

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

9 November 2026

Studies

[Limbic network hyperconnectivity, fasting appetite hormone dysregulation and impaired go/no-go performance in youths with bipolar disorder]

Current cross-sectional cohort indicates that youths with bipolar disorder exhibit concurrent alterations in appetite hormones, inhibitory control and limbic connectivity. These findings provide a characterisation of youth bipolar disorder across multiple indices, although longitudinal studies are necessary to understand how these features relate to long-term clinical trajectories.

[Seen and not seen: hidden distress in skin picking disorder]

Isibor (2026) concluded that: "Skin picking disorder is experienced not only as a compulsive behaviour or emotional regulation difficulty, but as a socially exposed condition shaped by cultural expectations about appearance, control, and legitimacy. Visibility transforms the body into a site of judgement, while the self-inflicted framing of damage undermines recognition and support."

[Understanding cognitive restructuring in PTSD]

This study provides evidence that altered communication within the thalamocortical network may be involved in cognitive restructuring in PTSD. In particular, the weaker inhibitory influence of the MPFC on the MDT may reduce the brain's ability to filter negative information, potentially helping to explain why negative beliefs remain so persistent in PTSD.

[Body clocks and bipolar disorder: what clinicians need to know]

The team extracted 960 statements from research papers and grey literature on chronobiology and chronotherapy, and experts rated 837 statements over three rounds. A statement reached consensus if at least 80% of experts rated it essential or important.

[Placement instability linked to poorer mental health for care-experienced children]

The current systematic review and meta-analysis provides evidence to support that placement instability is significantly associated with mental health difficulties in children and young people in care. Specifically, more frequent placement moves were associated with greater mental health difficulties.

[Mood stabilisers or antipsychotics in early bipolar disorder: stick or twist?]

Relapse rates were lower in those receiving mood stabilisers alone or in combination with antipsychotics, compared to SGAs alone. This suggests that in first episode mania with psychosis, a treatment strategy should include a mood stabiliser to prevent relapse, either alone or in combination with an SGA.

[Does seeing original art in a gallery lower stress hormones?]

Viewing original artworks in a gallery was associated with larger decreases in an inflammatory marker and stress hormone compared to viewing reproductions in a laboratory. Exploratory analyses also reported heart rate and skin temperature differences between groups.



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[Bad mornings, more scrolling? How teenagers' mood relates to daily phone use]
The findings from this study provide new evidence that suggests how adolescents feel in the morning predicts how much passive phone use they engage in that day. However, neither passive nor active phone use across the day was linked to how well they slept that night or how they felt the next morning. One possibility is that adolescents turn to passive phone use (such as scrolling or watching) when they feel more negative as a low-effort, avoidance-based way of coping. Overall, this study highlights the value of tracking the same individuals over time to capture natural up and downs in daily lives. This is especially important during adolescence, a particularly sensitive stage of development, for understanding real-world behaviour.

[Helping young refugees settle: culturally adapted CBT and acculturation]
This systematic review aimed to pull together the studies that have used acculturation-informed Culturally Adapted CBT in reducing mental health symptoms and overall psychological wellbeing for refugee young people. This review contributes to the emerging evidence base on acculturation-informed Culturally Adapted CBT, although its effectiveness remains uncertain. Each study included found improvements for participants that received intervention. These studies used Culturally Adapted CBT, which includes adaptations such as use of translators, clinicians with migrant experience and consideration of cultural values. It was ensured that acculturation was considered through delivery in a school setting, working with participants' families and helping strengthen support networks within the community.

Editorial

[Beyond the hype: why artificial intelligence is not a shortcut to solving mental illness]
Ultimately, whether artificial intelligence comes to augment psychiatric care or hollow it out depends less on model capability than on the choices of stakeholders and policymakers.

Report

['Like a cliff edge': young people with complex needs let down as they transition from children's to adult services, experts find]
Experts have highlighted how young people, especially those with complex physical and mental health needs, are failed by services that abruptly change or cancel the support they need when they turn 16 or 18.

Podcast

[Our mental health and what to do about it – with Peter Fonagy and Norman Lamb]
Why has demand for mental health services risen sharply among young people and what can be done?



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News

Stonewall publishes first major report for almost a decade – 'LGBTQ+ Life in the UK: 2026'
18% of LGB+ people said that healthcare staff lacked understanding of LGB+ health needs, while 39% of trans+ people experienced the same for trans health needs. Half (54%) of all LGBTQ+ people had ever considered suicide, and 22% had attempted suicide. This rises to 71% and 32% of trans+ people.

NHS launches mental health text service in the East of England
The NHS has launched a new text service designed to provide round-the-clock mental health support across the East of England. Staffed by registered health and care professionals, it is available 24/7 for people of all ages.

BPS increasingly concerned for those who use unregulated AI chatbots for mental health therapy, new data reveals
70% of respondents say they are somewhat or very concerned about clients using general purpose AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, CoPilot, Claude, Gemini) for mental health support.

Oxford experts help shape major review calling for reform of ADHD, autism and mental health support
The independent review for the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has called for significant changes to how people access support for mental health conditions, ADHD and autism.

'This is direct': positive early feedback from pilot community mental health hub in Cumbria
Hope Haven in Whitehaven is one of six trial open-access, 24/7 schemes in England offering preventive care.

We all want to protect our children from anxiety. But could we be making it worse?
No one wants their child to struggle. But the things parents do can disempower children later in life.

There is no 'magic pill' to fix young women's anxiety. I should know – I once took propranolol myself
Prescriptions for these beta blockers are soaring among England's teenage girls. But they deserve more than this sticking-plaster approach.

EU charges TikTok with failing to protect users' mental health
Regulator's initial ruling says algorithm 'can be harmful' and led young and vulnerable viewers 'down rabbit holes they can't easily escape'.