

RFPB IN MENTAL HEALTH

**THE MENTAL IMAGERY FOR SUICIDALITY IN STUDENTS TRIAL
(MISST): A FEASIBILITY STUDY**

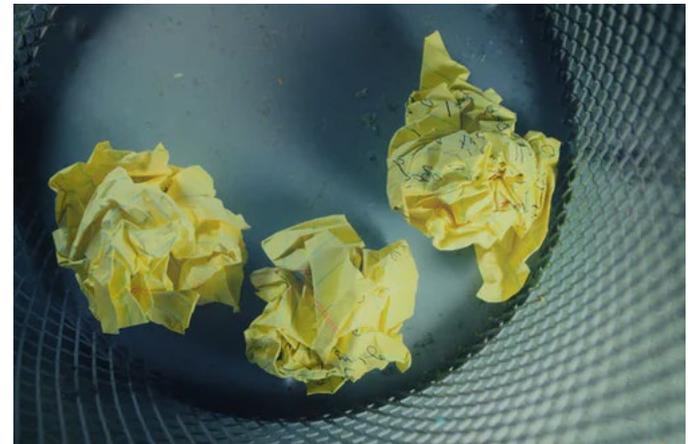
PETER TAYLOR

ABOUT ME

- Senior clinical lecturer
- University of Manchester (2016-now)
- Previously at University of Liverpool
- Research focus on self-harm and suicide
- Largely quantitative researcher (but have published qualitative as well)



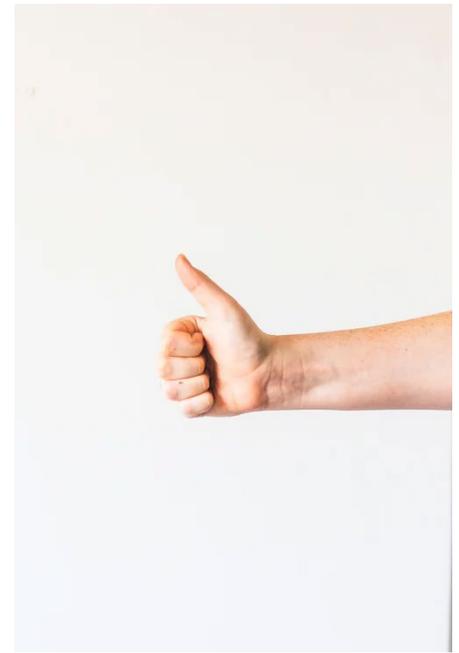
ABOUT ME – GRANT SUCCESS



- Lots of applications to various funders – ESRC, MRC, Wellcome, British Academy, AFSR, NIHR
- Some nearer misses, but lots of rejections
 - Approx. 8 where I was PI rejected
- Some success where I was co-investigator (MRC, GCRF, NIHR)

LEARNING POINTS

- **Hang onto the good ideas**
- **Recycle where possible**
 - Consider if funders allow resubmissions?
- **Build a good team (not just about what looks good on paper, but how you work together)**
- **Don't give up – but allow yourself a break**



**THE MENTAL IMAGERY
FOR SUICIDALITY IN
STUDENTS TRIAL
(MISST): A FEASIBILITY
STUDY**

MISST STUDY: THE PROBLEM

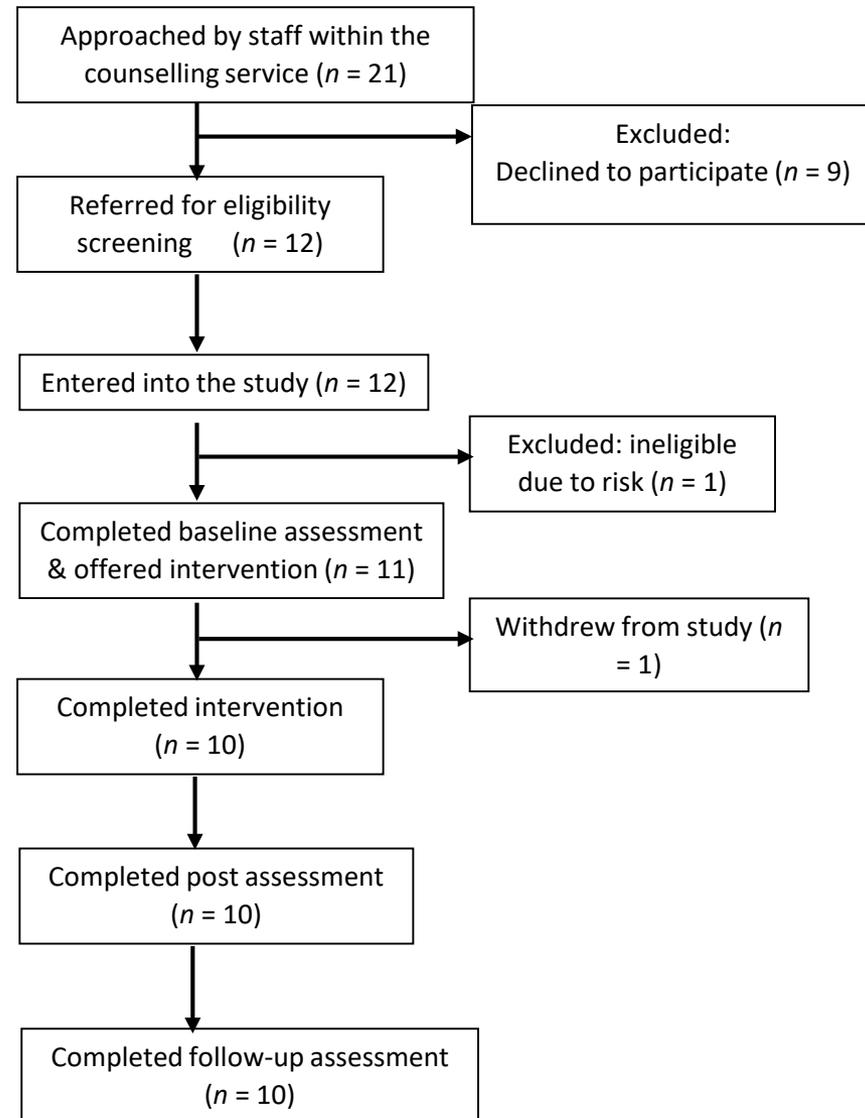
- Suicide a global health concern (800,000 lives a year)
- Rise in suicide rates amongst young people
- Increasing concerns about student mental health including prevalence of suicidal thoughts and behaviour
- University can be a very stressful and challenging time
 - Marginalised groups (e.g. LGBTQ+) where risk is elevated
- High suicide rates in Northern cities including Manchester
- Mental health provision at University historically limited or patchy
 - but development of student mental health Hub

MISST STUDY: A SOLUTION?

- Brief psychological intervention – Broad Minded Affective Coping technique (BMAC)
- Developed in context of suicide prevention
- Focused on breaking chain of negative thoughts and feelings by increasing access to positive memories
- Evidence of short-term improvements in mood for people with psychosis, PTSD, and with students from various studies

PILOT STUDY

- Six session BMAC delivered remotely by trainee clinical psychologist (Knagg et al., in prep.)
- N = 10 students with recent (past 4 weeks) suicidal ideation and/or behaviour
- Single-arm feasibility study

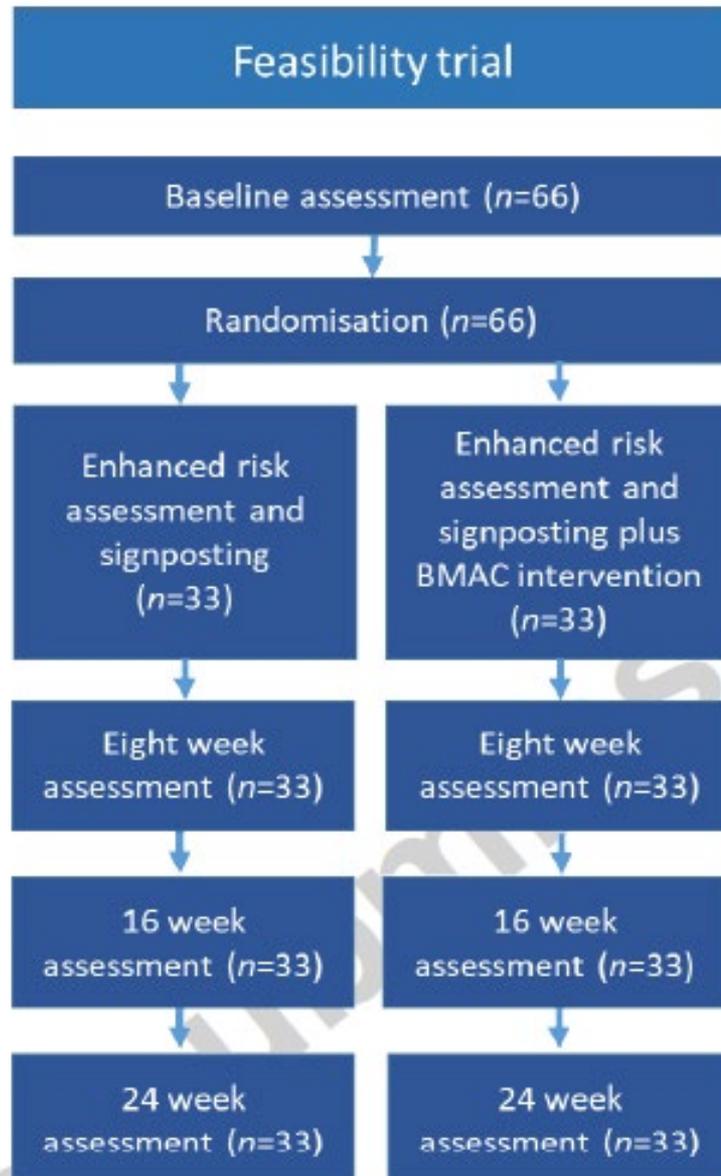


PILOT STUDY

- Evidence interventions was acceptable: $M = 5.2$ sessions attended; positive feedback from most participants
- The majority of participants agreed that the intervention was appropriate indicating that the intervention was 'fitting' ($n=7$), 'suitable' ($n=8$), 'applicable' ($n=8$) and a good match ($n=6$)
- Improvement in suicidal ideation at end of therapy, $d = 1.22$ and 12-week follow-up, $d = 1.25$ (reliable change in 8/10)
- Also improvements in depression ($d = 1.35 - 1.17$).

MISST STUDY

- Feasibility randomised controlled trial
- Higher education students with recent suicidal thoughts or behaviour
- Feasibility & acceptability
 - Recruitment rates; adherence to treatment; retention to follow-up; suitability of primary outcome; safety of intervention
 - Clear stop-go criteria
 - Qualitative interviews with participants and other stakeholders



MISST INVESTIGATOR TEAM

Chris Sutton

(University of Manchester)

Dan Pratt

(University of Manchester)

Fiona Lobban

(University of Lancaster)

Jasper Palmier-Claus

(University of Lancaster)

Nathan Randles

(Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust)

Peter Taylor

(University of Manchester)

Richard Drake

(University of Manchester)

Sophie Parker

(Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust)

Steven Eccles

(Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust)

TIMELINE

Initially planned as a general NIHR Research for Patient Benefit application (October 2020)



Started developing application – RDS input in April 2021



Mental health research in Northern England call – May 2021



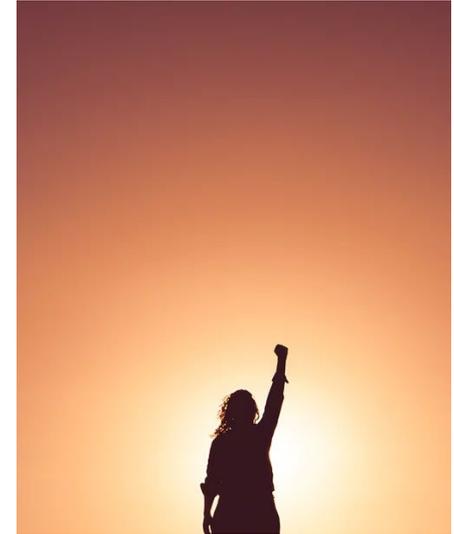
Application submitted to MH in North call– June 2021



Success – September 2021

THINGS THAT HELPED

- **Rapid funding call**
 - And having a project already in development
- **Interventions at the right stage of development**
- **Having robust pilot data available**
- **PPI and being able to illustrate how it shaped the study**
- **Great team (both on paper and in practice)**
 - Good mix of expertise and clear roles
- **Good links and support from relevant organisations**
- **Topical research area**
- **Luck!**



CONCLUSIONS

- **Groundwork is important**
 - Pilot studies & data
 - PPI
 - Existing links with organisations
- **Making the process as painless as possible**
 - Hold on to good ideas
 - Tweak and Recycle
 - Develop a good team that will pitch in
 - Give yourself a break between applications
- **Keep trying**