

## ERC Consolidator and Proof of Concept grants INTERACT and IMPACT coordinated by professor Inez Myin-Germeys and related research project IMMERSE

The Center for Contextual Psychiatry ([CCP](#)) at KU Leuven is world-renowned expert center on the use of Experience Sampling Methods (ESM) to capture the interaction between the person and the environment in the development of psychopathology. ESM is a structured diary technique, delivered as an app, that allows capturing the moment-to-moment variation in symptoms, feelings, and behaviour, in real-time and in the real-world. It also enables the development of mobile health interventions in the field of mental health.



Prof. Inez Myin-Germeys, who is leading the CCP, has received an **ERC Consolidator** grant in 2012 to conduct the **INTERACT** study. INTERACT combined fundamental research using ESM to study the daily life processes of altered stress reactivity and recovery as well as reward in the development of psychosis, with translational research to develop and test a new mobile health intervention targeting these processes.



The intervention was Acceptance and Commitment Therapy in Daily Life (ACT-DL), a blended care intervention combining face-to-face therapy with an Ecological Momentary Intervention, where the psychological therapy was delivered via an app in the normal daily life context. In collaboration with partners at the University of Amsterdam and the University of Maastricht, The Netherlands, and the Central Institute of Mental Health in

Mannheim in Germany, the largest clinical trial to date on ACT in the early phases of psychosis was set up. It was shown that ACT-DL was a feasible and acceptable intervention. Furthermore, ACT-DL was found to be more successful than treatment as usual in reducing negative symptoms and improving functioning, two of the hardest to treat problems in psychosis. In 2019, Prof. Myin-Germeys received an **ERC Proof of Concept** grant for the **IMPACT** study to transform the research ACT-DL app into a clinical ACT-DL app that can be implemented in a naturalistic clinical setting. This included adapting the ACT-DL to the flexible needs in clinical practice, but also to develop an implementation strategy and running implementation pilots in routine mental health care.



In line with that, Prof. Myin-Germeys received a **Horizon2020** grant as principal investigator for the **IMMERSE** project, in collaboration with 9 partners across 4 countries in Europe (Slovakia, Germany, Scotland and Belgium). IMMERSE stands for Implementing Mobile MEntal health Recording Strategy for Europe. IMMERSE aims to implement ESM as clinical tool in routine mental health care to transform mental health care in Europe into a true person-centered care focused on the needs of each individual while giving them an active role in their treatment process and decision making. IMMERSE fits within the European Framework for Action on Mental Health and Wellbeing, as well as in the eHealth Digital Service Infrastructure. It is an implementation project, aiming to thoroughly evaluate strategies, processes, and outcomes of implementing a digital mobile mental health solution, while also identifying and overcoming key barriers as well as strengthening facilitators for implementation, transfer and scale up.

The different European projects have contributed to the further development of digital mobile interventions for individuals with mental health problems, in a fast-changing landscape. COVID-19 has not only severely impacted mental health, the social-distancing measures also pressed the need for the development of digital interventions that people can use in their daily life. Furthermore, the new European Medical Device regulatory framework requires larger scale collaborations across different partners in order to transfer new digital tools to medical devices ready for the clinical market.