

Dear Member,

We hope you have been enjoying the longer, brighter days. Someone told me recently that the sun won't set before 7pm again until October now... that's a pretty lovely thought, isn't it?

We have been delivering some really brilliant projects in the first quarter of this year, and we're so excited to launch our first episode of our podcast series in April!

Keep your eyes (and most importantly, ears) peeled for the launch of 'Cherp Conversations'. We hope you're excited to hear directly from our community researchers, as we dive into the good, the not so good, and the inspiring moments they've encountered through their community research work.



As a reminder, the **Power of Us conference 2026** marks the second year of us bringing together our Birch Network members, community organisations, academics and *anyone* interested in the power of engagement in research. You can expect:

- Powerful key note speakers
- Engaged community panels
- Workshop sessions that will enable meaningful discussion

This year we gave the conference the theme: *In Partnership: Creating Spaces for Trust, Understanding, and Shared Impact*, something we know you will all agree is at the heart of collaborative practice. We hope you will be joining us - if you're hoping to attend, please note we are fully booked, but you can add yourself to the waiting list here: [Tickets and waiting list](#)

Thanks for taking the time to engage with this newsletter and with the Birch Network, and please reach out if you have anything to contribute to next month's edition!

Best wishes, Keshena, CHERP Manager at BVSC,
Email me at: keshenab@bvsc.org

Engage with the Birch Network!

We want to hear from you in this newsletter and at our quarterly meetings...



Share updates with:
researchadmin@bvsc.org and we will add your research studies, updates or events into this monthly newsletter.

Let us know if you'd like to present at the next quarterly meeting! We'd love to hear from you and your research ideas



Project Updates from Birch Members

Check the CHERP community Hub!

There are lots of new updates on our [community hub](#), just waiting for you to check them out... click on the 'New' or 'Latest' tab to see what's been shared since you last logged in!

The screenshot shows the CHERP community hub interface. At the top left is the CHERP logo and a search bar. Below the logo is a navigation menu with options like 'Back to CHERP', 'Topics', 'My posts', 'My messages', 'Review', 'Admin', 'Invite', and 'More'. The main content area displays a list of posts under the 'Latest' tab. The first post is a welcome message titled 'Welcome to CHERP!' with a sub-heading 'Cherp Tutorials'. Below it are three research-related posts: 'Homecare Workers as Proxy Healthcare Professionals', 'Research into Youth Violence with West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership', and 'Smoking Cessation Research'. Each post includes a category tag (e.g., 'Current & Upcoming Research') and a user profile picture. The bottom post is a training session titled 'Easy Read Training in Birmingham City Centre - 21st April 2026'.

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.](#)

Research Involvement Opportunities

Birmingham City Council demographic questionnaire

The purpose of this testing is to understand how clear, accessible and easy the questionnaire is to complete before it is implemented more widely. During the session, participants will complete questionnaires online, while a researcher observes the process. The researcher will act as a neutral observer; they will not explain or clarify questions, but will record completion time, points of confusion, requests for explanation and visible reactions.

Inclusion Criteria To take part, participants must:

Be aged 18 or over

Be able to read and write English independently at a conversational level
(without supervision or support)

Have access to a digital device (desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone)
and be able to use it independently

Not have previously been involved in the redesign or development of the questionnaire (to avoid prior exposure influencing the results)

If selected to take part, they will receive Participant Information, Consent Form before the session and a £25 voucher following the session.

Fill in the form:

[Usability Testing Recruitment](#)

Opportunity for professionals who support care-experienced young people

The University of Birmingham is running a study on how care-experienced young people aged 13–25 seek mental health support in England (foster care, kinship care and residential care). This includes support from VCSE organisations as well as formal services. The study was designed together with care-experienced young people to ensure it reflects their views. We're asking VCSE organisations and other professionals to share this opportunity with the care-experienced young people they support: they can take part in a short anonymous survey (prize draw) or a one-hour online interview for those aged 16–25 (£25 e-voucher). More information and links to take part: <https://linktr.ee/COLLAGEresearchstudy>.

HAVE YOU STAYED IN A UK CITY HOTEL RECENTLY?

Help shape the future of inclusive hospitality!

I am Adelaide Moreno, a final-year student at the University of Greenwich. I am looking for participants for my dissertation research titled:

"Invisible Journeys: Exploring the Intersection of Race and Wheelchair Accessibility in UK Hotel Experiences."

I am looking to speak with you if you are:

- Black or Black British.
- A manual or power wheelchair user.
- Have stayed in a 3 or 4-star UK city hotel in the last 2 years.

What is involved?

A relaxed, 15 - 30-minute conversation (via Zoom/Teams or in-person in London or Birmingham) about your experiences—the good, the bad, and the overlooked.

Why participate?

Your voice will help highlight the specific barriers Black disabled travellers face and provide hotels with practical recommendations for real change.

Interested? Please contact me directly via email at:

am1235c@gre.ac.uk

All data is fully anonymised and strictly confidential. This study has been reviewed by the University of Greenwich Ethics Committee.

Upcoming Events



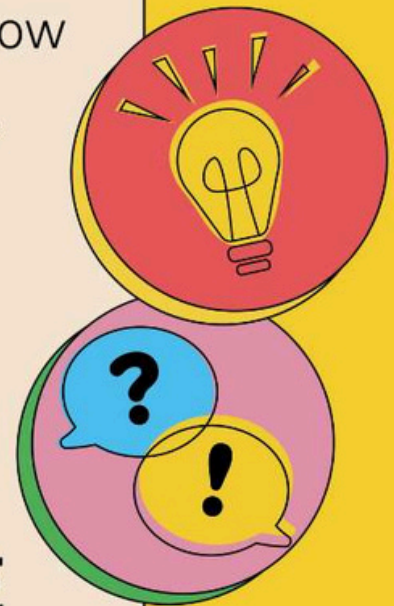
RAINBOW ROUNDTABLE: NEURODIVERGENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

We want to learn more about how your experiences affect your health and wellbeing, and hear your ideas about what would make a difference for you.

Refreshments and fidget toys available.

18TH APRIL , 4PM -6PM
BIRMINGHAM LGBT CENTRE

Please get in touch for help with travel costs.



A discussion with LGBTQ+ communities to improve health & wellbeing



BOOK: link.outsavvy.com/ndlgbtq

MOREINFO:

Maria Hughes 0121 643 0821

MariaHughes@blgbt.org



EXPLORING AND COPING WITH DISORDERED EATING

Trans & Non-Binary Support Group

A six-week support & psychoeducation group, facilitated by Jessica Sharman MUKCP - Integrative Psychotherapist and Peer Support Worker in Eating Disorders.

A safe space to explore eating difficulties, gain peer support, and learn coping skills for eating and body image difficulties

**FIRST SESSION 20TH APRIL
5.45PM - 7PM
BIRMINGHAM LGBT CENTRE**

You do not need a formal eating disorder diagnosis to join this group.



BOOK: link.outsavvy.com/tnbed
MORE INFO: Maria Hughes

0121 643 0821

MariaHughes@blgbt.org



RAINBOW ROUNDTABLE: NEURODIVERGENCE AND THE TRANS AND NON- BINARY COMMUNITY

We want to learn more about how your experiences affect your health and wellbeing, and hear your ideas about what would make a difference for you.

Refreshments and fidget toys available.

**11TH APRIL , 4PM -6PM
BIRMINGHAM LGBT CENTRE**

Please get in touch for help with travel costs.



A discussion with LGBTQ+ communities to improve health & wellbeing



BOOK: link.outsavvy.com/ndtnb
MOREINFO:

Maria Hughes 0121 643 0821
MariaHughes@blgbt.org

Register for free now!

Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Day
Monday 20th April 2026, Edgbaston, Birmingham, UK

Patients and members of the public are invited to join us at the University of Birmingham on the 20th of April for our first Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) Day.



Register now on Eventbrite

Find out more and register via the QR code opposite, or via this link: <https://bit.ly/40k69LT>

People with all levels of experience are welcome, whether you have done lots of PPIE work already or you are thinking about getting involved in PPIE for the first time. This is an opportunity to meet other people who are passionate about making research better for patients and their families.

We will also share results from the National Lung Matrix Trial; a large precision medicine trial in non-small cell lung cancer.



Mailing list sign-up

There will be the option to join online. Details will be shared via the CRCTU PPIE Mailing List in due course.

We celebrate
We activate

birmingham.ac.uk



From our free webinar series | Your health, our research: short talks, big impact

Research made simple

What is health and carer research and why do we do it?



Thursday 16 April | 6-7pm



with **Dr Joseph Lanario, University of Birmingham**

This engaging session will take you behind the scenes of research – what it is, why it matters, and how it impacts all of us in everyday life.

No science knowledge needed!

[Scan or click here to register](#)

