

## **Seminar 1: The impact of COVID-19 on mental health research practice: ethical issues**

**27 September 1pm-2.30pm (London/GMT+1hr)**

This seminar will explore the ethics of how mental health research practice has changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussion will include the ethical implications of transferring face-to-face research online and what safeguards are needed to protect the wellbeing of participants at a time when support from the research team or external services may be reduced due to social distancing and other restrictions. How do we ensure ethically robust mental health research in the time of COVID-19 and how best can researchers involve people with lived experience in the design of research as it transitions to the digital world?

**Chair:** [Ross Upshur](#), University of Toronto, Canada

**Panel:**

- [Professor Ellen Townsend](#), Self-harm Research Group, University of Nottingham, UK
- [Dr Abhishek Ghosh](#), Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, India
- [Professor Jackie Hoare](#), Consultation–Liaison Psychiatry, University of Cape Town, South Africa

The following questions will form the basis of the seminar's panel discussion. Seminar attendees are invited to submit questions in advance of the seminar when they [register](#) or by [email](#), or during the live discussion.

- 1. How has mental health research practice changed during the COVID-19 pandemic and what are the ethical implications?**
- 2. What counter-measures are required to balance the new ways of conducting research (e.g. the need for adequate (remote) mood assessment before and after a participant's involvement in research)?**
- 3. Are the new ways of conducting research being picked up in the ethics review process?**
- 4. What should be done to ensure ethically robust mental health research in the time of COVID-19 (including the involvement of people with lived experience in research prioritisation and design)?**

### **Background reading**

Townsend E, Nielsen E, Allister R, Cassidy SA. Key ethical questions for research during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Lancet Psychiatry*. 2020 May;7(5):381-383. doi: [10.1016/S2215-0366\(20\)30150-4](#)

Choudhury S, Ghosh A. Ethical Considerations of Mental Health Research Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic: Mitigating the Challenges. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*. 2020;42(4):379-381. doi:[10.1177/0253717620929097](#)

This is the first in five seminars on the theme 'Ethical issues arising in research with people with mental health conditions'. Details of the full series are available at: [www.gfbr.global/gfbr-2021-seminar-series](http://www.gfbr.global/gfbr-2021-seminar-series)