey Lewis and the News and Toni Basil. More recently Nicky co-wrote “Live like there’s no tomorrow” recorded by Selena Gomez. Nicky lives with bipolar disorder and was diagnosed in 1961 at age 16.

## Sir Norman Lamb



A long-standing and active campaigner for mental health, Sir Norman Lamb has worked to challenge stigma around mental health and to ensure people with mental health issues are treated with the same priority as patients with physical health needs. A former Health Minister from 2012-2015, Sir Norman introduced the first access and waiting time standards in mental health care for the treatment of mental health problems like depression and anxiety, and for patients experiencing a first episode of psychosis. Prior to this he was also a Minister in the Department for Business, Innovation and skills. In 2019, Sir Norman Lamb received a knighthood in the Queen’s Birthday Honours for his public and political service, notably his contribution to mental health.

## Robert Westhead



Robert is a former journalist and now works in NHS communications. He also ran the government campaign to tackle the stigma of mental illness. Robert has sat on two successive NICE bipolar guidelines as a patient, is a former chair of Bipolar UK and was a trustee of Mind. He is a passionate advocate for mental health research, believing that effective treatments for mental illness will only be developed with a step change in investment by government and the public. Robert, 47, who suffers from rapid cycling bipolar disorder, has taken part in several research trials. His treatment has been significantly improved by the experimental drug nimodipine. Prescribed by the Maudsley two years ago, in combination with other drugs, this calcium channel blocker has helped properly control his mood cycling for the first time since he was diagnosed, aged 19. He lives in west London with his wife and two children.

Sam Rickwood



Sam Rickwood, a Clinical nurse specialist completed a PGDip in mental health nursing, followed by an MSc in mental health nursing. She worked for two years in a busy acute mental health ward in East London, four years within a community mental health team supporting those experiencing first episode psychosis within a predominantly Bengali community. She also worked for a year in Perinatal mental health. She joined OPTIMA in April 2020 providing psychoeducation to people with bipolar as well as facilitating the psycho-education group.

Sarah Skelton



Sarah is the Head of Programme Development at PAPYRUS. With a background in developing young peoples services, Sarah has worked across education, health and social care settings to improve outcomes for children and young people. She is committed to enabling young people to thrive through building connection, skills, and engagement opportunities. Her current work focuses on supporting, equipping and influencing stakeholders to create suicide safer communities.

Simon Kitchen



Simon Kitchen has been CEO of Bipolar UK since April 2018. His previous roles include running the Dementia Action Alliance, where he signed up over 1,000 organisations to help people with dementia. He also led a major co-production initiative at Leonard Cheshire Disability that empowered over 1,000 people with long term conditions in residential care to have more choice and control over their lives. He loves walking, and in May 2019 walked Hadrian's Way with the northern groups members to raise money for the charity. His first experience of bipolar was in his late teens when he supported a friend with the condition.

Dr Stuart Watson



Stuart Watson is a Clinical Senior Lecturer and an inpatient consultant psychiatrist in Newcastle. He has a long standing interest in bipolar disorder. He has examined neurocognitive performance, the stress hormone axis and childhood antecedents in people with bipolar disorder and has used this understanding to develop and run clinical trials of drugs that act on the stress hormone system. He is workstream lead for the Clinical Research Network in England and is currently linking with the National Institute of Health Research to allow the examination of an untested drug regime in bipolar depression.

We look forward to you joining us at the conference. Recordings of most of the sessions will be available on [our website](#) after the event.