

**BPOS Student and Early Career Researchers**  
**Online conference: Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June '21, 1-3pm.**  
**'Perspectives on conducting Psychosocial research during the COVID-19 pandemic'.**

We were thrilled to welcome new and old BPOS student and ECR members to our conference which began with the BPOS Executive Chair, Kate Absolom explaining how BPOS wishes to provide a community to support psychosocial oncology researchers from all disciplines and areas of work. Kate then introduced our 3 invited speakers who explained how they have addressed the impact of the pandemic upon their research.

Dr Lynn Calman, Associate Professor, Deputy Director Macmillan Survivorship Research Group, University of Southampton, presented the processes behind changes made to the ENABLE and HORIZONS studies. Lynn emphasised the value of PPI in aiding decision making during the necessary revisions to methodologies. She observed a corollary of the pandemic relevant to her research is that it has helped people realise what is valued. Lynn also noted that as researchers we should not worry about our data being changed by the pandemic nor attempt to separate Covid-19 from our data, but that in fact what is learnt now will be very useful going forward.

Dr Sarah Gelcich, Research Fellow, University of Leeds. Lead for CANVAS (CANcer surveillance And Support project), described the ups and downs of trying to recruit patients as they complete treatment. Sarah described delays and changes which have increased workload but also some benefits e.g., telephoning people who may be feeling isolated after completing treatment and also due to social distancing. Another consequence of the pandemic is that e-health is clearly very much needed and has become more acceptable, which lends even greater pertinence to Sarah's research.

Lynsey Fenwick, PhD Researcher, shared her PhD 'River' journey with us. This creative inspiration was from participation in a NCRM workshop and enabled Lynsey to convey the ebb and flow of her experiences. She was able to observe benefits to the changes she had to make to her in-person ethnographic approach, including regular contact with her participants and awareness of the increase in technological solutions available.

We then heard from 5 BPOS Students and Early Career Researchers who had submitted abstracts before being invited to present their perspectives of researching during the pandemic. We are grateful to them all for their excellent presentations:

1. Liz Jestico: Support in decision making by parents of children with cancer.
2. Dr Monica Leslie: UK Trial of the online supportive intervention 'Finding my way'.
3. Rebecca Platt: Care and support needs of people with dementia and cancer.
4. Zoe Cooke: Psychosocial Outcomes Toolkit in partnership with 'Tenovus Cancer Care'.
5. Lucy King: TYA cancer-awareness.

We are grateful to Kate Absolom, Lynn Calman and Sarah Gelcich for judging the presentations. The winner was: Rebecca Platt.

BPOS student representatives Sara Matthews and Lucy King closed the meeting with a brief summary of the BPOS Covid-19 student survey (a full analysis of which will soon be undertaken) and an outline of some resultant changes to the BPOS website.