

IMPULSE (Implementation of an effective and cost-effective intervention for patients with psychotic disorders in low and middle-income countries in South Eastern Europe) is a 3-year project funded by the European Commission as part of the [Horizon 2020 initiative](#). The objective of the study is to facilitate the development of psychosocial care and treatment of people with psychotic disorders in South Eastern Europe.

OUR TEAM

The IMPULSE study is co-ordinated by Queen Mary University of London. Research activities are conducted by partners in six European countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia, and the United Kingdom. The team meets twice a year to discuss project activities.

This photo is from the second project meeting held in Skopje, in November 2019.



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Key challenges:

- Inadequate resources for mental health in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) in South Eastern Europe
- Lack of expertise in implementation of evidence-based interventions in clinical practice;
- Low level of empowerment and the marginalisation of service users and caregivers;
- The need to strengthen the evidence base for the contextual scalability of interventions of proven effectiveness in LMICs.

Expected impacts:

- Advance implementation of affordable mental health interventions to alleviate burden of mental disorders
- Development of effective community-based mental health care
- Empowerment of patients and caregivers
- Building/strengthening research capacity

What we do?

START: The study started in April 2018 and we plan to end our research activities in March 2021.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT: We worked closely with all relevant stakeholders (e.g. patients, carers, clinicians, service providers, policy makers, etc.) to formulate contextually appropriate approach to implement psychosocial interventions for people with psychosis across different healthcare systems.

IMPLEMENTATION-EFFECTIVENESS TRIAL: Our main clinical study employs innovative design that looks not only into effectiveness of a psychosocial intervention called DIALOG+, but also into implementation outcomes such as costs, acceptability, sustainability, reach, etc. The study includes 80 clinicians and 468 patients. The protocol can be found here: <https://content.sciendo.com/view/journals/gp/ahead-of-print/article-10.2478-gp-2019-0020.xml?rskey=GCEfwN&result=2>

PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS ENGAGEMENT: Throughout the project we have been working with patients and their families to ensure their views are included in our research. Two service users organisations – Menssana from Sarajevo and Prostor from Belgrade are partners on the project. In September 2019 members of Lived Experience Advisory Panel, study researchers and different professionals met in Tivat, Montenegro for a 2-day workshop to discuss how to successfully engage and empower patients and caregivers in LMICs. The model will be available on our website in upcoming months.



Tivat meeting, September 2019

DISSEMINATION: During 2018/19 we presented our research on a number of national and international events and conferences. Three papers have been published and more are in preparation. We plan to have our main study findings ready for dissemination by the end of 2020. At the end of the study we will organise dissemination events in each participating country. The main international dissemination event will be in March 2021 in Sarajevo. More details are available on our website.

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Study findings are continuously presented nationally and internationally.

Please visit our website and social media accounts for more information and updates or email us at impulseprojectlondon@gmail.com.

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