



## SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

### Project Case Study: CHITIN Project - Walking For Health (WORth) Trial

#### THEME:

Health & Social Care

#### FUNDING(ERDF+MATCH)

€10,601,181.20

#### MATCH FUNDERS:

Department of Health  
Northern Ireland

Department of Health  
Ireland

#### LEAD PARTNER:

Public Health Agency,  
Northern Ireland

#### PROJECT PARTNERS

Health Research Board,  
Ireland

**Start Date:** 01/09/2016

**End Date:** 30/06/2023



[https://  
research.hscni.net/chitin](https://research.hscni.net/chitin)



@CHITINProject

The Cross-border Healthcare Intervention Trials in Ireland Network (CHITIN) is a unique partnership between the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland and the Health Research Board in Ireland, who are working together to deliver 11 Healthcare Intervention Trials (HITs). The HITs will help prevent and cure illness and promote improved health and well-being. The WORth project is just one of such interventions: a cross-border research study investigating the feasibility of delivering an intervention to increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour in adults with severe mental health difficulties.

People with severe mental health difficulties, such as schizophrenia, psychosis, bipolar disorder and major depressive disorder, experience increased risk of physical health problems, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease, and have reduced life expectancy compared with the general population. Although the reasons for this health disparity are multifaceted, lifestyle factors including physical inactivity partly explain these findings. The WORth project is investigating the feasibility of strategies to support this population to become more active and sit less during the day. Participants will be identified through mental health services in two Health and Social Care Trusts (Northern and Western HSC Trusts) in Northern Ireland and one Community Mental Health Team, based in Louth CMHT, Ireland.

Participants will be randomised to receive either the WORth intervention, which is a multicomponent health behaviour change intervention, or written and verbal education and advice about being more active. WORth was developed in collaboration with mental health service users and health care professionals, who have provided feedback on the intervention components. It will be delivered by health care professionals working within mental health teams. Extensive work has been done to develop a training package to support the health care professionals delivering the intervention. To date, this training has been delivered across the three study sites to 16 health care professionals, including eight occupational therapists, three physiotherapists and five support staff. Throughout the project, feedback from participants and health care professionals delivering the intervention will be used to further refine the WORth intervention and the training package.

The project is ongoing, with phase 1 having been completed in the Louth area in Autumn 2019. All three study sites are currently open to recruitment for phase 2. We hope to recruit 60 participants (30 from NI and 30 from Ireland) with severe mental health difficulties. The findings of this study will be used to inform a main trial in this area.

