

Dear Member,

Firstly, thank you for signing up as a Birch Network member - we're delighted to have you here! The Birch network is designed to be a 'one-stop shop' for community engagement in research for Birmingham and Solihull (and beyond!).



The network has been growing steadily, and we are now at 148 members as we come to the end of 2025. That's 148 academics, community members, community organisers, voluntary sector organisations, healthcare professionals, researchers... the list goes on.

By bringing you all together on the common goal of increasing engagement, inclusion and collaboration in research practice, we hope to see real-life changes in the way research is developed, delivered and used to define services. We hope you feel the same way too!

We want this network to work for you - so please share the invitation to join with anyone relevant, and join us for quarterly meetings. If you have any thoughts/feedback on what you'd like to see in this newsletter, or from the network then just reach out: researchadmin@bvsc.org or direct to me: Keshena@bvsc.org.

I'm really looking forward to working with you,

Kesh, Community Research (CHERP) Manager at BVSC Research.

The CHERP hub



The CHERP hub is a shared space for community, connection and research into health, social care and wellbeing. As a member of the BIRCH network you should have received an invite link which allows you to create a log in so you can begin sharing your work on the platform. If you haven't received a log in link, need help, or have feedback please contact researchadmin@bvsc.org

[Visit the hub to connect and share your work.](#)

Updates from Birch members

What is this feature?

Each month we want to give Birch members the opportunity to showcase their work and share any information they think will be valuable to the network. If you are working on something that you think is worth shining the light on, or have something to bring to the attention of the network please let us know and we can feature it here!

Please send any suggestions to: researchadmin@bvsc.org

Research Involvement Opportunities

Please feel free to share the following opportunities within your networks, or to contact the named researchers directly for more information.

Back Pain in Birmingham Underserved Communities

We are looking for individuals to be a part of this study, the criteria for involvement in this research is:

- Black adults (18 years and above)
- Living in underserved majority Black communities in Birmingham
- who have chronic (> 3 months since first onset) Lower Back Pain that is not due to cancer, fracture, radiculopathy, inflammation or infection

UNIVERSITY of BRADFORD | **NIHR** | National Institute for Health and Care Research | **NIHR** | Leeds Biomedical Research Centre | **NHS** | Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust

DO YOU SUFFER WITH BACK PAIN?

DO YOU IDENTIFY AS BLACK, CARIBBEAN OR AFRICAN IN LEEDS, BIRMINGHAM OR LONDON?

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU ON HOW TO MAKE CARE BETTER

PLEASE CONTACT US: **01274 238553**

Or use this code



You will be paid for your time

We want people with different types of jobs, hobbies & carer responsibilities



Upcoming Events

Who's really in charge? The gut microbiome's secret role in autoimmunity

2 December | 6-7pm | Online

Autoimmune diseases are on the rise - and many scientists now believe this is linked to changes in the gut microbiome. Join this talk delivered by Prof Palak Trivedi (University of Birmingham, NIHR Birmingham Biomedical Research Centre) to discover how understanding the gut could change the future of autoimmune disease treatment - no science knowledge needed, everyone is welcome to join! [Register here.](#)

SAVE THE DATE

POWER OF US CONFERENCE

Thursday 23rd April 2026

Join us as we put collaborative research centre stage, give you space to build connections, and celebrate the power of engaging communities in research activity.

LOCATION:

Birmingham City
Football Club, St
Andrews, B9 4RL

