

# Mindset-XR Innovation Support Programme

## Cardiff Roadshow Event

Thursday 16 October 2025

 @HINSouthLondon

 [healthinnovationnetwork.com](https://healthinnovationnetwork.com)



Innovate  
UK



Health  
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Network  
South London



Hwb Gwyddorau Bywyd Cymru  
Life Sciences Hub Wales

# Welcome and Opening Remarks

**Cari-Anne Quinn**

Chief Executive, Life Sciences Hub Wales

 @HINSouthLondon

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Life Sciences Hub Wales

# Housekeeping

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**Timing of the day**



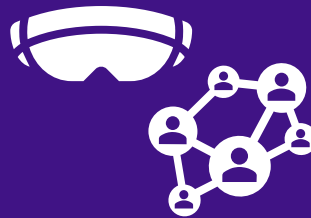
**Fire alarm and evacuation**



**W/C**



**Feedback form**



**Demos and networking**



# AGENDA

Amser	Sesiwn	Siaradwr
09:30-10:00	Cyrraedd a Chofrestru	Lluniaeth ar gael. Stondinau arddangos ar agor.
10:00-10:15	Croeso a sylwadau agoriadol	Cari-Anne Quinn, Prif Weithredwr, Hwb Gwyddorau Bywyd Cymru
10:15-10:30	Diweddariad gan Innovate UK	Innovate UK - Jane Guest
10:30-10:45	Cyflwyniad Diwydiant: Therapiau Gwybyddol Realiti Estynedig (MR)	Sarah Beauclerk - Cysylltu Realiti
10:45 - 11:25	Egwyl am banded	Arddangosfeydd Technoleg ar Agor
11:25 – 11:40	Cyflwyniad Cyllid	Liz Rees- Hwb Gwyddorau Bywyd Cymru
11:40 – 11:55	Cyflwyniad Elusennol: Profiad Bywyd wrth Ddylunio Arloesedd	Ceri Phelps-Prifysgol Cymru y Drindod Dewi Sant - 'Y Prosiect Cerdded yn ein Hesgidiau'
12:00 – 13:15	Cinio Rhwydweithio ac Arddangosfeydd Rhyngweithiol	Darperir cinio; arddangosiadau technoleg byw
13:15-13:30	Cyflwyniad Arloeswr 1:	Dylon O’Leary- Mativision
13:30 – 13:45	Cyflwyniad Arloeswr 2: Dichonoldeb a Gwasanaethau Rheng Flaen	Azize Naji a’r Athro Jeff Lewis -Goggleminds
13:45 – 14:00	Cyflwyniad Arloeswr 3: Tosturi Digidol dros y Glasoed	Ange McMillan- Elemental Health
14:00 – 14:15	Cyflwyniad Arloeswr 4:	Sean Carroll - TendVR
14:15 – 14:45	Trafodaeth Banel a Sesiwn Holi ac Ateb gyda’r Gynulleidfa	Yr holl siaradwyr gwadd, Cadeirydd: Cari-Anne Quinn
14:45 – 15:00	Y Camau Nesaf a Chlo	Cari-Anne Quinn, Hwb Gwyddorau Bywyd Cymru

Time	Session	Speaker
09:30-10:00	Arrival and Registration	Refreshments available. Demonstration stands open.
10:00-10:15	Welcome and Opening Remarks	Cari-Anne Quinn, Chief Executive, Life Sciences Hub Wales
10:15-10:30	Update from Innovate UK	Innovate UK - Jane Guest
10:30-10:45	Industry Presentation: XR-Driven Cognitive Therapies	Sarah Beauclerk - Connecting Realities
10:45- 11:25	Coffee Break	Technology Demonstrations Open
11:25 – 11:40	Funding Presentation	Liz Rees- Life Sciences Hub Wales
11:40 – 11:55	Charity Presentation: Lived Experience in Innovation Design	Ceri Phelps- UWTSO- ‘The Walking in Our Shoes project’
12:00 – 13:15	Networking Lunch and Interactive Demonstrations	Lunch provided; live tech demos on display
13:15-13:30	Innovator Showcase 1:	Dylon O’Leary- Mativision
13:30 – 13:45	Innovator Showcase 2: Feasibility to Frontline	Azize Naji and Professor Jeff Lewis - Goggleminds
13:45 – 14:00	Innovator Showcase 3: Digital Compassion for Adolescents	Ange McMillan- Elemental Health
14:00 – 14:15	Innovator Showcase 4:	Sean Carroll-TendVR
14:15 – 14:45	Panel Discussion and Audience Q&A	All keynote and session speakers, Chair: Cari-Anne Quinn
14:45 – 15:00	Closing Reflections and Next Steps	Cari-Anne Quinn, Life Sciences Hub Wales

# Update from Innovate UK

**Jane Guest**

Innovation Lead, Innovate UK

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# Mindset XR Programme: 2022 – 2027

[jane.guest@iuk.ukri.org](mailto:jane.guest@iuk.ukri.org)

Innovation Lead

## Healthy Lives Aim

“Helping people to live well throughout  
the life course in mind and body.”

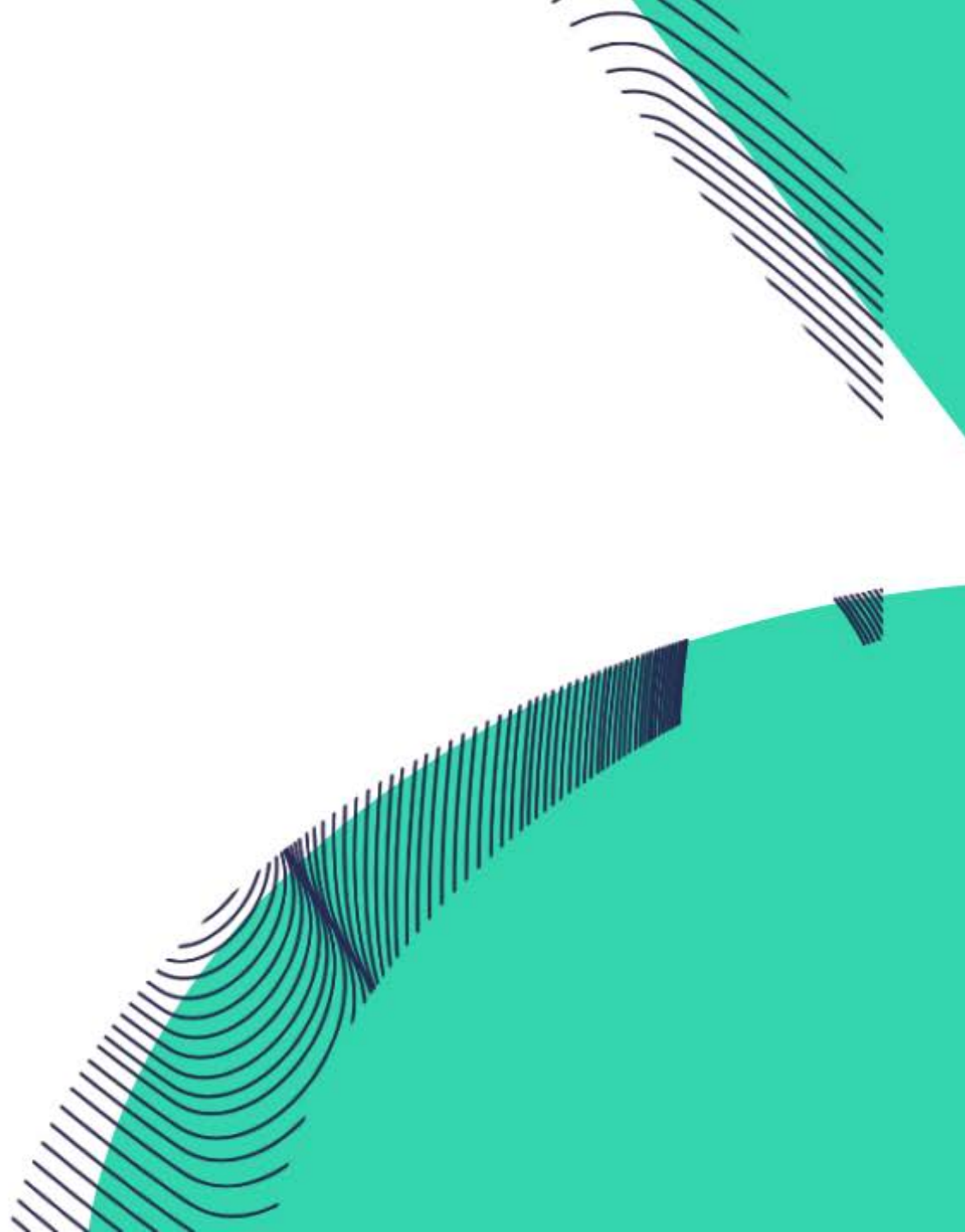


Healthy Lives



# Scene Setting

- Aim
- Approach



## Mindset: Tackling a key societal issue

- Inspired by XRHA paper 'Growing value of XR in healthcare'

Key Findings from NHS England Survey, 23/24:

- 1 in 5** (20.2%) adults (over 11.5 million) in England had a Common Mental Health Condition (CMHC)
- Young people** were more likely to have an CMHC than older adults with prevalence in 16 – 24 yr olds rising to 25.8%
- Prevalence of **severe MHCs** has also increased by 11.6%
- Prevalence of CMHCs is **higher in the most deprived areas** (26.2%) than in the least (16.0%)
- Yet only **44.6%** adults are receiving treatment\*
- Increasing demand + not enough clinicians = digital opportunity

\* [Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey: Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, England, 2023/4](#)

### UK-WIDE ISSUE

Nation	Prevalence (Adults, %)	Treatment Rate (% of those with condition)
England	20.2% (16–64, 2023/24)	43.5% receiving treatment (2023/24)
Northern Ireland	18–26% likely affected	40% of diagnosed cases received treatment
Scotland	11.3% (long-term condition, 2022)	Approx. 20% on antidepressants
Wales	~16.7% current; ~25% lifetime	No specific rate available

### KEY OUT-TAKE

20 – 25% UK population have a MHC and not even half of them are being treated



# Addressing with a holistic approach

Overall Programme Budget £20m

Delivered 3 Workstreams, 2022 – 2027:

1. Grant funding for **Collaborative R&D** projects, inspiring partnerships between academia and industry
2. **Investment Partnerships** to boost government funding and stimulate future investment
3. Partnering with Health Innovation Network, South London to deliver the **Mindset XR - Innovation Support Programme (MISP)**, to optimise results by stimulating:
  - Knowledge sharing (**expertise**)
  - Networking and collaboration (**partnerships**)
  - Adoption and scale (**connections**)
  - *Supports both projects and the wider ecosystem to deliver maximum economic and social impact*

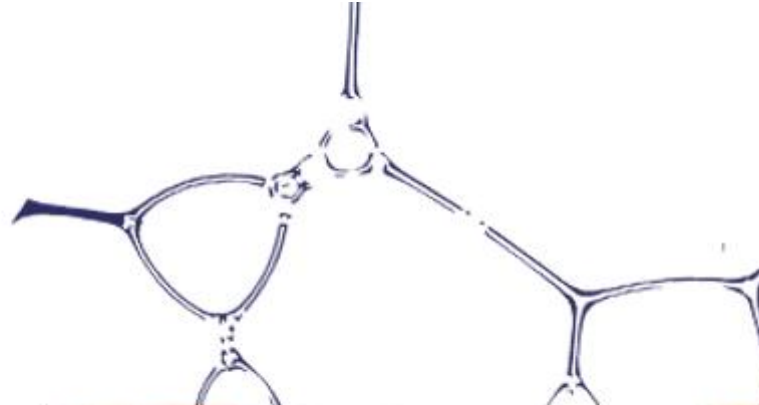


Image: Play Well For Life

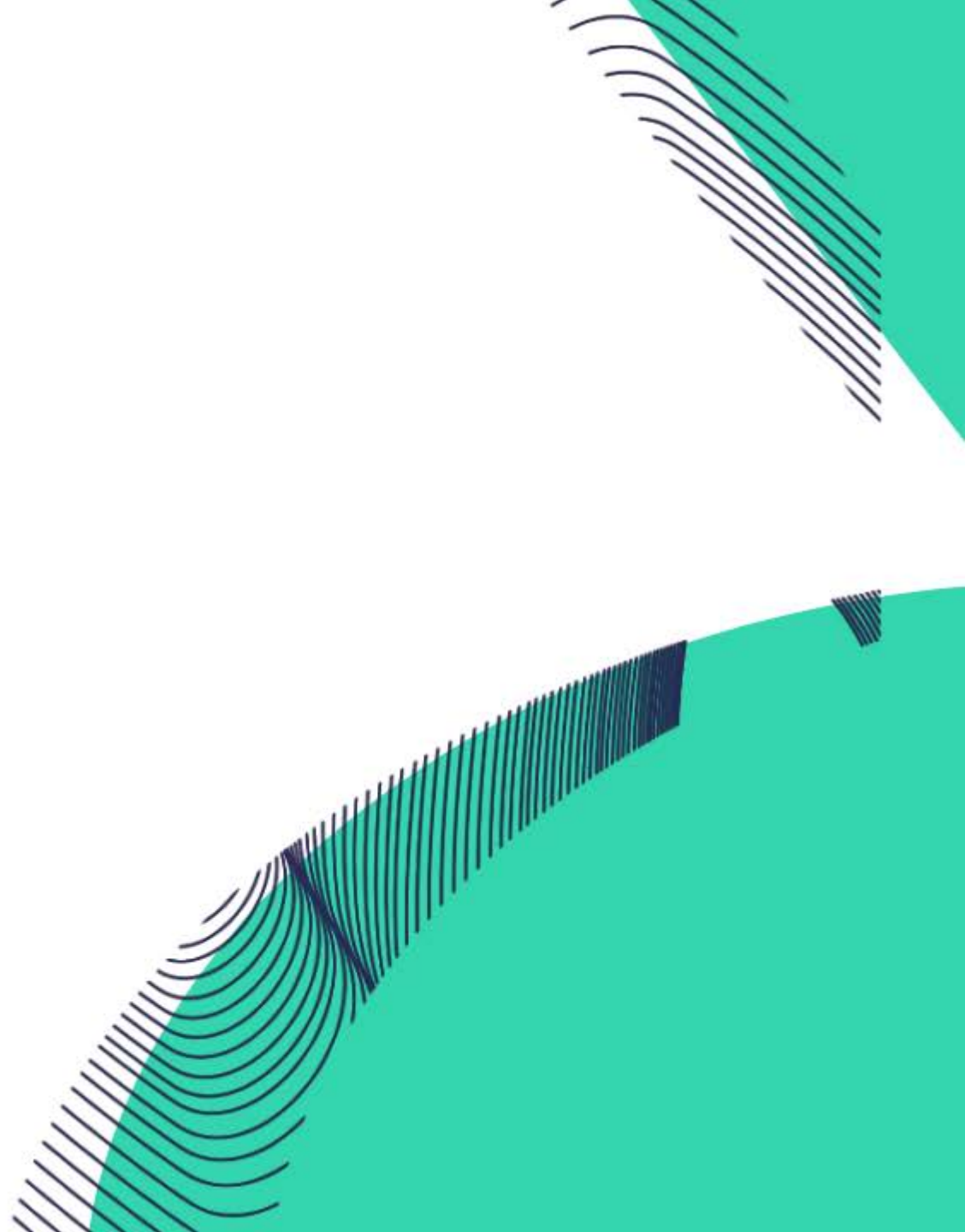


Healthy Lives



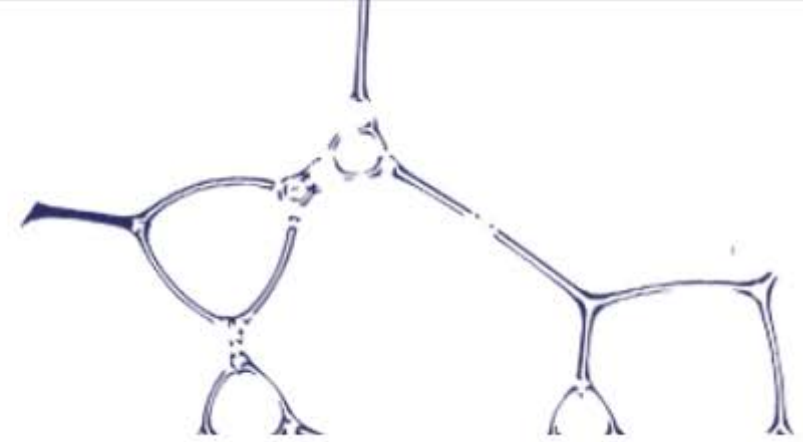
# Delivering Impact

- Impact Timeframe
- Mindset
- Projects

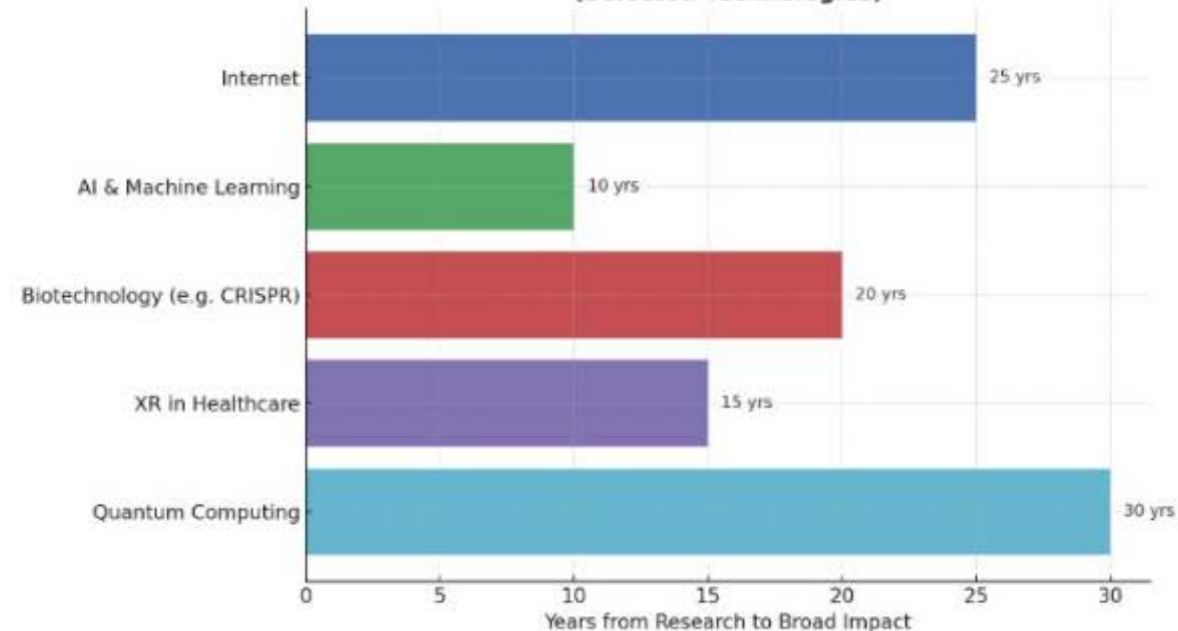


## Timeframe: From research to impact

- Many studies conducted
  - 10 – 20 years for broad tech impact
1. Griliches (1957, 1992)
    - Showed that new technologies often take **decades** before reaching widespread economic impact.
  2. Comin & Hobijn (2004, 2010)
    - Highlight that major technologies (electricity, telephone, computers) take **10–30 years** from invention to broad adoption across economies.
  3. OECD and World Bank reports
    - Emphasise that R&D and innovation investments typically take **10–20 years** before showing clear economy-wide benefits.



Timeline: From Research to Significant Social & Economic Impact (Selected Technologies)



### KEY OUT-TAKE

Takes 15 years for XR to deliver broad impact in healthcare, but 'we' are already seeing this!

## 3 Years in, Mindset impact so far...

- Funded & supported 70+ UK wide SME led projects, including final cohort of 17
  - **30** Feasibility
  - **40** Industrial Research
  - **4** Investment Partnerships
  - **80%** projects address low social economic groups
- Stimulated ecosystem, growing no. of applicants
  - £3m MR1 – 2022/23: **46**
  - £3.2m MR2 – 2023/24: **103**
  - £3.6m MR3 – 2024/25: **136 (196% inc. over 3 years)**
  - £1.8m Investment Partnerships: **150%** inc. across 3 comps
- Innovation progressed from treating **wellbeing to SMIs**
- Over **63** additional jobs created across **32** projects reporting
- **£2.1m** private and further funding raised by **13** projects reporting
- High performance MISIP achieving **NPS 9 and so much more!**



Innovation  
Caucus



INNOVATE UK GRANTS  
AND R&D RETURNS:

IMPACT ON BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

**ROI - £6.21 of value-added for every £1 Innovate UK invests**



OXFORD  
BROOKES  
UNIVERSITY

## Projects are Already Delivering Impact!

- **TendVR: Researching, designing and delivering VR-based mindfulness based cognitive therapy (VR MBCT) to Mind service users across the UK**

Key stats:

- First VR-MBCT course to be **deployed in the NHS – just three years** after their first study
- **2-5 times cheaper** than Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- On demand treatment with **no waiting list**
- **EFFECTIVE >50% average reduction** in PHQ-9 (depression) and GAD-7 (anxiety) vs. 43% (classic ‘gold standard’ CBT) <sup>1</sup>
- **ENGAGING >80%** treatment completion rates (vs. 68.2% classic CBT)<sup>2</sup>
- **59% reliable recovery** from mental health conditions in latest delivery (NHS target = 48%) moving from clinical to non-clinical level of treatment
- **MR3 award**, focussing on Treatment Resistant Depression

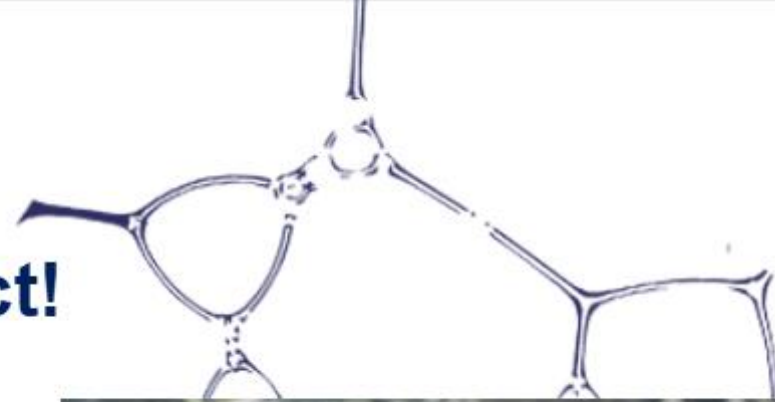


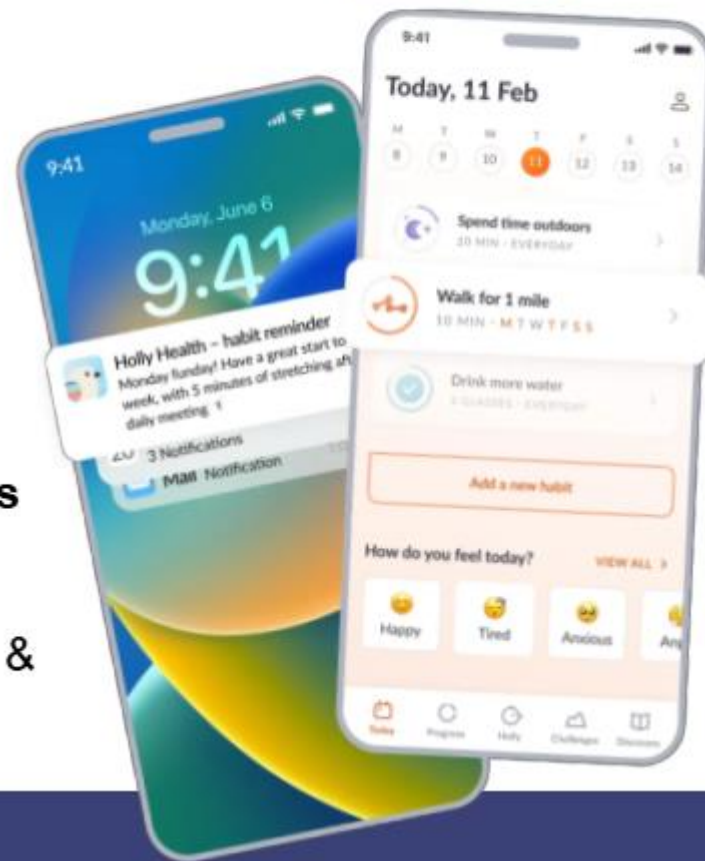
Image: TendVR





## Wellbeing coaching, with compassion & intelligence

- Their digital service **supports sustainable mental & physical health habit changes** for a wide range of lifestyle risk factors and long-term conditions like **anxiety**, after extensive co-design with the public & clinicians
- Deployments have taken place with **200+ GP practices across over 18 UK regions**
- Holly Health has delivered personalised digital health & habit coaching to **70,000 UK patients**



### Observed outcomes in primary care:

**30%**  
reduction in GP  
Appointments  
*(in high service users)*

**28%**  
improvement in  
ONS-4 Wellbeing  
*(in people with low to  
medium wellbeing)*

**31%**  
increase in  
Exercise Hours  
*(in people with low to  
medium exercise)*


**3.55mmHg**  
Average BP  
reduction  
*(in people tracking  
BP)*

**>15x ROI**  
Estimated ROI  
in ICS scale  
deployments

## And last but most definitely not least...

### XR Therapeutics: New VR platform for accessible treatment of phobias and anxiety, self-harm & PTSD

- **7 NHS** trusts (took one and a half years to win first contract)
  - 2 charities
  - Multiple private insurance providers
  - Various services including adult and children mental health teams working in:
    - Prison and probation services
    - Education and CYP services
    - Neurodiversity and learning disabilities
    - Procedural and hospital settings
- The **first XR company to be commissioned by an ICB** and be included on the NHS Innovation Accelerator
- Health economics report shows savings of up to **£21,000 per 100 patients treated**, plus **7 QLYs** (quality-adjusted life years)
- **Featured in the NHS Long Term Plan** for their work with Greater Manchester Mental Health Foundation Trust



“It was fantastic, extremely useful for the patient, they progressed so quickly in 2 sessions. I have a patient scared of heights, he went into the session with all those typical physical symptoms associated with anxiety and **what we did in 2 sessions here with XRT would probably have taken around 12 without.**”

- **Laura, NHS Therapist**

“XRT has changed my perception of how I view all my fears and anxieties and not just the specific phobia I have. I was **blown away by the process of the treatment and how quickly it worked for me.**”

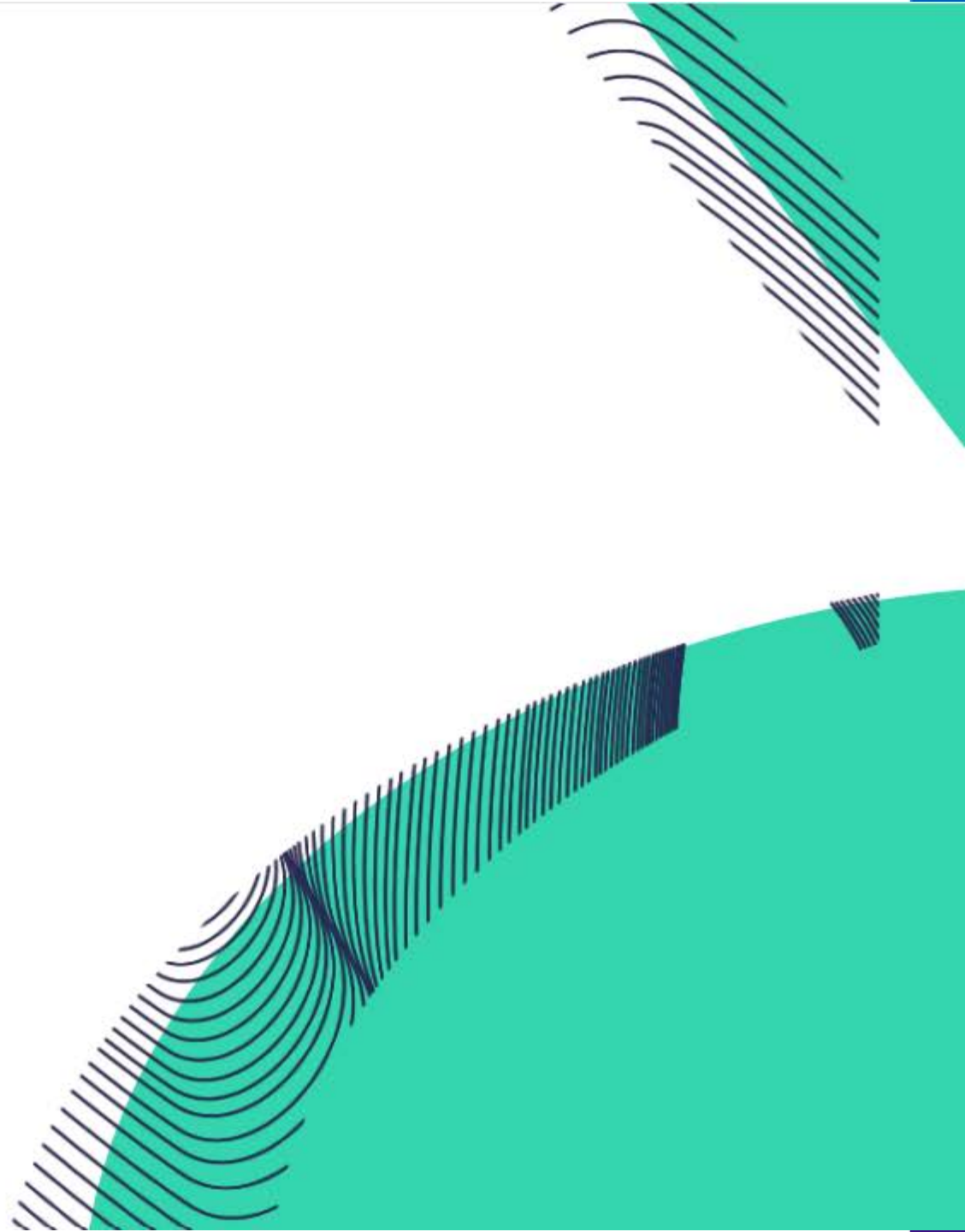
– **Patient, XR Therapeutics**

Healthy Lives



# Future Funding

- Context
- Shape
- Optimising Impact





## How things are shaping up

Top-level UK strategy supports more investment in DTX for MH:

### Government

- Economic growth central to Industrial Strategy, with Digital & Tech and Life Sciences being two of the 8 key UK growth sectors
- Health mission focus is on CYP mental health

### NHS 10 Year Plan

- Analogue to Digital
- Hospital to Community
- Sickness to Prevention

### Life Sciences Plan

- Enabling World Class R&D
- Driving Health Innovation and NHS Reform
- Making the UK an Outstanding Place in Which to Start, Grow, Scale, and Invest

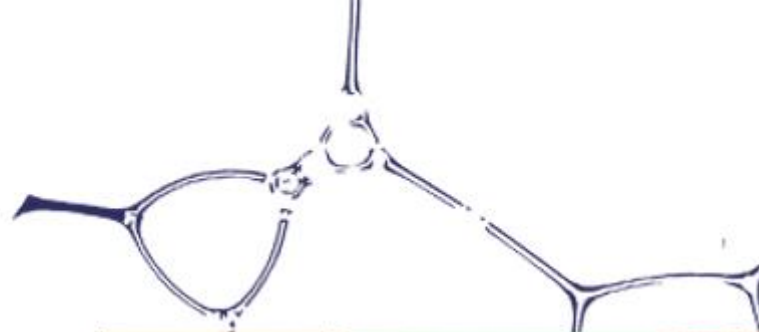


Image: CrossSense Trial Participant



## Catalysing innovation in mental health

Current thinking developed in Aug 24, will need to be reviewed and aligned where necessary to new strategy and SR priorities

- New 4yr programme with comps launching in **2027**
- Focus will be on DTx for mental health across the life course utilising creative tech + AI (if applicable & appropriate)
- Thematic areas: **Prevention**, Diagnosis, **Treatment**
- CR&D multi-strand comps:
  - Feasibility (TR 1 – 3)
  - Industrial research (TR 4 – 6)
  - Experimental design (up to TR 7, 8)
- Investment Partnerships comps, feasibility, industrial research, experimental design
- Contracts for Innovation (SBRI), industrial research (closer to market/impact)



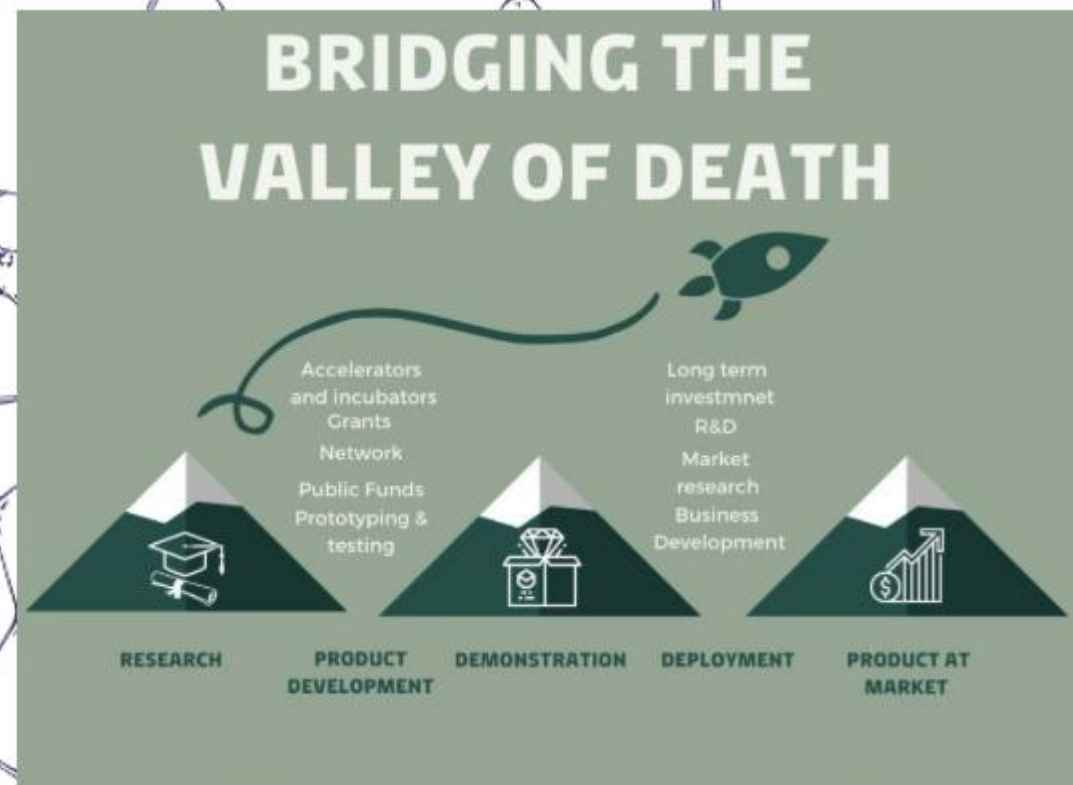
Image: MindTrack 360  
(Formerly, Life Process Program)

## Optimising economic & social impact

A community approach, drawing on ecosystem expertise

- Looking at a UKRI **cross-council partnership** to run a comp focussed on behavioural and culture barriers to determine what's needed for **behavioural change** - to increase market adoption and stickiness
- Providing a **support programme** to help optimise project delivery and opportunities to drive adoption and scale (e.g., MISP)
- Partnering with an accelerator to help projects with the most potential to bridge the second valley of death

**AMBITIOUS CO-DESIGNED PLAN, DEPENDENT ON STRATEGIC AND SPENDING REVIEW PRIORITIES + BUDGET ALLOCATIONS... still an opportunity to shape – let's talk!**



# From Isolation to Inspiration

**Sarah Beauclerk**

Director, Vere Experiences CIC

 @HINSouthLondon

 [healthinnovationnetwork.com](http://healthinnovationnetwork.com)



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Life Sciences Hub Wales



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## From Isolation to Inspiration

SARAH BEAUCLERK | VERE EXPERIENCES CIC



### What being a care worker taught me: the human spirit needs more than the basics Sarah Beauclerk

Society shuns the idea and reality of aging. Have we forgotten that these are the generations that rebuilt the country after the war, and created the NHS?



© What is not so considered is the design of aids to enable reading, crafts, music - the activities a person would engage in to keep sane. Photograph: iStock



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# VR INCLUSIVE MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

**Developed in collaboration with the Pembs. Older Adult Community Mental Health Team.**

- Meaningful benefits for patients include reductions in relapse and crisis episodes, with one participant describing the group session as her “safe space.”
- Evaluation data shows an average in-session mood improvement of nearly 3 points on a 10-point wellbeing rating scale, and a broader trend of sustained improvement in baseline mood.
- As patients progress and no longer require intensive support, the demand for continued, lighter-touch support has become clear. We are now developing Community Immersive Wellbeing Sessions in response.





# Connecting Realities

**“It made me feel important”**

- **80 % of participants** show observable mood improvement following VR experiences
- Reported benefits were **as individual as the needs of each participant**, from relaxation to reconnection and renewed sense of self
- **Moments of Connection** as healthcare staff report increased understanding of their cared for.
- **Care-home staff reported improved overall ambience and atmosphere** following sessions — a calmer, more positive environment for residents and teams alike.





# CARERV

- **“The headsets had some great feedback and it will really help carers manage manual handling in their role. It is an exciting development which I can already see has so much potential. We can’t wait to introduce this to unpaid carers.”**

***Lauren Blockwell, Carer’s Trust***

- Delivering OT and Nursing-led immersive care training to Unpaid Carers living within the Community.
- Developed through support from Public Health Wales and in collaboration with Juice Immersive, PCC Occupational Therapy and Manual Handling Training professionals, and featuring the ‘Safe Systems of Work’ a West Wales 3 County Collaboration.
- Current modules include slide sheet and hoisting training as well as manual handling techniques.

# CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES



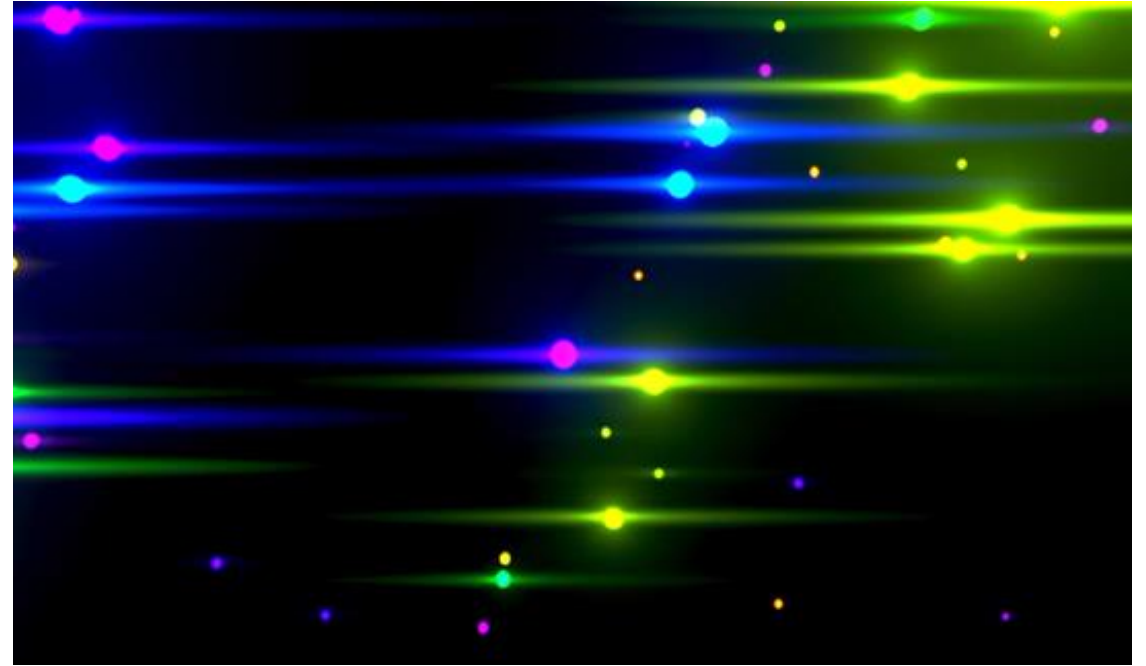


## WHAT'S NEXT?

Exploring Possibilities: Media Cymru funded project working in collaboration with Red Seam and Welsh National Opera



An Immersive Wellspring for Women's Health and Wellbeing in Development



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# Thank you

SARAH BEAUCLERK | VERE EXPERIENCES CIC

# Tea and Coffee Break

10:45-11:25

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# Funding Support

**Liz Rees**

Funding Programme Lead, Life Sciences Hub Wales

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Life Sciences Hub Wales

# Life Sciences Hub Wales

Liz Rees  
Funding Programme Lead



# What we do

We are an **arm's length body** of Welsh Government

We exist to catalyse **innovation** and **collaboration** between **industry, health, social care, and academia**

Our strategic aims:

- Improve health and wellbeing outcomes
- Improve efficiency and value
- Drive economic development





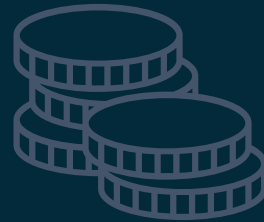
# Our Delivery Teams



**Sector  
Intelligence**



**Programme  
Delivery**



**Economic  
Development**



**Partnerships**



**Marketing &  
Communications**

# Our Current Priorities

**Digital &  
AI**

**Precision  
Medicine**

**Cancer**

# Funding Support

- Signposting to appropriate funding schemes
  - Funding web page
  - Funding questionnaire
  - Research Connect database
- Bid Support
  - Eligibility assessment
  - Staggered support for bid development
  - Bid review; proofreading, editing
- Collaborative bids
  - Consortia development
  - Connecting with funders UK-wide
  - Neutral broker



# Funding Programmes



## Generic:

- UKRI (MRC, Innovate UK)
- NIHR
- Welsh Government e.g. SMART FIS
- HCRW
- Charitable bodies

## Specialised:

- LEAP (Digital Health Community Innovators)
- Mindset-XR Innovation Support Programme
- Wellcome Mental Health Award - Transforming Early Intervention for Anxiety, Depression and Psychosis in Young People
- NIHR PHR: Commissioned Workstream Funding for Primary Research Topics – Men's Mental Health

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<https://lshubwales.com/innovation-directory>



Any questions?

[Elizabeth.rees@lshubwales.com](mailto:Elizabeth.rees@lshubwales.com)

[Funding@lshubwales.com](mailto:Funding@lshubwales.com)

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# Innovation Directory

Our Innovation Directory offers users essential details about organisations in Wales actively involved in the advancement of health and social care innovation. The directory currently lists:

- Life sciences companies based in Wales
- Health organisations – HBs, Trusts, RPBs etc.
- Innovation support organisations
- Universities & Intensive Learning Academies

<https://lshubwales.com/innovation-directory>





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# Any questions?

[Elizabeth.rees@lshubwales.com](mailto:Elizabeth.rees@lshubwales.com)

[Funding@lshubwales.com](mailto:Funding@lshubwales.com)

# Lived Experience in Innovation Design: The Walking in Our Shoes Project

## Barrie Evans

Lived Experience Expert, Limbless Association

## Dr Ceri Phelps

Health Psychologist and Programme Manager: MSc Applied Psychology  
University of Wales Trinity St David

 @HINSouthLondon

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**Lived Experience in Innovation Design:**

**The Walking in Our Shoes Project**

**Ceri Phelps & Barrie Evans**







# No Amputee Need Cope Alone



**The Limbless Association**

# What are we trying to achieve?

## Project Aim

To design and evaluate the acceptability and feasibility of a co-produced psychoeducational intervention designed to support better psychosocial adjustment to living with limb loss.

# Co-production and the Person-based approach

- **sharing of power** – the research is jointly owned and people work together to achieve a joint understanding
- **including all perspectives and skills** – make sure the research team includes all those who can make a contribution
- **respecting and valuing the knowledge of all those working together on the research** – everyone is of equal importance
- **reciprocity** – everybody benefits from working together
- **building and maintaining relationships** – an emphasis on relationships is key to sharing power

[NIHR Guidance on co-producing a research project](#)



# The Team

## Academic Research Team

- Dr Ceri Phelps
- Associate Professor Paul Hutchings
- Dr Fatma Layas
- Nathan Morgan
- Mark Huntly
- Garry Bartlett
- Dr Tim Bashford
- Dr Kate Williams

## Lived Experience Experts

- Barrie Evans
- Dr Mark Williams
- Lianne Forest
- & our co-production group

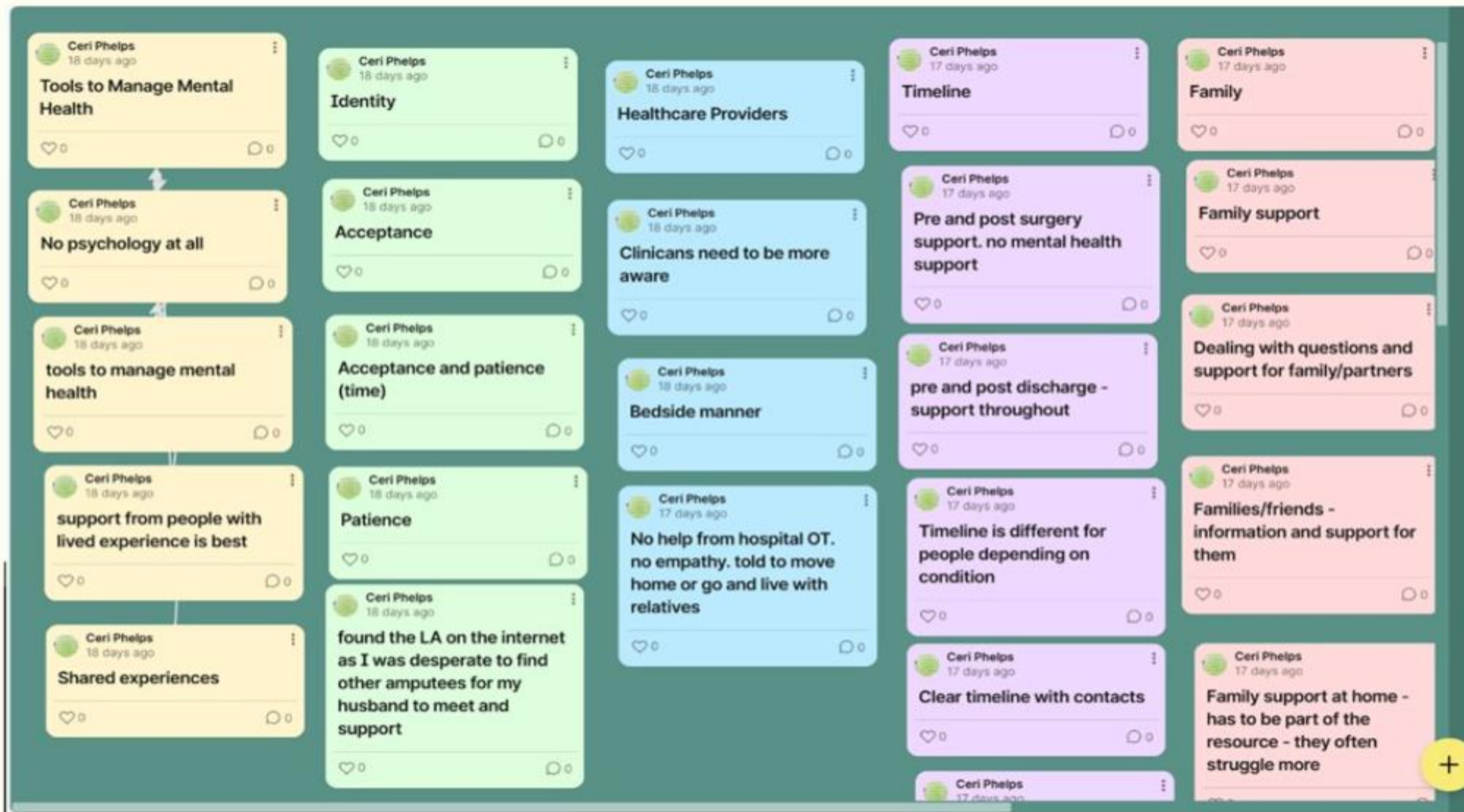
## Stakeholders

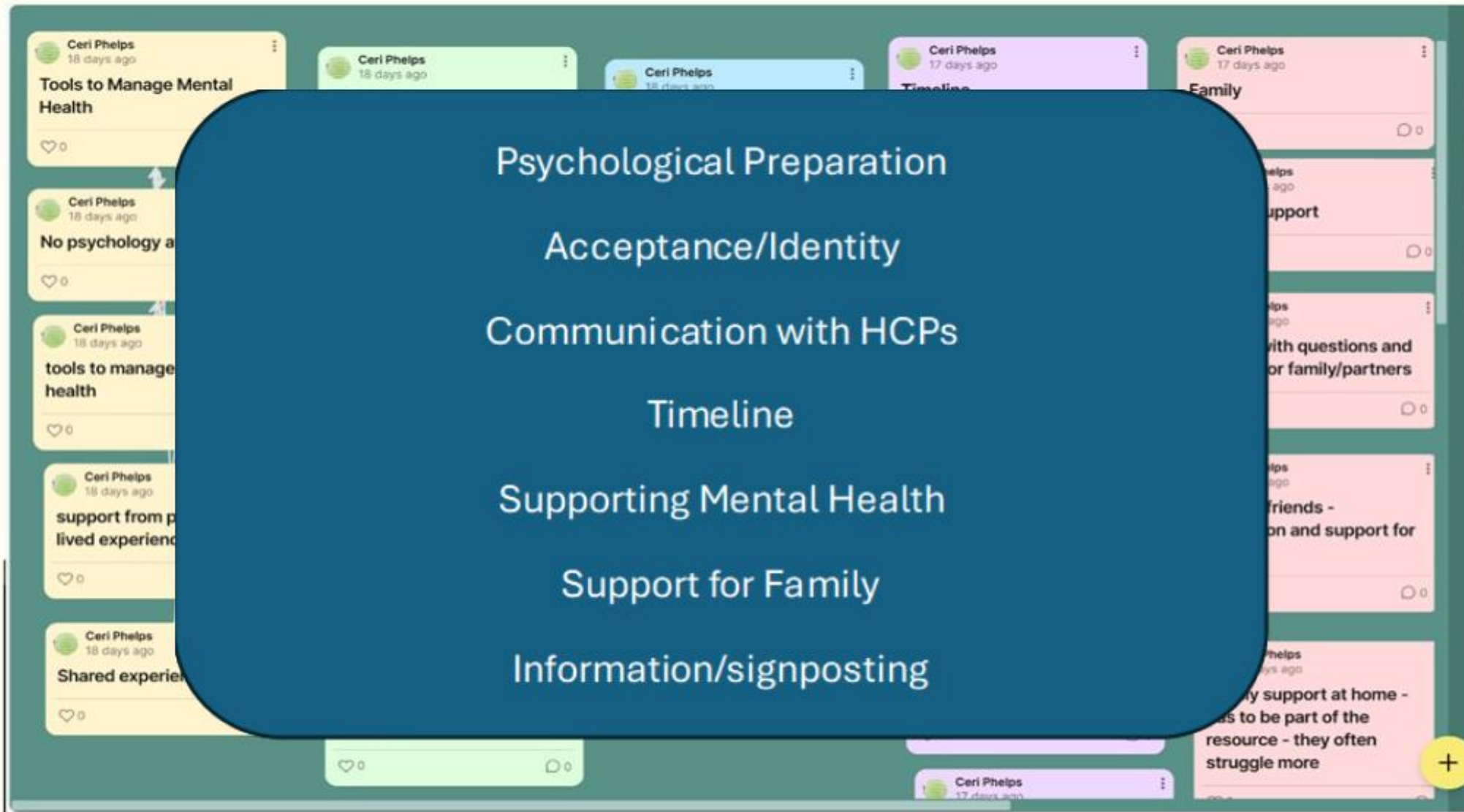
- Deborah Bent CEO LA
- David Bosanquet, Surgeon
- All Wales Psychoprosthetics Group
- Dr Pippa Tollow, CAR, UWE



# Co-production workshops: Heath Community Centre, Cardiff







# WalkInMyShoes: Iteration 1

Expertly Curated by Psychology Professors

## Walk In My Shoes

Your comprehensive repository of limb loss information. Expert-curated articles and timeline-based resources to support you through every stage of your journey.

[View Timeline](#) [Browse Articles](#) [Chat with BARRY](#)

### Your Journey, Our Expertise

Three powerful tools to help you navigate your limb loss journey with confidence

#### Interactive Timeline

Navigate through your recovery journey with stage-appropriate resources

- Pre-Operative
- Recovery
- Assessment
- And more...

[Explore Timeline](#)

#### Expert Articles

Comprehensive resources curated by Psychology Professors

- Professional-based content
- Professionally reviewed
- Regularly updated

[Browse Articles](#)

#### BARRY AI Assistant

Get instant, personalized support from our intelligent AI companion

- 24/7 availability
- Cultural respect
- Empathetic support

[Chat with BARRY](#)

My Shoes



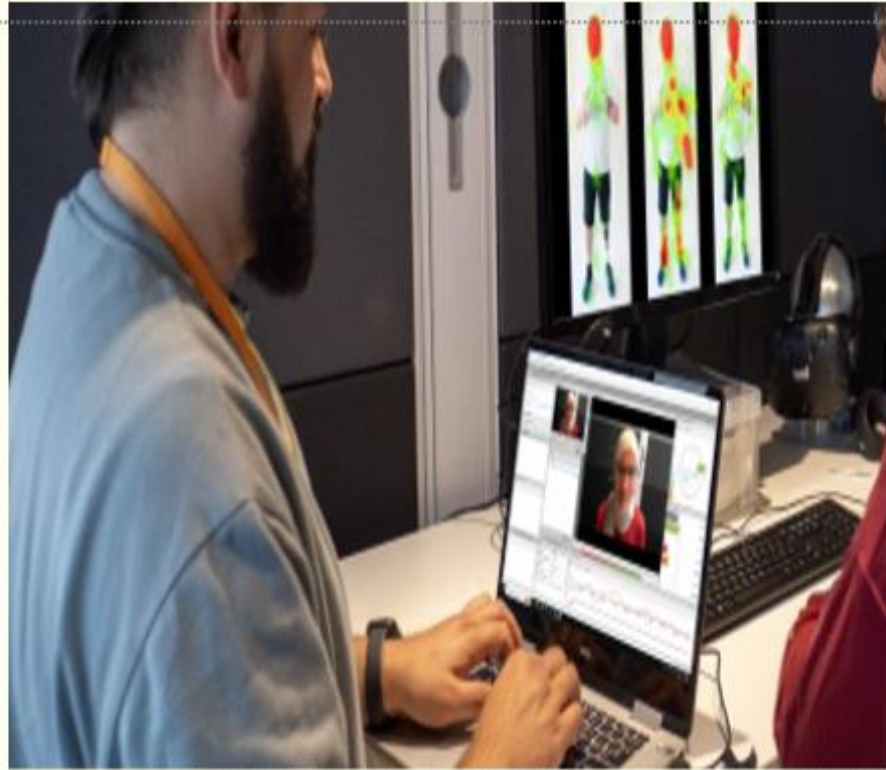
# Immersive Technology? Capturing Daily Challenges





# Immersive Technology? Capturing Social Stigma



# Next Steps: Experimental Testing of Intervention and UX Testing



Category	Items
Good	Delight, Excellent, Celebrate, Enjoy, Love, Fabulous, Appealing, Glad
Bad	Angry, Bothersome, Gross, Dirty, Tragic, Awful, Selfish, Sick
Physically Disabled People	
Physically Abled People	

Benefit to project

---

**Authenticity and Relevance**

---

**Enhanced Empathy and Understanding**

---

**Tailored Support and Empowerment**

---

**Increased Engagement**

---

**Credibility and Trust**

# Lived Experience Impact

- Empowerment and Validation

- Opportunity to Make a Difference
- Personal Growth and Reflection
- Skill Development
- Recognition and Respect
- Sense of Community and Belonging
- Improved Self-Esteem
- Therapeutic Value of Sharing Experiences



# Thank you for listening to our shared story



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT  
THE PROJECT LEAD, DR CERI PHELPS



[CERI.PHELPS@UWTSD.AC.UK](mailto:CERI.PHELPS@UWTSD.AC.UK)

# Networking Lunch and Demo Break

13.00-14.00

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Please enjoy the demos and networking

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# Innovator Showcase: Mativision

**Dylan O'Leary**

Managing Director, My Healthcare Global

 @HINSouthLondon

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# Innovator Showcase: Goggleminds Feasibility to Frontline

**Azize Naji**

Chief Executive, Goggleminds

**Professor Jeff Lewis**

Professor of Flexible Learning, Cardiff Metropolitan University


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# Innovator Showcase: Elemental Health Digital Compassion for Adolescents

Ange McMillan  
Director, Elemental Health

 @HINSouthLondon

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# Augmenting

## Therapy

Supporting Teenage Anxiety Using Immersive Technologies



# Hello!

**I'm Ange from Augmenting Therapy**

- An Autistic therapist with a vision for a world where every child and young person can have access to compassionate support that enables them to lead fulfilling, connected lives – free from the limitations of anxiety



# The Unmet Need

## The Reality

- Many of the young people we support find traditional therapeutic methods difficult to engage with. Whether that's due to trauma, being neurodivergent, depression or high levels of anxiety, there can be times when talk or play can feel overwhelming. My clients used tech as part of self-care...Which led me to the question...



**What if we could  
use immersive  
technologies to help  
reduce teenage  
anxiety?**



**So, you can imagine  
my excitement when  
I discovered there  
was funding to help  
answer my question**





# Picture the Scene

A cold day in January 2023...

- With a badly broken wrist and hope in my heart I sat in my first ever R&D session
- As a Psychotherapist with a tiny dream I could never have imagined the journey I would go on
- From Seed Funding to Development Funding (thank you Media Cymru) we learned how immersive technology could be used to help reduce anxiety and increase social connection



# Our Journey

## The Seed Process

- 35 young people surveyed
- 10 youth professionals surveyed
- 19 parents surveyed | One Interview
- Platform Youth Service Youth Forum Session
- 21 interviews with researchers, technology companies and youth organisations
- Three open workshops on the topic of anxiety



# Our Journey

## The Development Funding

- 3 in-depth expert interviews
- 1 pilot group over 3 sessions with 6 young people
- 1 3-hour workshop with 5 young people
- 1 2-hour workshop with 6 adults
- 1 1-hour workshop with 7 young people
- Prototyping sessions and open access workshops with 50 people



# Our Prototype

## Augmenting Therapy

- With Sugar Creative we developed an AR/2D therapeutic tool, piloted with CYS and Platform
- Our intervention, which can be delivered by trained youth workers and therapists, offers an alternative – where young people can interact with calming, supportive virtual environments that blend with in-person group interaction



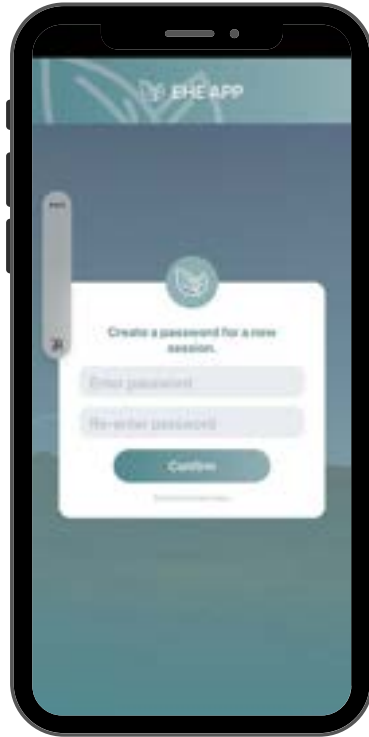
# The Experience

## Through the Power of Augmented Reality

- Young people can cultivate their own virtual garden that mirrors their emotional world.
- By creating personalised plants; young people find an engaging way to express their feelings and reduce anxiety. This innovative approach combines guided imagery with technology to create a supportive, nurturing space to reduce anxiety



# The Therapeutic AR Journey



## 1. Open the App

Begin an emotional journey in a secure, welcoming digital space designed specifically for young people seeking creative expression



## 2. Base Plant Selection

Choose a foundation stem that represents your core self – just as every person is unique, every base plant tells its own story



## 3. Plant Customisation

Express emotions through carefully chosen flowers, colours, and petal arrangements – allowing feelings to bloom into visual form

# The Therapeutic AR Journey



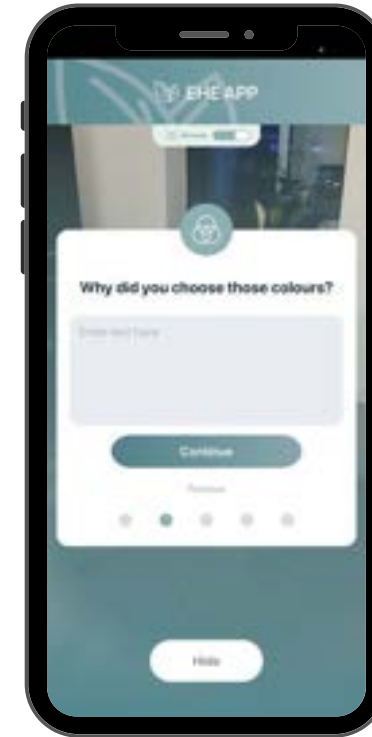
#### 4. Environment

Add weather elements that mirror emotional state – from sunny skies to pouring rain



#### 5. AR Experience

Young people watch their emotional garden come to life through AR, creating a tangible connection between inner and outer worlds



#### 6. Connection

Young people can share their creations with therapists or peers, opening conversations about their emotional journey

# Our Impact

## Our Pilot Studies Show

- Anxiety reduction by 14.24% (statistically significant)
- Increased social connectedness
- Increase in school attendance
- Positive engagement from young people and professionals.

**“I like the more abstract way of exploring emotions and identity as it makes it less intense and in a format that might feel safer as you’re talking about the flower rather than about yourself like it’s not all on you”**



# Testimonials

## Our Young People Said:

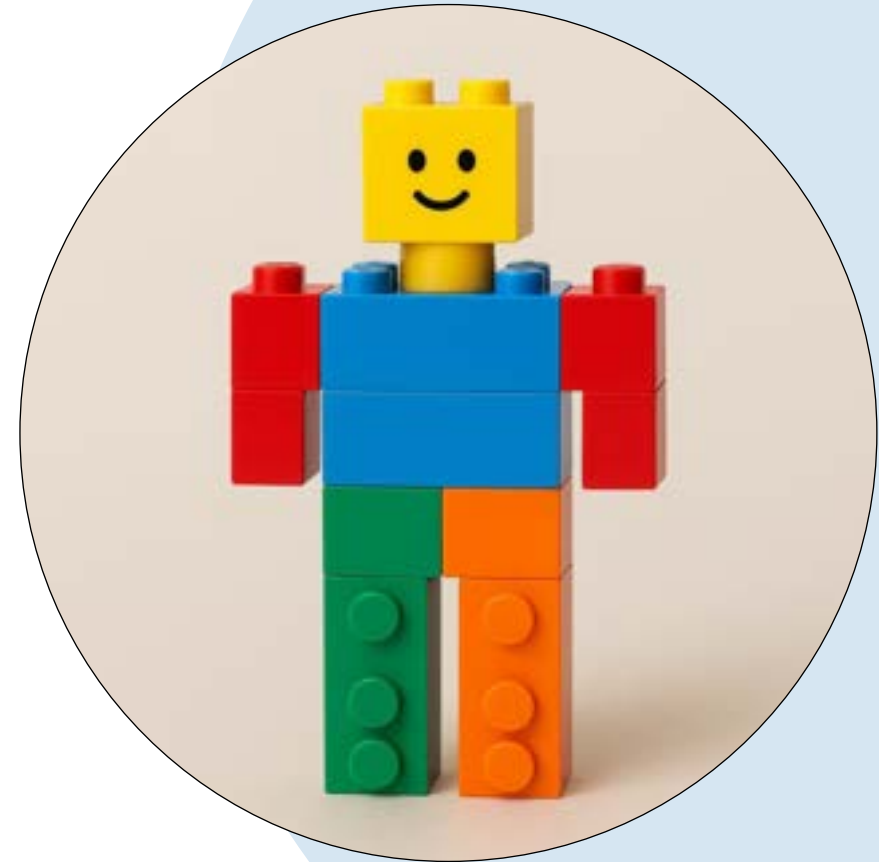
- “Using ways that don't require talking in the traditional sense could help make group therapy less daunting and more accessible”
- “I liked how I could put the plant wherever I wanted in the room. It felt like I was controlling my space and that gave me confidence”

**“It will improve  
the  
experience of therapy  
definitely”**

# What Now?

## Funding and Partnerships

- We are now working with schools and also partnering with Platform Youth services and continuing with Cardiff Youth Service to co-produce a new programme of support
- Our themes are Being me, Being safe, Being ok, Being friends
- Using art, building blocks, clay, animation and immersive technologies



# So Here We Are...

## Augmenting Therapy

- A brand new CIC
- Validated by the Children's Commissioner
- Featured on the BBC
- We prioritise making mental health support accessible to all. Using creative, cutting-edge approaches we are finding new, effective ways to engage young people to support their well-being



**BUT**  
**We need your help!**  
**Seeking immersive**  
**artists, youth**  
**professionals and**  
**designers to consult**  
**with us!**







# Report Link QR

 LinkedIn: Ange McMillan

 Instagram: @elementalhealth\_uk

 [www.augmentingtherapy.com](http://www.augmentingtherapy.com)  
[www.ehe.org.uk](http://www.ehe.org.uk)

# Innovator Showcase: TendVR

**Sean Carroll**

Business Development Manager, TendVR


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# Panel Discussion and Q&A

**Cari-Anne Quinn**

Chief Executive, Life Sciences Hub Wales

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# Closing Reflections and Next Steps

**Cari-Anne Quinn**

Chief Executive, Life Sciences Hub Wales

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