

Institution: University of Warwick		
Unit of Assessment: C23 – Education		
Title of case study: The PBS Academy: improving understanding and enhancing the delivery of Positive Behavioural Support (PBS)		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2013 - Ongoing		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Prof Richard Hastings Dr Louise Denne	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor Senior Research Fellow	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 1 Oct 2013 – present 1 Jan 2016 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: October 2013 – December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact <p>Research into the use of Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) – a support method designed to reduce challenging behaviour in adults – has improved the lives of people with an intellectual disability and their carers. While PBS is acknowledged as effective, its reach had been limited, especially at the implementation level, with an absence of nationally agreed standards or an effectively trained workforce. This had contributed to failure within adult care services, most notably the 2011 Winterbourne View scandal, which uncovered abuse of residents with intellectual disabilities at a care home. Research to address this challenge and enable more effective use of PBS, led by internationally recognised expert Professor Richard Hastings at Warwick, has underpinned policy, regulation and the training of service providers throughout the UK.</p>		
2. Underpinning research <p>An estimated 2.6% of adults in the UK have an intellectual disability (ID), with one in five having a vulnerability to develop behaviours that challenge others and risk harm. Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) is an approach to care based on an assessment of the social, physical, and individual context in which the behaviour occurs. This analysis is used by professionals to develop evidence-based interventions which reduce challenging behaviour.</p> <p>Hastings collaborated with colleagues at Bangor and Kent universities to publish an up-to-date definition and scope of PBS (Gore et al., 2013), a causal framework for behaviours that challenge (Hastings et al., 2013), and the case for developing a competence framework for those providing PBS services (Denne et al., 2013).</p> <p>While PBS is now promoted as the preferred approach in national policy documents and guidance, there is substantial variation in the standard of PBS training and delivery, an absence of nationally agreed standards, and a significant lack of shared understanding about PBS among stakeholders (individuals with ID, families and carers, service providers, professionals, and commissioners).</p> <p>Since 2013, Hastings and Dr Louise Denne at Warwick's Centre for Educational Development, Appraisal and Research (CEDAR) have conducted applied research focussed on enabling effective implementation of PBS among stakeholders.</p> <p>The Warwick research found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> people with IDs and challenging behaviours are often left misunderstood and without evidence-based services (3.1). 		

- specialist services using PBS for children and adults with ID across the lifespan in the community can deliver improved quality of life and reduced challenging behaviour with high levels of user satisfaction (3.2). Specialist community-based behavioural support teams should adopt the PBS framework intervention model and develop capable environments, policy, training and screening and consider the importance of practice leadership (3.3).
- raising the profile of the experiences of support and services by people with ID and challenging behaviour themselves (3.1) and co-producing an intervention with people with ID, demonstrated that these experiences can be successfully used in the training of social care staff (3.4). The latter research comprised a cluster randomised controlled trial funded by NIHR (School for Social Care Research) 2015-17.

Bringing together evidence from this underpinning research, and other key evidence, a PBS project was established (with leadership from Hastings and Denne at Warwick) in 2014-15 through the formation of the PBS Academy (formerly the PBS Coalition UK) - a small and influential group of UK PBS experts. The project identified and detailed practice that is effective, sustainable and leads to meaningful outcomes across interrelated levels of individual practitioners, organisation, and community. The primary output of this project was that CEDAR and the PBS Academy published the PBS Competence Framework in 2015.

The competence framework (3.5), which is freely available online under creative commons licenses, provides a framework of information for those stakeholders supporting individuals with ID, detailing all they need to know and do to effectively deliver PBS. It is written from the perspective of the person being supported, taking into account the multi-disciplinary nature of the various professional teams providing support. The framework details, therefore, levels of competencies by function: direct contact support, behaviour specialist, and consultant.

Evaluation practices for policy/practice change projects were also researched by CEDAR (3.6) and a logic model approach was identified as the best method to assess the distinction between output and impact against multiple stakeholder groups and timescales. This approach was then applied to evaluate the impact of the PBS Academy, indicative of the commitment to evidence-based practice taken by Warwick researchers leading the PBS Academy.

3. References to the research

- 3.1** Griffith, G.M., Hutchinson, L, & **Hastings, R. P.** (2013). "I'm not a patient, I'm a person" The experiences of individuals with intellectual disabilities and challenging behavior: A thematic synthesis of qualitative studies. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 20, 469-488
doi:[10.1111/cpsp.12053](https://doi.org/10.1111/cpsp.12053)
- 3.2** Bowring, D., Totsika, V., **Hastings, R. P.**, & Toogood, S. (2020). Outcomes from a community-based Positive Behavioural Support team for children and adults with developmental disabilities. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 33, 193-203
DOI: [10.1111/jar.12660](https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.12660)
- 3.3** Bowring, D. L, Totsika, V., **Hastings, R. P.**, & Toogood, S. (2019). Designing specialist community-based behavioural support teams. *International Journal of Positive Behavioural Support*, 9 (2), 4-15
<https://www.ingentaconnect.com/contentone/bild/ijpbs/2019/00000009/00000002/art00002>
- 3.4** **Hastings, R. P.**, Gillespie, D., Flynn, S., McNamara, R., Taylor, Z., Knight, R., Randell, E., Richards, L., Moody, G., Mitchell, A., Przybylak, P., Williams, B., & Hunt, P. H. (2018). Who's Challenging Who training for staff empathy toward adults with challenging behaviour: Cluster randomised controlled trial. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 62, 798-813
doi:[10.1111/jir.12536](https://doi.org/10.1111/jir.12536)
- 3.5** Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) Coalition UK (2015), 'Positive Behavioural Support (PBS): A Competence Framework', University of Warwick (available online: <http://pbsacademy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Positive-Behavioural-Support-Competence-Framework-May-2015.pdf>)

3.6 Suzi J. Scott, **Denne, L.D., Hastings, R.P.**, (2018) "Developing a logic model to guide evaluation of impact for learning disability projects: the case of the Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) Academy", Tizard Learning Disability Review, Vol. 23 Issue: 3, pp.125-132
doi:[10.1108/TLDR-10-2017-0038](https://doi.org/10.1108/TLDR-10-2017-0038)

Since 2013, research and impact grant funding supporting the research has a total value exceeding £3.2million across 15+ awards, including a peer-reviewed grant from NIHR: Who's Challenging Who: Randomised Controlled Trial evaluation; July 2015 to April 2017; **GBP303,392**; PI - **Hastings**.

4. Details of the impact

Designing and building a sustainable national workforce development infrastructure and standards for PBS is a significant challenge, particularly in the context of Government policies which commit to building capacity in local services and bringing people with ID back into their communities (3.3). Warwick's research has benefited policymakers by providing a framework for regulation, and helped service providers by offering evidence-based guidance for training. In turn, this has improved the lives of individuals with PBS and their carers.

Transforming Care: policy, plans and commissioning

Sir Stephen Bubb, the independent reviewer of the Transforming Care Programme, the national response to Winterbourne scandal, stated in his report 'Time for Change' that 'the nearest we have got to a Standard is the PBS Coalition's Competency Based Framework currently hosted on the PBS Academy's website' (5.1). Bubb's endorsement indicates the centrality of the competence framework to solving the challenges associated with effective implementation. The competence framework is cited in 65 documents in total, including: national reports, significant third sector organisations and those responsible for NHS England commissioning policy and programmes (5.2).

The competence framework became central to the Government's transforming care programme, a public commitment by NHS England in 2015 to establish stronger support in the community for the care of individuals with ID. It was a recommended resource for workforce development, a key facet of the national plan to develop community services that emerged after the Winterbourne Scandal, outlined in the NHS England report Building the Right Support (2015) (5.3). Significantly, the PBS Competencies identified in the PBS Academy framework were mapped into the Health Education England (HEE) Skills and Competency Framework. HEE is a Non-Departmental Public Body, supporting 160,000 students and trainees, including clinical and non-clinical NHS staff, working locally, regionally and nationally to support the delivery of excellent healthcare and health improvement by ensuring the workforce has the appropriate skills, values and behaviours.

At a national commissioning level, the Service Model for Commissioners (2015) highlights that existing 'competency frameworks need to include requirements for staff training, for example person-centred approaches, communication and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), in line with the PBS competency framework' (5.4). Produced as a response to the government's commitment to transform care and support for people with ID, the document is used by all health and social care commissioners, covering strategic, operational and individual level commissioning, highlighting the central role that the framework holds. Hastings served on the model reference group. The 2015 NICE clinical guideline on Challenging Behaviour used Warwick's research on user perspectives to inform multiple recommendations, fully incorporating research output 3.3 as a core chapter. The 2018 NICE guidance on challenging behaviour service models, for which Hastings was a member of the Guideline Development Group, also cited the evidence. (5.5)

Workforce development: service providers and third sector

The competence framework has been adopted extensively among national providers concerned with workforce development and support within the community. Underpinning this work is The Learning Disabilities Core Skills Education and Training Framework (2016) used to support workforce development, commissioned and funded by the DHSC and developed in collaboration for Skills for Health, Skills for Care and Health Education England, with Hastings sitting on the Steering Group. The framework is used by employers, universities and care providers in both health and social care in planning education and training, outlining best practice. The framework builds specifically upon the PBS Academy competence framework, which is referenced in the document as one of three national guidance documents for communication and leadership and management in ID care and support (5.6).

Growing out of the competence framework, the PBS Academy produced a set of 3 Standards, comprising: Standards for Services, Training, and Individual Practitioners. At the service delivery level, these documents together have informed the practices of workforce development organisations nationally, including a direct influence on the work of Skills for Care, the third sector delivery partner for the Department of Health and Social Care. In their guidance for stakeholders seeking training on PBS, Skills for Care states as a core principle that 'PBS training should ensure that all workers develop the skills and knowledge outlined for each area of the PBS competence framework (PBS Academy, 2015), and should adhere to the Standards for training (PBS Academy, 2017).' (5.7).

The national training organisation British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD), which aims to provide better support in the community for those with ID, has mapped all of its training programmes onto the competence framework and standards since its inception. More than 2,000 people have participated in BILD training programmes, and tenders for training from commissioners and provider organisations have specified the need to map onto the competence framework. BILD's CEO said the organisation had delivered 516 PBS programmes which have included content based on the competence framework. These programmes were delivered to more than 90 different organisations covering the UK, Southern Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and some parts of Europe (5.8). The competence framework and associated Standards and resources have been endorsed by a further 30 organisations, and 61 documents, that support people with ID (5.2).

For the large adult care service provider Dimensions, their strategic investment into PBS is built on the research and their practice has changed as a result of implementing PBS Academy resources (5.9). Dimensions incorporated PBS Framework competencies into their Train-the-Trainer course which underpins their model of support. Their 6,000 support workers have now been trained in PBS competencies, providing support to over 3,500 individuals with ID. Dimensions' Director of Complex Needs Development testifies that, since the implementation of this new support model including PBS, 'the people we support and their staff have created over 25,000 quality-of-life improvements and, at the time of writing, are actively working to achieve over 16,000. Through [the support model], people have overcome anxiety (for example, gaining the confidence to leave the house for the first time in years), acquired important, everyday skills (for example, making a cup of tea without support), and achieved long held ambitions (for example, taking their first sky diving lesson).' (5.9)

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation (CBF), a national charity focused specifically on individuals with severe ID whose behaviour can be challenging, has worked extensively with the PBS Academy. CEO of the CBF testifies that 'The PBS Academy has transformed the work of the CBF by providing a clear evidence-based framework that has shaped our work; both in the practical support we provide families through the development of training, tools and resources, and also in our policy work.' (5.10). The CBF and PBS Academy co-produced a resource for family carers which has been downloaded 1,860 times. Feedback from families and carers has testified to the quality of support, including from one mother who said: 'This PBS family resource is a must! Understanding what PBS is, standards you should expect and insightful questions to ask. Changed my son's life.' (5.10)

The CBF is also involved in key national policy discussions related to behaviour support, which has been directly informed by CEDAR's work. (5.10). The CBF also states that working with CEDAR has 'demonstrated [to the CBF] the value of bringing researchers, practitioners, and families together, and collaborating to develop an applied research agenda with a focus on the dissemination of best practice.' (5.10)

Individuals, families and carers

A suite of resources are freely available on the PBS Academy website and are produced in collaboration with and tailored for specific stakeholder groups. The resources translate the competence framework into practical and useful aids for different stakeholders, including individuals with ID, and family carers. The PBS Academy website had more than 58,000 visits in the period 2017-2020. The Academy's impact report has shown that individuals found the resources to be 'very helpful [in] looking for a new provider that follows PBS' and particularly helpful for information 'to check [...] understanding and question care providers/support workers'. They have been rated by users surveyed as being 80% 'very useful' or 'useful', indicating an improvement in understanding about PBS support (5.2). Survey respondents also reported that they had used the resources in a wide variety of ways, including "to reduce the inappropriate prescribing of psychotropic medication, to influence recruitment and practice, to inform research, consultation, and mapping service provision." (5.2)

Debbie Austin is the mother of 11-year-old Lucy, who has Down Syndrome and Autism. Lucy has a history of behaviours that have been described as "challenging" which affected family life and the life opportunities available to her. Testifying to the usefulness of the resources from the CBF and the PBS Academy, she wrote: 'The PBS Academy/CBF resources have been useful to us, and are useful to other family carers, because they provide a clear, evidence-based description of PBS. Since we began using Positive Behavioural Support principles at home, Lucy's behaviours that challenge have occurred only rarely and when they do, we understand why and can put in place the support she needs. As a result, our home life is far less stressful. Lucy is very much happier and able to engage with her world in a meaningful and enjoyable way.' (5.11)

Leading future change: informing new regulation

As a result of Warwick's leadership in the area of ID and PBS, in 2019/20 Denne is leading a PBS Academy team invited to work with the healthcare regulator, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), on a jointly-funded project to inform their inspections process. Resources have been developed to help those involved in the inspection of services better understand best practice in the support of people with an ID. This will be the first time that such services will be required to change their practices by a regulatory body, demonstrating the central role that Warwick research is playing in the effective implementation of PBS in the sector, nationally, to drive up the quality of care for those with ID and behaviour that challenges.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

5.1 Time for Change: The Challenge Ahead. ACEVO report (p.18, 27)

5.2 PBS Academy evaluation report and survey

5.3 National Plan: Building the Right Support. NHS England report (p.53)

5.4 Service Model for Commissioners. NHS England (pp.17-18)

5.5 NICE guidance 2015 & 2018

5.6 The Learning Disabilities Core Skills Education and Training Framework (p. 83 / p.2, p.7, p.23, p.30, p.55, p.61)

5.7 Letter and report from Skills for Care

5.8 Letter from BILD

5.9 Letter from Dimensions

5.10 Letter from the Challenging Behaviour Foundation

5.11 Letter from parent