

South Yorkshire ICB Research & Innovation Forum: Mental Health

Friday 8 March 2024, Sheffield

Summary

Introduction

Convened quarterly, the South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) Research and Innovation Forums bring together those with an interest in research and innovation in health and wellbeing across South Yorkshire. Their purpose is to bring together the research, innovation and health and care strengths of South Yorkshire to collaboratively identify priorities for research and innovation, share best practice and build new partnerships to take forward research and innovation. The forums respond directly to feedback from people across the region that they want more opportunities to build connections, collaborations and a shared understanding of priorities to support research and innovation.

Held at the Showroom Workstation in Sheffield on 8th March 2024, this sixth forum was dedicated to the priority theme of mental health. The event brought together 43 participants from across the region, representing the diversity of organisations in the research and innovation community including academia, local authorities, the voluntary and community sector, health and care trusts, and the ICB.

The forum aimed to provide an overview of the current system priorities for mental health, as well as showcasing a selection of current initiatives being delivered by some of the research active organisations in the region. It also enabled researchers, clinicians, practitioners and experts by experience to connect, share insights into great work currently happening, and explore opportunities to collaborate in seeking to address the foremost challenges in the region. We thank all those who attended for your contributions.

This document provides a summary of the content and feedback from the session. If you would like further information or have ideas for future collaboration in this area, we encourage you to get in touch with the South Yorkshire Innovation Hub team at sy.innovation@yhahsn.com



An overview of the current system level priorities for mental health

Colleagues from [NHS South Yorkshire](#) and the [Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism \(MHLDA\) Provider Collaborative](#) shared an overview of the current system-level priorities, ambitions and initiatives for mental health service provision. This included the NHS Operational Planning and Joint Forward requirements for mental health, the areas of focus for the ICB and where research and innovation may be able to support this work. The slides are shared below.

📄 [Innovation & Research to Support Mental Health](#) – Marie Purdue & Sarah Boul

Current mental health research and innovation in South Yorkshire: an overview of current activity

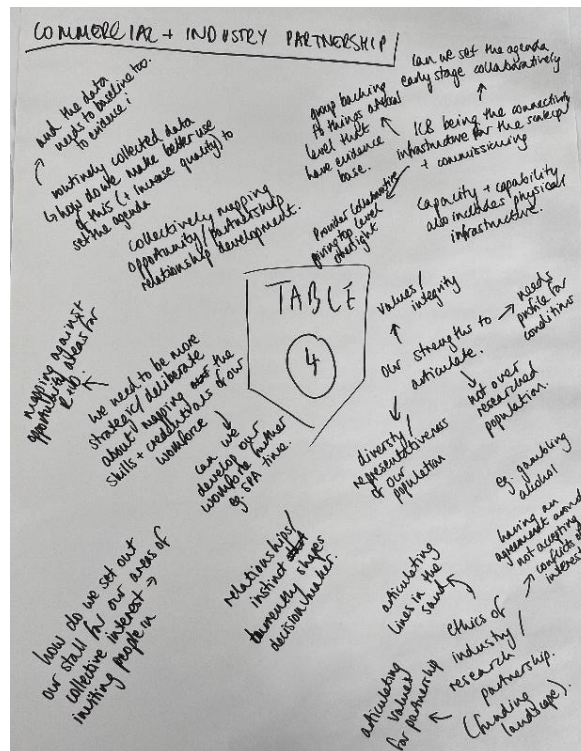
The forum provided the platform to showcase a selection of current research initiatives from a number of mental health, community trusts and academia in the region.

The initiatives underway demonstrate the strength of the research assets in the region, and underlines how South Yorkshire is a significant player in mental health research. This offers the potential to bring further benefits to the area through continued collaboration, knowledge sharing and strategic investment.

📄 [Research, Innovation & Evidence at SHSC](#) – Dr Michelle Horspool & Dr William Gann

📄 [Grounded Research at RDaSH](#) – Heather Rice

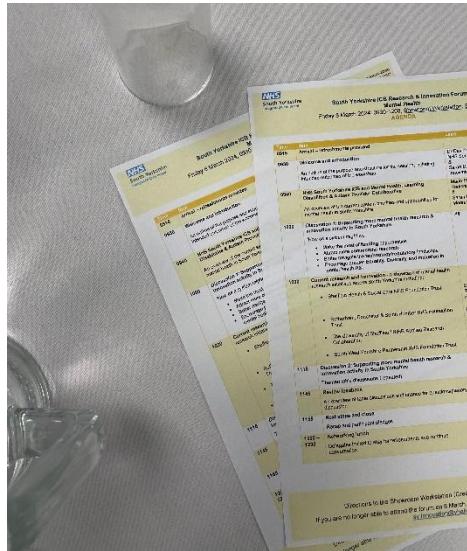
📄 [UoS Mental Health Research Unit](#) – Prof. Scott Weich



Key points of discussion from breakout conversations

After hearing about the current system priorities and research initiatives across the region, attendees had the opportunity to join collaborative discussion groups relating to key themes for mental health. Here, participants were able to explore how their experiences, challenges and ideas could add value across these themes through collective working as a system.

The key feedback from each of these four discussions is outlined below.



1. Funding

Current strengths

- The diversity in populations throughout South Yorkshire ensures there are opportunities to represent a broad range of these populations through increased engagement in research activity.
- We have a strong and well connected VCSE sector in South Yorkshire. This can provide the basis for collective funding bids, although greater coordination is required to develop the infrastructure to enable this.

Connections and infrastructure

- There is desire for a central body to coordinate bids from across the region. There are such forums/collaborations for VCSE organisations but not a unified collective for mental health provider research funding.
- When funding opportunities arise, there could be more coherent collaboration across key organisations around partnership working. It would be useful to develop a shared understanding of the pipeline of funding opportunities. Connections could then be made between relevant organisations at an early stage. It was highlighted that Doncaster HDRC could be an existing forum for these connections to be made.

Gaps and opportunities for future research

- Out of area placements are a key priority for the ICB. Further research would be beneficial to understand patient care and financial impact of this.
- Inpatient acute psychosis and readmission. There are opportunities to work upstream to predict admissions and understand why they are occurring.

2. Attracting commercial research and industry partnership into South Yorkshire

Current strengths

The strengths in the region that we need to articulate and build upon include:

- Values/ integrity
- Needs profile for conditions
- South Yorkshire is not an over-researched population
- The diversity/ representativeness of our population
- Research is highly embedded in clinical practice
- Our infrastructure and connectedness

Opportunities

Through discussion, several considerations for future activity were identified. These can be summarised across the following themes:

Infrastructure

- When we think about capacity and capability needed to do more commercial and industry partnership work, we need to also consider our physical infrastructure – we have good physical infrastructure to support R&I in mental health in the region and this can be part of our story to promote.
- The ICB should be the connectivity infrastructure and support the scale up of good practice as well as more systematic commissioning.
- It would be more effective if the ICB worked early stage with research partners to help set the agenda.
- We need to develop a process for ICB individuals to help back and scale up things at a local level which have a strong evidence base. The MHLDA Provider Collaborative could provide the oversight for this.

Setting priorities

- Can we make better use of our routinely collected data to help baseline our position, identify key outcomes and areas we might want to focus.
- We need to be clear about the ethics of our relationships and give clear boundaries to our engagement. This includes agreement about our position on conflicts of interest with potential funders of research.
- We need to be more strategic/ deliberate about mapping the skills and credentials of our workforce and think more collaboratively about how we develop our future workforce. Part of this is understanding the Principal Investigator (PI) strengths we have for future research.
- We need to set out our stall about what our areas of interest are and what we want to do together.

Engaging with industry

- Can we be more proactive in shaping the landscape saying where we want to innovate, and directing industry around our problems/ challenges? Articulating the clinical priorities and population health needs across SY is very important for this to happen.
- Can we improve our way of working as a system to triage industry and innovator opportunities?
- We need to help people to know where to go for industry partnership and advice.
- We need to make the engagement with industry time efficient, rather than duplication of conversations across organisations.
- More effectively promoting routes to support for innovation would be helpful. This includes signposting, improved communications and skills development for staff.

3. Support navigating the complex technology and regulatory landscape for mental health innovation

Current strengths

There are several assets and resources currently in the region which can support organisation with knowledge and expertise around technology and regulations. This includes [Devices for Dignity](#), the universities, [Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber](#) and the [Yorkshire & Humber Care Record](#).

Current gaps and challenges

Areas identified during group discussion included:

- Different technologies and systems are used across trusts
- Information Governance (IG) can be extremely time consuming and complex
- There is a lack of workforce interest in regulations
- There is a limited resource of clinical safety officers

Opportunities

In aiming to address or tackle some of these challenges, potential opportunities identified included:

- Shared learning: there could be regular meetings between organisations in South Yorkshire to share expertise and/or coordinate IG requirements.
- Collaborative working: the potential for a convergence of contracts for technology currently being used across multiple trusts.
- Pooling resources: possibilities of shared clinical safety officer posts across multiple organisations in the region. This could include a scoping exercise to understand where the bottlenecks are, then a role for the ICB to coordinate the pooled/shared resource.
- External support: working closely with commercial regulatory companies to address current challenges being experienced.

4. Encouraging greater equality, diversity and inclusion in mental health research and activity

Current strengths

There are many organisations and networks in South Yorkshire which seek to encourage better representation and inclusion in research activity:

- [Ethnic Minorities Research Inclusion \(EMRI\)](#) network
- [Devices for Dignity](#)
- [Good Things Foundation](#)
- [The Deep End Research Alliance](#)
- [Lived Experience Research Partnership](#) (SHSC)

There are also resources available, such as the [Sheffield Mental Health Guide](#), as well as many organisations based outside of South Yorkshire (e.g. the [McPin Foundation](#))

Whilst there are many strengths in the region, the importance of connecting up pockets of good work happening across each organisation/trust was discussed.

Gaps and challenges

- There is a lack of diversity in delivery teams and workforce; it can be difficult for those with diverse backgrounds in the health and care workforce to become researchers.
- There is limited coverage of research (and research methods) during clinical training, particularly in nursing courses.

- Finding people to take in research can be challenging; 'hard to reach' communities that are underrepresented in healthcare services/treatment are also resistant to taking part in research.
- When research is conducted, data is often not fully collected. Questions on demographics, for example, can feel intrusive, and are therefore not included (or provided by participants).
- Health and care data is often not joined up. For instance, there is a lack of link between primary and secondary care data.
- Language must be a key consideration when engaging with communities. The default language for research and innovation activity is English, however it was noted that there are more than 100 languages spoken in Sheffield alone.
- The prevalence of digital poverty in communities.

Opportunities

When seeking to engage communities in future research, the group identified a number of considerations, ideas and opportunities:

- The Deep End Alliance provides training to people in communities.
 - As a means of addressing digital poverty, the [National Databank](#) (the Good Things Foundation) offers free SIM cards for charities.
 - The EMRI network may be able to provide information about key individuals to engage with across different community organisations, to ensure the right people are represented in future research activity.
 - AI tools could be utilised as a translation service when working with communities, although it is important to ensure the accuracy of any translation.
 - We could encourage more use of avatars and images when engaging communities in research and use of 'easy read' language, especially for those with speech and language difficulties.
 - We could deliver an education piece around participating in research.
 - Engagement in faith communities, particularly in the 'bricks and mortar' infrastructure within localities.
 - Opportunities for apprenticeships with local authorities.
 - Ensure that commercial research is not accepted if it is only delivered in English.
 - Offer remuneration for individuals to take part in research.
 - It was noted that ideas that come from 'the ground' i.e. work with communities to co-develop research around the topics that matter to them, and what they want to engage in.
 - The importance of involving 'gatekeepers' from target communities in research, but appreciate that such roles would need to be funded in research projects.
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Next steps

This document serves to provide a reminder of the content shared during the forum, as well as an overview of the discussion and feedback during the session. All attendees are encouraged to follow-up with connections made on the day, to share this summary with relevant colleagues and reach out to both NHS South Yorkshire ICB and Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber to continue the conversation.

As an initial next step, some of the key actions shared by attendees on the day included:

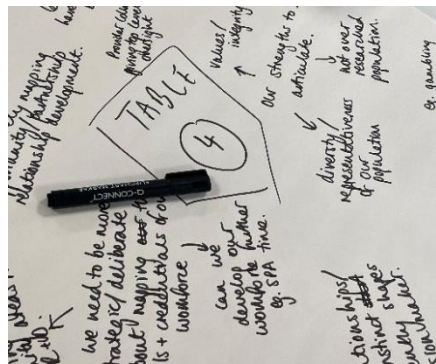
- To collaborate regionally on dementia research and innovation
- To find out more about this and where my own R&D could sit
- To follow up and contact people I have met today
- To work with clinicians to leverage university resources to address patient needs

We look forward to hearing how these actions develop.

Concurrent to this, the ICB will be discussing the feedback shared on the day to better understand where new activity could be developed to address identified priorities and challenges for the system. This includes where new research may be necessary, who the key organisations/individuals are in this space and how we can work collectively across the system to ensure future research and activity best represents, and best addresses the challenges of, the people of South Yorkshire.

Get in touch!

If you would like further information, have ideas for future sessions or would like to share updates from connections made during the forum, please contact andrew.woodcock@yhahsn.com



Appendix 1 - Agenda from the forum

Time	Item	Lead
0915	Arrival – refreshments provided	
0930	<p>Welcome and introduction</p> <p>An outline of the purpose and structure for the session, including intended outcomes of the workshop</p>	<p><i>Dr David Crichton – Chief Medical Officer, NHS South Yorkshire ICB</i> & <i>Sarah Dew – Director, South Yorkshire Innovation Hub</i></p>
0940	<p>NHS South Yorkshire ICB and Mental Health, Learning Disabilities & Autism Provider Collaborative</p> <p>An overview of the current system priorities and opportunities for mental health in South Yorkshire</p>	<p><i>Marie Purdue – Managing Director, South Yorkshire MHLDA Provider Collaborative</i> & <i>Sarah Boul – Programme Director for Mental Health, NHS South Yorkshire ICB</i></p>
1000	<p>Discussion 1: Supporting more mental health research & innovation activity in South Yorkshire</p> <p><i>'How as a system might we</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the most of funding opportunities • Attract more commercial research • Better navigate the technology/regulatory landscape • Encourage greater Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in mental health R&I 	<i>All</i>
1030	<p>Current research and innovation - a showcase of mental health research initiatives across South Yorkshire including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Foundation Trust • Rotherham, Doncaster & South Humber NHS Foundation Trust • The University of Sheffield / NIHR Applied Research Collaboration • South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust 	<p><i>Dr Michelle Horspool – Deputy Director: Research; Dr Will Gann – Consultant Psychiatrist</i></p> <p><i>Heather Rice – Director of Research & Innovation</i></p> <p><i>Prof Scott Weich – Professor of Mental Health; Dr Lizzie Taylor Buck – Research Fellow</i></p> <p><i>Dr Wajid Khan – Head of Research</i></p>
1115	<p>Discussion 2: Supporting more mental health research & innovation activity in South Yorkshire</p> <p>Themed table discussions (repeated)</p>	<i>All</i>
1145	<p>Review feedback</p> <p>An overview of table discussions and chance for questions/plenary discussion</p>	<i>Dr David Crichton</i>
1155	<p>Next steps and close</p> <p>Recap and participant pledges</p>	<i>Dr David Crichton & Sarah Dew</i>
1200 – 1230	<p>Networking lunch</p> <p>Delegates invited to stay for refreshments and continue conversation</p>	<i>All</i>

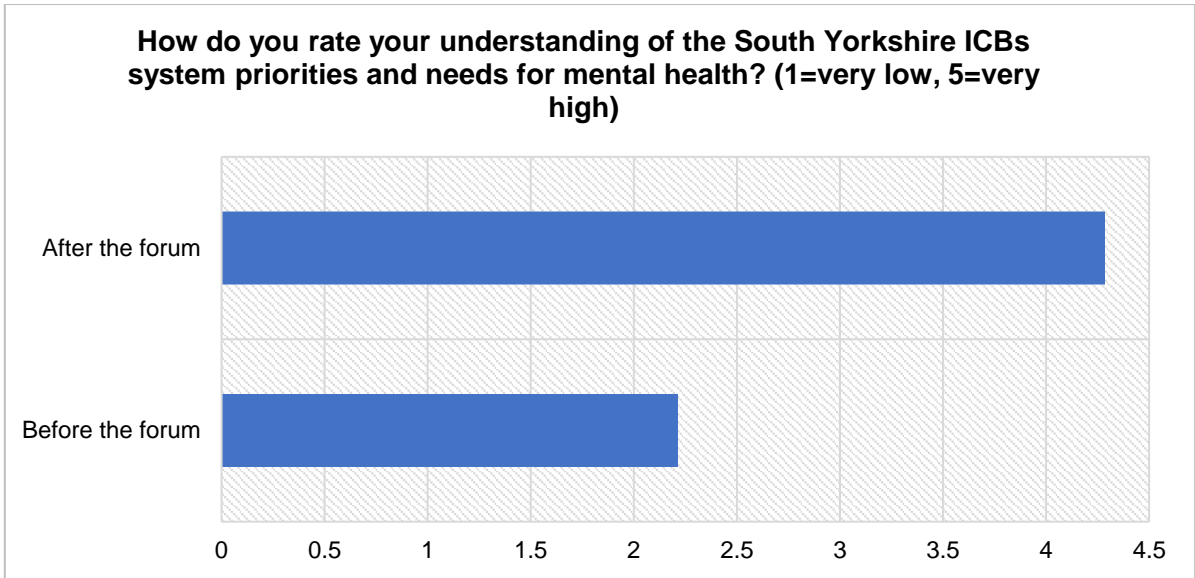
Appendix 2 – your feedback from the forum

An online feedback form was shared on the day and distributed to attendees after the event. Many thanks to all who shared your reflections. You told us:

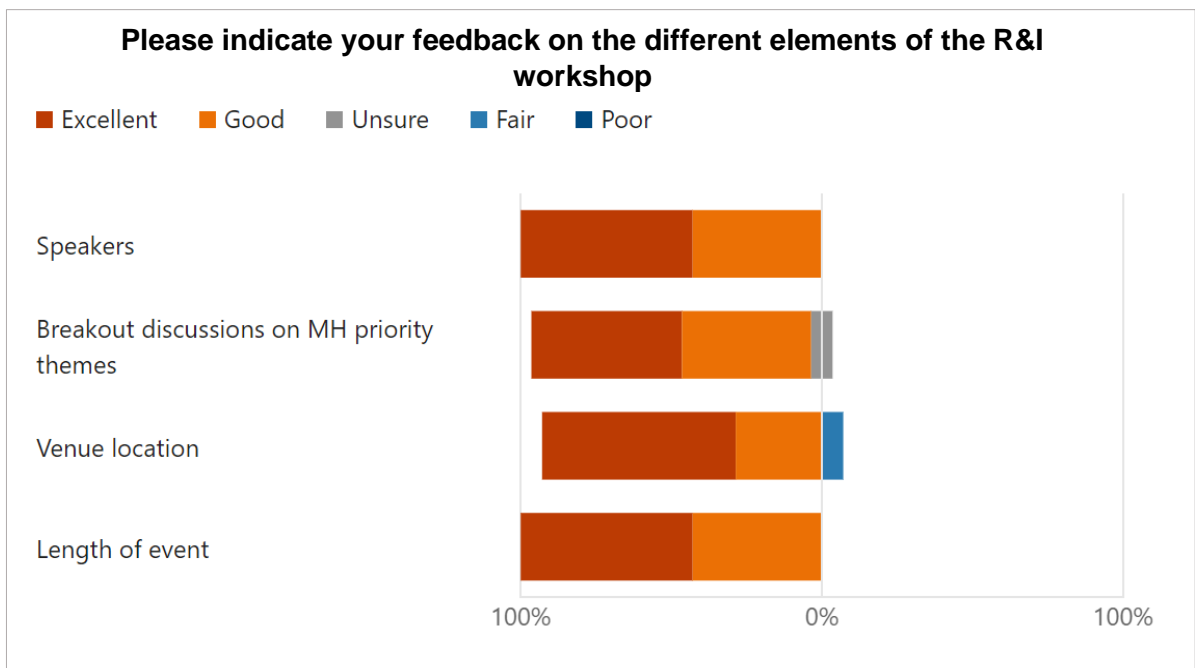
The overall average rating of the R&I forum (out of 5) was **4.36 ★**

Comments on the workshop overall included:

- Great to hear about what is going on and making new contacts
- Very positive to work with colleagues from across the region – health, VS [voluntary sector], LA [Local Authorities]
- Very useful and accessible forum for collaboration
- It was good to hear the priorities and the work already going on
- Clear agenda
- The breakout sessions were really good, giving attendees the opportunity to discuss issues that clearly mattered to them
- Excellent opportunity to form connections between academics and clinicians
- It was a valuable session – good overview of priorities. Good opportunity to make connections with colleagues and representatives from voluntary and community sector
- Excellent session. Friendly, informal and informative
- Very good speakers, right questions to tables
- Very nice balance of opportunities. Specific topics on tables worked well
- I feel this event was ideal, as more than half a day could be too long with people's workload priorities being what they are
- This met my needs
- Enjoyed the breakout discussion activities. Provided great networking opportunities.
- First experience of joining a SY Research & Innovation Forum. Intend to come back for more!
- Enjoyed the breakout discussion activities. Provided great networking opportunities.
- It's always helpful to rotate locations across the patch as you already do
- Interesting speakers topics and clear passion and commitment from the chair
- Your event was really good, hopefully there will be a follow up forum, to discuss EDI and joint funding bids, to name but a few interesting topics.

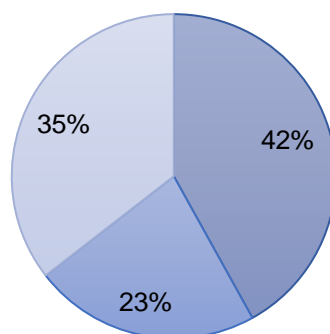


93% of respondents indicated their understanding of the ICBs system priorities increased. The average score before the session was **2.2** (out of 5), compared to **4.3** after the forum.



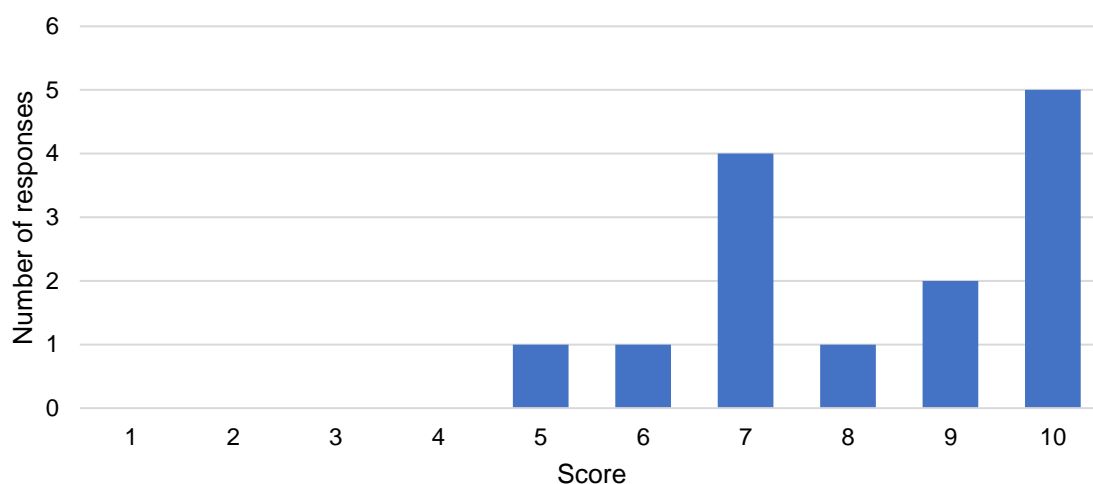
100% of respondents met new people at the forum or created new connections which were believed to be beneficial for their work

What actions will you take as a result of your involvement in the R&I forum?



- Follow up with contacts and connections made at the forum
- Contact Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber for information or support
- Share information or ideas with colleagues in my organisation

How confident (out of 10) do you feel that you/your organisation can play an active role in supporting future mental health research and innovation activity in South Yorkshire?



Suggestions for future forums included:

- More time for feedback from the workshops
- End with some actionable goals for people to work on
- More action focussed outcome or aim for the event
- Add an extra 30 mins for feedback would have been useful, and inclusion of SCH as they do child health whilst the rest of the providers were adult health
- Would be really useful for people to introduce themselves at the beginning of each break out session - although it takes a bit of time it is worth its weight in gold - (and helps to contextualise the contributions in the session as well) . re format. - in a future event - if the format has two breakouts - I wonder about one being on a specific question (as identified by the organisers) and another which allows for a more open -

bottom up - discussion (eg what has stood out for you about this morning? what are your wants from coming here today? what priorities would you like to see us discuss/address?)

- It was a shame not to hear from a speaker about the research and Sheffield Children's Hospital
- It was great to have a key focus on mental health. It would be useful to consider a showcase event more broadly and it would also be useful to consider widening audiences in the future particularly to include industry partners. In fact perhaps a dedicated industry event is worth considering?
- Great updates on ICB priorities and to know the direction of travel. Would have been good to have a wider audience of academics - many more research active staff in this area. Also possible reps from Sheffield Hallam and University of Sheffield presenting.

End
April 2024