

WHO'S CHALLENGING WHO PROJECT
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**Who's
Challenging
Who?**

Study Information Sheet

We would like to invite you to take part in our research study. Before you decide, we would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you and your residential setting.

Purpose of the study

We have developed a half-day training course (“Who’s Challenging Who” – WCW) for staff who work in social care settings with adults with a learning disability who may engage in challenging behaviour. The challenging behaviours of interest in this study may involve physical or verbal aggression towards others, or towards property.

WCW was developed in collaboration with people with a learning disability. WCW training is delivered by a trainer with a learning disability and a co-trainer who does not have a learning disability. The training is designed to help social care staff to understand the perspective and experiences of people with a learning disability whose behaviour has been labelled as challenging. Following the training, staff design an Action Plan to take their learning into their work setting with the rest of the staff team.

In our research, we are testing whether the WCW training is effective in improving staff understanding of people with learning disability and challenging behaviour.



Why have we been invited to take part in the research?

We are looking for settings supporting between 1 and 10 people with a learning disability, and where at least one service user engages in aggressive behaviour at least sometimes. We do not know if you support any adults who also engage in aggressive behaviour. If you do, we would very much like to hear from you.

Do we have to take part in the research?

You are under no obligation to participate in the research. By completing the Initial Contact Form, you will be able to explore participation in more detail and we can establish whether your residential setting meets the criteria for inclusion in the study. If your residential setting is suitable, and you are still interested in being a part of the study, we would write to two staff members from your service to formally invite them to participate in the training and the research.

Individual staff members can withdraw from the study at any time.

What will happen if we do take part?

If you return the Initial Contact Form to the research team, a researcher will contact you to arrange a time to speak to you over the telephone. The researcher will ask you a few questions about your residential setting and establish with you whether any of your service users engage in one or more aggressive challenging behaviours.

We will be requesting contact information for the residential setting manager or other senior staff member with line management responsibility for the setting. In addition, we ask you to talk to your staff and find a second staff member to volunteer to receive WCW training and take part in the research. Following the telephone conversation with the researcher, they will decide if your setting is suitable for the study. If this is the case, and you are still interested in taking part in the research, we will send an information sheet and consent form to the two named staff members. The information sheet will explain in detail what participation in the study would mean for the individual staff members.



Once two staff from the setting have agreed to take part, we will ask each of those people to complete some questionnaires about their perceptions of people with a learning disability who have challenging behaviours. These questionnaires will be sent by mail, and returned to us in a pre-paid envelope along with the consent form that each staff member will be asked to sign.

The manager or other senior staff member will be asked to complete an additional questionnaire. This will ask for information about the total number of incidents of challenging behaviour recorded in your residential setting over the previous few months. We will also ask for the total number of recorded uses of any restrictive interventions (e.g., PRN medication, any removal of privileges). This information will be drawn from the records you keep for your residential setting. We will not be asking for any information about individual service users – only the total number of recorded incidents of both kinds in your residential service. We will also not be asking for any details of the incidents – just a total number in each case. Service users and staff will, therefore, not be identified.

Once staff from several residential settings have agreed to take part in the research, and completed the initial measures, we will use a random process to decide which services will get to attend WCW training first. Everyone will be offered places on a WCW training course – some straightaway, and others after waiting a few months.

Six weeks after being assigned to attend WCW training first or later, we will send questionnaires again to all staff in the study. We will send the same questionnaires again approximately 14 weeks after that. Each time, a pre-paid envelope will be included for the return of the questionnaires. We will also invite some staff to take part in an interview with a researcher about their experience of receiving WCW training and using the learning in their residential setting.

At the end of the study, we will write to all residential services that have taken part in the research to explain our findings. We will also make the WCW training materials available free to everyone who would like to use the training in their settings and services.



What is involved in Who's Challenging Who training?

Two staff from your residential setting would attend a half-day WCW training course together, and with staff from three or four other settings involved in the study. The WCW training, and refreshments, are provided free of charge. However, we cannot offer travel expenses to the training or the costs of replacement staff time for attending the training.

The WCW training involves a mix of presentations by the two trainers, group exercises, and discussion. The whole focus is on what it is like to be labelled as “challenging”, and to help staff to understand the perspective of people with a learning disability. Towards the end of the training course, each staff pair is asked to draft an Action Plan for what they would like to change about their residential setting based on what they have learned during the course. These plans are discussed with the group and the trainers.

Following the WCW training course, the trainer without learning disability will have two 30 minute telephone coaching sessions with the manager/senior staff member from each residential setting. In the first coaching session, a plan will be developed for how the trained staff members will share their learning with the wider staff team and seek “buy-in” for their Action Plan. At this stage, the Action Plan may well be adjusted following discussion amongst the wider staff team. This is no problem. In the second coaching session, the trainer will help the manager/senior staff member to develop a plan for how to make sure that the Action Plan is carried forward in practice. Following the second telephone coaching session, WCW training is complete. It is up to each residential setting how they go on to use the learning from the training.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The University of Warwick is responsible for this research, working with researchers from Cardiff University, and from Mencap. The research has received funding from the National Institute for Health Research's School for Social Care Research.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the Social Care Research Ethics Committee. A Research Ethics Committee is a group



of independent people who review research to protect the dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of participants and researchers.

Further information and contact details

If you are interested in your residential setting taking part in this study, please complete and return the enclosed Initial Contact Form in the pre-paid envelope supplied. When you speak to a researcher on the telephone, you will be able to ask any questions you like about the research.

If you would like to ask questions before completing the Initial Contact Form, please contact Rosie Knight, Research Assistant, by email at R.E.Knight@warwick.ac.uk, or by phone at 07823 362152.

If you are unhappy about any aspect of this research study, please contact the Chief Investigator, Richard Hastings by mail, email or telephone (CEDAR, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL; R.Hastings@warwick.ac.uk; 02476 522197).

This study is covered by the University of Warwick's insurance and indemnity cover.

Any complaint about the way that you have been dealt with during the study, or any possible harm that you might have suffered, should be directed to: the Director of Delivery Assurance, Registrar's Office, University House, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 8UW; e-mail: complaints@warwick.ac.uk; telephone 02476 574774.

Thank you for reading this Study Information Sheet. We hope you will now be willing to complete the Initial Contact Form.


***National Institute for
Health Research***