

Photograph taken by Professor Nick Craddock

Welcome to the 2016/17 edition of the annual Mood Disorders Research Newsletter.

It has been another busy and productive year for BDRN. You will find updates about some of our recent research findings on page 2, including groundbreaking work we are doing with other mood disorders research groups from around the world. You will read on page 8 about some of the ways we have been working hard to spread the word about the importance of research into mood disorders.

We were delighted to provide expert advice to BBC EastEnders about their postpartum psychosis

storyline, and Clare Dolman of Bipolar UK updates you about that on page 11.

As always, we want to say a really big THANK YOU to our research supporters, particularly to those who continue to give up their time and effort to participate in our studies - without your help the research just could not happen.

We've included a new set of questionnaires with this newsletter and we would be very grateful if our participants would complete them and send them back in the pre-paid envelope. In particular, this information will help us to understand more about the

relationship between mood disorders, sleep and other aspects of physical and mental ill-health.

We continue to welcome many new participants to BDRN, so if you know anyone with a mood disorder who hasn't taken part before let them know about our work – we would love to hear from them. We are offering our mood-monitoring system True Colours (see page 8) to all our participants so if you haven't signed up yet and you would like to try it let us know.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter, and from all of us in BDRN we wish you all the very best for the new year ahead.

The Mood Disorders Research Teams

Cardiff University

Professor Nick Craddock, Professor Ian Jones, Dr Liz Forty, Christine Fraser, Katie Lewis, Holly Pearce, Rebecca Lynch

University of Worcester

Professor Lisa Jones, Dr Katherine Gordon-Smith, Sarah Knott, Amy Perry, Lizzie Ludlow



Some of our latest research findings

Our research has led to a number of publications over the past year. These studies have all contributed to our knowledge of the genetic and environmental causes and triggers of mood disorders and will be important in determining the direction of future research in the field.

In a large collaborative genetic study with researchers in the United States we have found that variations in DNA called rare copy number variants (CNVs) are likely to play a role in susceptibility to bipolar disorder in some individuals (*Molecular Psychiatry*; 2016 volume 21, pages 89-93).

Data collected for the Depression Case Control (DeCC) and Depression Network (DeNT)

studies were also used to investigate whether there is an association between rare CNVs and major depression. We did not find an association in the sample as a whole although these rare genetic variants may play an important role for a minority of people who have unipolar depression. (*Biological Psychiatry*; 2016 volume 79, pages 329-36).

Many readers of this newsletter will have completed a questionnaire asking about mood instability, analysing the questionnaire scores we found rates of mood instability to be particularly high in bipolar disorder compared to major depression. Among individuals with bipolar I disorder, greater mood instability in adulthood

was associated with having experienced specific traumas in childhood, which may open new avenues in clinical interventions. (*Journal of Affective Disorders*; 2016 volume 190, pages 764-771).

We conducted the first study looking at whether trauma in childhood might increase risk for postpartum psychosis in adulthood. Unlike in postpartum depression, we found that childhood trauma does not play an important role in the triggering of postpartum psychosis suggesting biological factors are more important (*Journal of Affective Disorders*; 2016 volume 205, pages 69-72).

Journal of Affective Disorders
Volume 205, 15 November 2016, Pages 69–72

Short communication
Adverse childhood life events and postpartum psychosis in bipolar disorder

Journal of Affective Disorders
Volume 190, 15 January 2016, Pages 764–771

Research paper
Affective instability, childhood trauma and major affective disorders

Archival Report
Biological Psychiatry
Phenotypic Association Analyses With Copy Number Variation in Recurrent Depressive Disorder

Papers have been published in Biological Psychiatry (2016 volume 79, pages 329-36), Journal of Affective Disorders (2016 volume 190, pages 764-771 and 2016 volume 205, pages 69-72) and Molecular Psychiatry (2016 volume 21, pages 89-93)

BDRN at the University of Worcester

Many of you hopefully received a letter from us earlier in the year letting you know that our Mood Disorders Research Group based in Birmingham has moved to the University of Worcester.

For many years BDRN has been a close collaboration between members of the team based at Cardiff University and the University of Birmingham. The work of BDRN continues exactly as before, with the teams at Cardiff and now Worcester working closely together.

Members of BDRN who are now based at the University of Worcester are Professor Lisa Jones, Dr Katherine Gordon-Smith, Sarah Knott, and Amy Perry, and we are delighted to introduce you to a new member of the team in Worcester, Lizzie Ludlow (you can find out more about Lizzie on page 7).

We are all thrilled about the move. The University of Worcester is an ambitious young university which has recently been shortlisted for the prestigious annual University of the Year award by the Times Higher Education (the winner has not yet been announced so

we've got our fingers crossed), and mental health is one of the University of Worcester's main research priorities.

Professor Lisa Jones, who leads the group in Worcester, said "The University of Worcester has given us such a warm welcome. The University provides a wonderful environment for



Professor Lisa Jones

BDRN to continue to thrive. We were particularly attracted by the University's clear commitment to mental health research."

Professor Ian Jones, who leads the group in Cardiff, said "With this exciting development and the ongoing support of all our participants, I'm sure BDRN will go from strength to strength."

Professor Nick Craddock, BDRN

Management Group, said "I am absolutely delighted. The University of Worcester is providing superb support for Professor Lisa Jones and her team. I have no doubt that this will make the collaboration with Professor Ian Jones and his team in Cardiff even more effective. This is great news for BDRN, our research and our participants."

Professor David Green, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive of the University of Worcester, said "We are delighted to welcome BDRN to the University of Worcester and look forward to this important research into the causes of mood disorders continuing to grow and make a difference to people's lives."



Professor David Green



True Colours

In our last newsletter we told you about a new and innovative online mood monitoring system called *True Colours* that is now available to all our research participants.

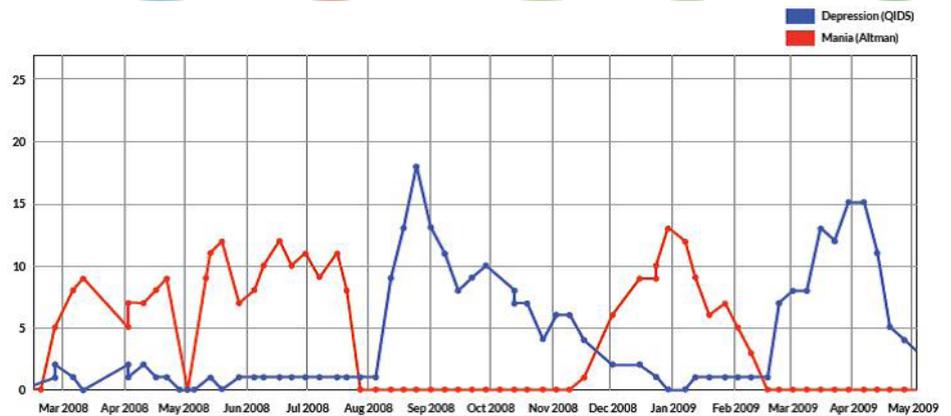
True Colours is an easy-to-use online technology that enables individuals to monitor their mood in an active and ongoing way.

The system works by sending email prompts asking individuals to answer simple questions about their mood that take no longer than 5 minutes to complete. It really is very simple to use and if you have any problems using the system we are always here to help.

Answers are converted into a graph that can be printed off, and over time will show changes and/or patterns in mood that may be helpful.

It is hoped the system will help us learn more about how mood symptoms change over time in individuals with mood disorders and how they are affected by changes in routines such as sleep.

Within *True Colours* there is also the opportunity to create up to 10 weekly and 10 daily personalised questions. These allow you to monitor things that are important for you, such as key mood symptoms, early warning signs or mood-monitoring techniques e.g. 'Last



An example of a graph produced by True Colours

night how many hours sleep did I get?'

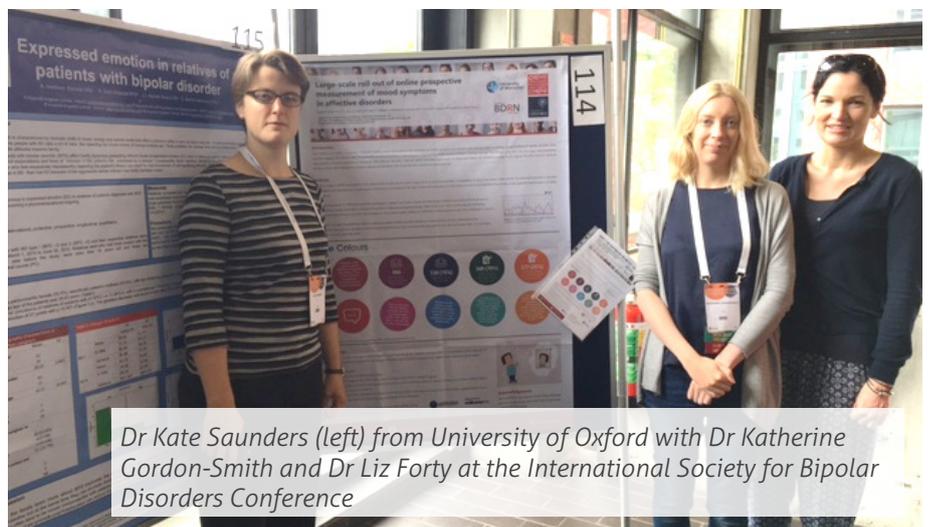
Over 800 BDRN participants have already started using *True Colours* and we have received lots of positive feedback, but we would like as many participants as possible to use the system as we are hoping to get the experiences of at least 2000 individuals.

Even if individuals are currently very well, we would like them to consider joining *True Colours* as information about even minor fluctuations in mood is extremely important for our

research.

Everyone's experience of mood disorder is different, so the more people who help us the better we will be able to understand the complex patterns of mood disorders over time.

We have recently presented some initial data on *True Colours* at the 18th Annual Conference of the International Society for Bipolar Disorders with our colleagues from the University of Oxford (see page 8). We will update you more on our findings in our next newsletter.



Dr Kate Saunders (left) from University of Oxford with Dr Katherine Gordon-Smith and Dr Liz Forty at the International Society for Bipolar Disorders Conference

We have received some great feedback from our current True Colours participants. Here is what a few of them had to say about the system...

“ I find it so helpful to look back over six or twelve months and see the mood swings so clearly and it's very helpful for my CPN too ”

“ I like being able to see the graphs and the patterns, and the contrasts with both feeling well, and unwell and depressed ”

“ True Colours is quick, simple and allows me to spot triggers. It takes me less than 5 minutes to do the weekly questionnaire and this is about right ”

“ The True Colours system is brilliant. I answer the questions weekly, without fail, and find it useful to be thinking about the questions, how my replies vary with my mood, and realising how much better I feel sometimes ”

“ I participated because I had considered other mood monitoring tools and this one looked the easiest to use and takes into account a wide variety of possible triggers without giving me loads of advice about what I should or shouldn't do ”

“ I'm not bipolar but can recognise even the smallest of differences in my responses week to week which gives me insight into my progress. Sometimes in the past I haven't recognised the signs before becoming depressed. Asking myself these questions each week are a great way of monitoring this ”



If you would like to join True Colours, or would like more information on taking part you can either email, telephone or write to us - our contact details are on the back of the newsletter.

We would be delighted to hear from you.

Changes to our team

We have said goodbye to a long-standing team member this year, whilst also welcoming several new colleagues to the team.

Andrew Bethell has worked with the research team in Cardiff University for the past 5 years. Andy joined BDRN as a NISCHR (National Institute for Social Care and Health Research) Clinical Studies Officer.

Andy spent a lot of his time interviewing participants for BDRN and promoting the research amongst clinicians, service users, patients and care-givers; as well as the wider general public, so many of you will have crossed paths with Andy over the past few years.

He will be very much missed, however has a fantastic career ahead and I am sure you will join us in wishing him well.

Just before he set off to the University of Liverpool to embark on his training to qualify as a clinical psychologist, Sarah Knott asked him a few questions about his time with BDRN and his exciting career ahead...

1. How long have you worked with BDRN?

"I joined Cardiff University in 2011, working alongside Professor Nick Craddock, Professor Ian Jones and Dr Liz Forty as part of the National Centre for Mental Health (NCMH) research team.

I 'left' the University in 2012 to take up a role with Health and Care Research Wales, and started working more closely with the BDRN team in Cardiff."



Andy (left) worked with the research team in Cardiff for five years, joining BDRN as a Clinical Studies Officer.

2. Can you tell us about your role working with BDRN?

"I worked with both the NCMH and BDRN research teams, and was responsible for interviewing research participants, as well as managing participant recruitment across Wales.

Over the past few years I worked closely with NHS Research and Development departments to raise the profile of mental health research in Wales, and to encourage clinical teams to engage with research more routinely.

I was also involved in the training, supervision and mentoring of new researchers."

3. What have you enjoyed most?

"I've thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the BDRN research team! I have particularly enjoyed spending time with people that have taken part in our research, and learning first-hand about how the symptoms associated with bipolar

disorder can impact people's lives.

I feel privileged that people have openly shared with me their stories."

4. How has your time with BDRN prepared you for your clinical training?

"Working with BDRN has helped in a whole host of ways! I feel that I now understand more about the complexities of mental health problems and the challenges that people face when trying to access support. I have certainly learned lots about the research process, and our BDRN scientific meetings have helped me to think a lot more critically.

These experiences will be really useful to reflect on when I am completing assignments and designing my dissertation project.

Overall, I am really grateful to have worked alongside such a fantastic team, and I hope to maintain my links with the BDRN teams throughout my clinical training and in my future career."

While bidding Andy a fond farewell, the BDRN team are also happy to welcome the following new members

Holly Pearce



Holly joined the team in 2015

Holly is an Assistant Research Psychologist at Cardiff University, working for the BDRN.

Holly has always had an interest in mental health. She graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Psychology from Swansea University in 2012.

Holly worked as an Honorary Assistant Psychologist within a number of community mental health teams, delivering CBT based interventions as well as gaining experience in a number of areas of mental health.

She also worked as a Research Assistant with the Cardiff Child Development Study based at Cardiff University and as a personal assistant for a young person with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

In 2015, Holly joined the BDRN team. More recently, alongside her colleague Katie Lewis, she has been exploring how disruptions to sleep might impact individuals with bipolar disorder.

Outside of work, Holly has a keen interest in music, playing the piano and attending gigs. She's also an avid fan of the Welsh rugby team and regional team the Ospreys.

Lizzie Ludlow



Lizzie is based in Worcester

Lizzie joined the Mood Disorders Research Group as a Senior Administrator in April 2016.

This is Lizzie's first role as part of a research group. She has had 5 years' experience in administration at the University of Worcester in a number of different roles. Lizzie provides administrative support to Lisa, Katherine, Amy and Sarah who are based at the University of Worcester, and is the first point of contact for the group.

In her spare time, Lizzie enjoys cooking, socialising and caring for her dog and cat, Tilly and Puss.

Rebecca Lynch

Rebecca joined the team from Swansea University's Medical School, where she conducted follow-up visits with parents and infants in the 'Growing Up in Wales: Environments for Healthy Living' study, and carried out the first phase of a study exploring the acceptability and efficacy of mindfulness training for children, delivering a tailored curriculum of mindfulness sessions to primary school children in February 2016.

Now based at Cardiff University, she coordinates the Bipolar Education Programme Cymru and measures the impact of psychoeducation programmes.

A graduate of Swansea Institute, Cardiff University, and King's College London, Rebecca has been fortunate enough to live and work in some fascinating places, including China University of Geosciences Beijing, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, and the British Councils in Sri Lanka and Hong Kong.

When not at work, Rebecca can be found reading and wondering, world wandering, and learning to play the ukulele.



Rebecca joins from Swansea University

Keep in touch

We plan to have more contact with our participants via email, although this will not replace our annual postal newsletter.

You may have provided your email address when you were first in contact with us.

If you have changed your email address or think you might not have provided one at the time, please update us with your details by emailing moodresearch@worc.ac.uk

If you would prefer us not to contact you by email, please let us know.

Have you moved? Please let us know your new address - our contact details are on the back page of the newsletter.

BDRN team attend Annual Conference of the International Society for Bipolar Disorders

In July 2016 members of the BDRN team attended the 18th Annual Conference of the International Society for Bipolar Disorders, held jointly with the 8th Biennial Congress of the International Society of Affective Disorders in Amsterdam.

The conference provided the opportunity for both clinicians and researchers from across the world to present and discuss the latest leading research findings and treatment approaches in the field of mood disorders.

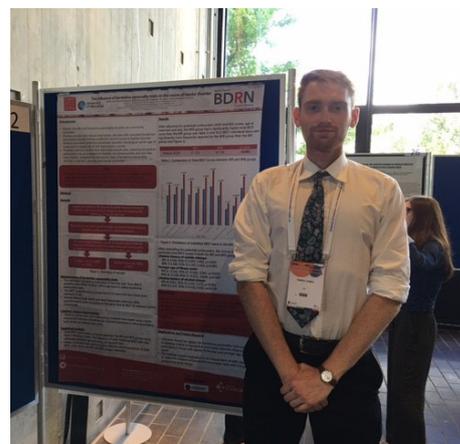
Symposium topics included pregnancy and childbirth (chaired by Professor Ian Jones), co-morbidities in bipolar disorder and the use of e-mental health technologies.



Imogen Webb and Amy Perry (inset), Tomos Jones (below), present their work during the conference.

We are very proud that BDRN members made up 15% of the UK delegates and gave a total of six talks and eight poster presentations.

Two medical students who previously undertook their research projects with us, Imogen Webb and Tomos Jones, also attended the conference to present their work.



BDRN at Hay Festival

Professor Lisa Jones and Professor Ian Jones were delighted to talk about bipolar disorder and the work of BDRN at the Hay Festival in June of this year.

We are very grateful to Clare Dolman, Vice Chair of Bipolar UK, who joined them on stage to talk about her own experiences of bipolar disorder.

They presented to a big crowd of around 300 people – even though they were on at 10am!

The Hay Festival is one of the world's foremost annual literary festivals, taking place every spring in the market town of Hay-on-Wye.

Professor Lisa Jones said "Speaking at the Hay Festival was a wonderful opportunity to be able to speak to the public about mood disorders. The audience was very keen to know more judging by the number of questions – if only there had been more time to answer them

all. We ended our presentation with a big public thank you to all of our BDRN participants from all over the UK".

BDRN would like to thank the University of Worcester for sponsoring their Hay Festival presentation.



Announcements

Prestigious Fellowship for Professor Ian Jones

We are delighted that the University of Worcester recently presented Professor Ian Jones with a prestigious University Fellowship, and appointed him as Honorary Professor of Psychiatry.

This is recognition of Ian's outstanding achievements as a psychiatrist and mood disorders researcher, and strengthens the close relationship between our teams in Cardiff and Worcester.

Inaugural Professorial Lecture by Professor Lisa Jones

Professor Lisa Jones with University of Worcester colleagues (Professor David

Green, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive; Dr Jan Quallington, Head of the Institute of Health and Society; and Professor Eleanor Bradley) and BDRN colleagues (Professor Ian Jones

and Professor Nick Craddock) when she delivered her Inaugural Professorial Lecture at the University of Worcester in June 2016.



Professor Lisa Jones (centre)



Professor Ian Jones (centre)

Bipolar Disorder Resources

Useful Books

Bipolar Disorder: The Essential Guide by D Roberts (2011), published by Need - 2 - Know

Family Experiences of Bipolar Disorder by C Aiken (2010), published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Living with Bipolar Disorder by N Burton (2009), published by Sheldon Press

The A-Z Guide to Good Mental Health: You Don't Have to Be Famous to Have Manic Depression by J Thomas and T Hughes (2008), published by Oneworld Publications

Bipolar Disorder - The Ultimate Guide by S Owen and A Saunders (2006), published by Michael Joseph Ltd

Become your own Bipolar Life Coach by Wendy Lavin (2012), published by Grosvenor House Publishing Ltd

Useful Websites

Bipolar Disorder Research Network: bdrn.org

Bipolar and Genetics Your Guide: bipinfo.org

Bipolar Education Programme Cymru: ncmh.info/bepcymru

Action on Postpartum Psychosis: app-network.org

Bipolar UK: bipolaruk.org.uk

Youthspace.me: youthspace.me

Mental Health Foundation: mentalhealth.org.uk

Mind: mind.org.uk

MQ: mqmentalhealth.org

Rethink: rethink.org

National Centre for Mental Health: ncmh.info

Pregnancy and bipolar disorder - volunteers needed

Amy Perry, one of our BDRN researchers, has been interviewing women with bipolar disorder during pregnancy and again once they have given birth.

Following women through pregnancy will help us to find out more about factors which make women more or less likely to become unwell in relation to childbirth. These findings will be very useful for women with bipolar disorder who may be considering pregnancy.

So far, just over 100 women have already taken part in this study, which is one of the largest of its kind anywhere in the world! Amy would like to say a huge thank you to those of you who have kindly participated, as without you this important work would not be possible.

Amy is about to start analysing the data collected so far as part of her PhD and will be looking at a range of factors that may contribute to women with

bipolar disorder remaining well or becoming unwell following childbirth including medication use, pregnancy or delivery complications, past history of illness following childbirth and the presence of mood illness during pregnancy.

We will update you on more on Amy's findings in our next newsletter.

This work is ongoing and we would be delighted to hear from any women with bipolar disorder who are currently pregnant and may be willing to help us with this research, please contact Amy on 01905 54 2880 or by emailing moodresearch@worc.ac.uk.

In June this year Amy ran a workshop for 17 women with bipolar disorder and their partners who were considering pregnancy. Organised jointly with Clare Dolman from the charity Bipolar UK, the workshop was oversubscribed and a huge success. It is hoped that another



one will be organised in the near future. If you would like to be added to a mailing list for further information about future workshops please contact Amy.

We are also very interested in finding out from individuals more widely (both men and women) about any mood illness episodes they might have experienced around the time of the birth/arrival of their children. We have included some questions in the enclosed questionnaires pack asking about your experiences around the birth/arrival of your children.

We would be extremely grateful for your responses.

BDRN in Japan

Researchers in Japan have now joined the BDRN team. BDRN Japan, led by Dr Tadufumi Kato at the RIKEN Brain Science Institute in Wako, is modeled on our work in the UK. Over 100 people in Japan who have bipolar disorder have already joined the network. Great to see BDRN going global!

双極性障害研究ネットワーク(BDRNJ)

HOME	双極性障害とは	BDRNJとは	ニュースレター申込み	リンク
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Advising on EastEnders storyline

The depiction of postpartum psychosis in EastEnders has massively raised the profile of this devastating condition among the general public.

Last year Prof. Ian Jones and I visited the Elstree Studios to meet with the programme's writers and researchers to encourage them to portray the character Stacey Branning, who has bipolar disorder and was pregnant, suffering a postpartum psychosis, as this does happen to 20-25% of women with bipolar.

We were also very keen that the portrayal was as accurate as possible, so gave our input to the scripts as they were developed over the following months.

We were both very pleased with the result: actress Lacey Turner's brilliant portrayal of Stacey's anguish as she suffers delusions and hallucinations soon after her baby's birth has deservedly received lots of praise, winning her two TV Soap Awards. It has



definitely raised awareness of the issue via charities Bipolar UK and Action on Postpartum Psychosis (APP), with the 'Bipolar and Pregnancy' booklet we produced together being downloaded a massive 855 during the EastEnders storyline (compared to 60 times in the three months before).

Also, by shining the spotlight on the need for better care for women suffering in this way, it has given a boost to the Maternal Mental Health Alliance which Ian and I are both very involved with. We have been campaigning to

end the postcode lottery where some areas have access to good services in a Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) while others miss out, and the media attention encouraged by the EastEnders storyline has definitely helped: even the Minister for Mental Health, Alistair Burt, referred to it in his speech to the House of Commons promising to dedicate significant funds to tackling this problem:

"It's great that EastEnders is raising awareness of this very important issue and it makes for some harrowing scenes to watch. Having a baby is a major life event and we want all new and expectant mums to be able to get the mental health support they need. That's why we are spending an extra £350 million on perinatal mental health services over the next five years."

This storyline has now been nominated for another award at the Mind Media Awards.

By Clare Dolman



Clare Dolman and Professor Ian Jones visiting East London's most famous square

Would your family be interested in taking part in a study into the children of people who have a mood disorder?



Dr Argyris Stringaris

BDRN is working with Dr Argyris Stringaris from the Institute of Psychiatry in London and the National Institutes of Health in the USA.

Dr Stringaris is interested in the children, both youngsters and adults, of BDRN participants.

The research would likely involve asking parents of children under

the age of 18 years to complete a short questionnaire about the strengths and difficulties of the child, and asking adult children of parents who have bipolar disorder to complete some questionnaires about their own health and experiences.

At the moment we would simply like to find out if this is something that may be of interest to our participants.

We would be very grateful if you would let us know if this is something your family might be interested in helping us with in the future by writing a note in the comments box at the end of your questionnaire pack, or email us at moodresearch@worc.ac.uk or telephone us on 01905 542 880.



The BDRN team

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Mr & Mrs Knowles for their donation in memory of their son and David, Robin and Simon Andrews for their donation on behalf of their late father, Dr Brian Andrews.

We are very grateful for your generosity.

Cardiff University Psychiatry Service

The Cardiff University Psychiatry Service (CUPS) offers a second opinion or consultation to patients with complicated mental health problems, with the aim of assisting and advising both clinicians and their patients in the diagnosis and management of severe mental illness.

There is no charge for this service (either to the patient or the referring NHS Trust). More information can be found at: cardiff.ac.uk/mrc-centre-neuropsychiatric-genetics-genomics/clinical-services or by e-mailing Elizabeth Upadhyay at UpadhyayEA@Cardiff.ac.uk.

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