

# Training to enhance user and carer involvement in mental health-care planning: the EQUIP research programme including a cluster RCT

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**Disclaimer:** This report contains transcripts of interviews conducted in the course of the research and contains language that may offend some readers.

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## Plain English summary

### The EQUIP research programme

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## Plain English summary

Service users and carers using mental health services want to be more involved in decisions about their care. Guidance recommends user and carer involvement for the best care, but this does not always happen. Our research aimed to train mental health professionals to enhance service user and carer involvement in care planning.

We listened to the views of service users, carers and health professionals, and used this information to design training for staff in community mental health teams. We co-delivered the training with service users and carers.

We tested how well the training worked by measuring how involved service users felt in their care before and after staff were trained, and compared this with people cared for by staff who had not been trained. Although professionals were positive about the training, it did not change how involved people felt in their care or any health outcomes and was not good value for money; therefore, the intervention was not effective. This was because health professionals were not able to apply what they had learned in training to their everyday practice. Our dissemination work following the trial where some NHS trusts began to implement organisational change showed some promising results.

We worked with service users and carers to design a tool for NHS trusts to measure levels of involvement in care planning. We also created animations and leaflets to communicate information about care planning and being involved in care decisions, and publicised these widely through social media sites such as Facebook (Facebook, Inc., Menlo Park, CA, USA; [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)) and Twitter (Twitter, Inc., San Francisco, CA, USA; [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)). In addition, we produced a video with our service user and carer advisory group to share the key messages of our research.



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