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OUR LATEST PUBLICATIONS (selection)

Nixdorf et al. (2022) A multi-national peer support intervention: the UPSIDES pilot phase. *Advances in Mental Health*. doi: [10.1080/18387357.2021.2020140](https://doi.org/10.1080/18387357.2021.2020140)

Haun et al. (2021) UPSIDES – Erfahrungen in Deutschland aus der Sicht von Peer Begleiter*innen und Trainer*innen [UPSIDES – experiences in Germany from the perspectives of peer support workers and peer trainers]. *Sozialpsychiatrische Informationen*, 51(3), 15-18. doi: [10.1486/Sl-2021-03_15](https://doi.org/10.1486/Sl-2021-03_15)

Charles A et al. (2021) Initial training for mental health peer support workers: international Delphi Consultation, *JMIR Mental Health*, 5, e25528. doi: [10.2196/25528](https://doi.org/10.2196/25528)

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NEXT NEWSLETTER: #09

→ Designing the Intervention: Process, facilitators and barriers

→ Interview with UPSIDES peer support workers shedding light on their experiences with UPSIDES training and working with services users - PART 2

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UPSIDES

Newsletter

#08
January
2022



#08 - TOPICS

- Participant recruitment: Progress, updates, challenges faced by the team
- Interview with upsides peer support workers shedding light on their experiences with upsides training and working with services users - Part 1. Barbara Kohlmann (Ulm site, Germany)



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www.upsides.org

Participant Recruitment: Experiences from the team

The recruitment process which is at the core of the UPSIDES project ended in June 2021 at all sites. We are happy to report that the UPSIDES study has recruited the required number of participants. Since the pandemic was a major barrier towards achieving the goal, some sites stepped up to help finish the total recruitment number. Some common challenges reported by all sites for recruitment were approaching participants, advertising about the study amid Covid-19 pandemic and sustaining people's interest towards the study.

According to Arti Kulkarni (Research Worker, PU site) *"we had to experiment with various strategies to approach potential participants keeping in mind the dynamic guidelines for Covid-19. For example, we were not allowed to enter in-patient wards which led to changing our focus completely to out-patient department until the restrictions were dissolved."*

While some sites used advertisements in local newspapers, others used the word of mouth. At India site, the researchers reached out to hospital staff in OPD to direct eligible service users to the researchers for more information on UPSIDES study and screening. This was achieved by weekly briefings with the staff and giving each professional a checklist for reference. In these ways, the UPSIDES sites tackled the barriers during recruitment phase.

Call for UPSIDES Study Recruitment

Inclusion	Exclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Age 18-60 years,✓ Knows Gujarati, Hindi or English✓ Main diagnosis of severe mental disorder✓ Illness duration > 2 years✓ Capable of giving consent	<p>Main diagnosis of...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Learning disability✗ Dementia✗ Substance use disorder✗ Organic brain disorder

Please send to Emergency Wards (Window 14) for screening

Days: Mon – Fri

Time: OPD hours (Morning and Evening)

This poster was used as a reference by the professionals for directing potential interested participants to UPSIDES research workers

Interview with UPSIDES peer support workers - Part 1

PSW: Barbara Kohlmann (Ulm, Germany)

Interviewed by Maria Haun (Research Worker, Ulm)

Why did you become a PSW?

BK: When I first heard about such a profession in 2006, I thought I would like to support people in coping with their illness and show them that it is possible to live well with such an illness. Well, I have always liked to support others and work as a volunteer.

What do you like most about your work?

BK: What I like most about the job is that I work with people. I am very interested in people and their life stories. My hope is that I can help my clients to find positive solutions for themselves. I want to support them, so my job is to support them so that they can support themselves.

Why is peer support important?

BK: Hopefully, over the years, the treatment in psychiatry will change and that it will be normal to have peer support. Peer support covers a different area than a doctor, nursing staff or a therapist. For example, we have more time for the client, much more time. It is also important that we are on an equal basis with the client and that we are experienced in crises. It is precisely because of our positive experience with crisis management that we can share this with others. In a way, the fact that I am experienced in crises and have coped with it well also gives me hope again and that is very important to me. This is often not given enough attention in psychiatric care, because the focus is first of all on deficits, in short, what one can no longer do, one can no longer work, one should apply for a pension, and then one cannot do this and that, but that is not true either. So I think peer support is a very good addition psychiatric care.

What do you wish for the future?

BK: For the future I wish that peer support becomes standard in psychiatry, and for myself, I hope that I will have the opportunity to continue to work as a Peer Support Worker after the UPSIDES study