

About Dr Rebecca Hamer

Dr Rebecca Hamer is a UK-based researcher and evaluator specialising in PTSD/CPTSD, trauma recovery and trauma-informed systems change. Her work focuses on policy and practice that advance social justice and address inequity, with particular expertise in trauma-informed qualitative methods and ethics when working with marginalised populations. She has extensive experience delivering research, evaluations, evidence reviews and synthesis for academic, NHS, local and national government and voluntary sector clients. Rebecca translates complex evidence into clear, actionable recommendations for commissioners, practitioners and multi-agency partnerships, with a growing portfolio in nature- and community-based approaches to trauma stabilisation.

Previous roles and focus

Rebecca has worked as a Research Associate at the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR), Sheffield Hallam University, and as Service Evaluation Lead for the Stovewood Trauma and Resilience Service (TRS) in Rotherham from 2018. Her work brings together rigorous qualitative and mixed-methods research with trauma-informed practice, ensuring that survivor voice, safety, and agency are central. She has led and contributed to projects that examine how services can become more trauma-informed, how systems can reduce barriers to access, and how evidence can be mobilised to support better outcomes for people with complex needs. An area of particular interest is the relationship between trauma-informed interventions, community settings and nature in generating social wellbeing, including an Innovate UK-funded equine-centred trauma stabilisation pilot translating the TRS framework into embodied, relational work with horses.

Expertise

Rebecca's expertise spans PTSD/CPTSD and trauma stabilisation; trauma-informed systems change across NHS, local government and the voluntary sector; substance use and recovery pathways; evaluation of complex services; and trauma-informed qualitative research methods and ethics. She is experienced in evaluation design, qualitative fieldwork in high-sensitivity contexts, analysis and synthesis, and the production of commissioner-ready reports. She works comfortably across multi-stakeholder partnerships and has supported programmes that include skills and capacity reviews for local authorities, supported and social housing evidence reviews, design and planning evidence assessments, older people's housing choices research, Family Hubs evaluation, civic society infrastructure evaluation, and investigations into severe multiple disadvantage.

Selected projects

Rebecca's recent work includes the Innovate UK AKT pilot developing an equine-centred trauma stabilisation pathway for women with histories of substance use and PTSD/CPTSD (Project Manager/Principal Investigator). She leads multi-year service evaluations for the Trauma and Resilience Service in Rotherham (Project Lead), evidencing outcomes in trauma

stabilisation and resilience and informing service development. At CRESR she managed the Department for Transport/NatCen “Personal Safety on Public Transport” strand, coordinating fieldwork and delivery. She has held qualitative or lead-author roles across a suite of DLUHC/MHCLG commissions: the Supported Housing Review, Social Housing Stock Management Literature Review, Planning Design Codes Rapid Evidence Assessment, Older People’s Housing Choices, Private Rented Sector Quality Pilots Evaluation, and Supported Housing Outcomes and Benefits. Additional work includes the DfE Family Hubs Evaluation (City of Doncaster), DHSC/OHID Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Teams Grant Evaluation, OHID Fulfilling Lives (Lewisham) on severe multiple disadvantage and systemic barriers to access (evidence review and case studies), the NAVCA Local Infrastructure Organisation Development Programme (regional case studies and stakeholder presentations), the DCMS Civic Society Infrastructure Evaluation (fieldwork), and the Carnegie SEED Wellbeing evidence review, where she authored the report on Democratic Wellbeing.

Previous experience

Rebecca’s earlier roles include Project Manager for ERANID-REC-PATH (coordinating work on international recovery pathways from problematic drug use and reporting to funders), Netreach and Service Development at Basis in Leeds (service improvement and outreach in trauma-informed contexts), and Research Assistant on the Beyond the Gaze project investigating the working practices, regulation and safety of internet-based sex workers in the UK. She has also worked as an editor and proof-reader, bringing clarity and accessibility to complex materials.

Education

Rebecca holds a PhD from Sheffield Hallam University. Her doctoral thesis, *The Scylla State: an alternative understanding of survival sex work and addiction*, develops a gendered understanding of marginalisation and trauma in the UK and integrates trauma-informed perspectives with lived experience accounts. She also holds a Master’s in Social Research and a Master’s in Social Work from the University of Leeds, and an undergraduate degree from the University of Leeds. This combined academic and professional training underpins her approach to ethics, methods and practice in sensitive research.

Publications and selected outputs

Rebecca has contributed to peer-reviewed publications and commissioned reports. These include an integrated model of change—Desistance and Recovery (book chapter); *Addiction Recovery in Services and Policy: An International Overview* (book chapter); the four-country REC-PATH study overview in *Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly*; *The Scylla State* in the *British Journal of Sociology*; and multiple government-commissioned reports and reviews for MHCLG, DWP, DfE and DhSC. These include reviews of Supported Housing, Community Led Housing, Older People’s Housing Choices and Social Housing (MHCLG/DWP), the Family Hubs Innovation Fund Evaluation (City of Doncaster, DfE), *Understanding the SEED Domains* (CRESR), and NHS Trauma and Resilience Serviced evaluation reports. Her PhD thesis is

publicly available through Sheffield Hallam University. Forthcoming work includes The Trauma-Informed Community in Rotherham (Executive Summary and Full Briefing Report), an article on Multidimensional Trauma: A Trauma-informed Framework Through Which to Understand Women's Problematic Substance Use in the United Kingdom, and the AKT Equine-Assisted Trauma Stabilisation Pilot report.

Approach and methods

Rebecca's approach is grounded in trauma-informed principles: safety, trust, choice and control, and empowerment. She designs and leads qualitative and mixed-methods studies that prioritise ethical engagement with participants in high-sensitivity settings. Her methods include theory-based and realist evaluation, contribution analysis, process and outcome evaluation, rapid evidence assessments and literature reviews, Q-methodology, case study design, and participatory/co-produced approaches. She is experienced in research governance, data protection and risk management and is committed to accessible communication and clear recommendations for decision-makers.

Media and speaking

Rebecca's work has featured on BBC Radio Sheffield, BBC Radio 5 Live, Times Radio and in The Conversation and Svenska Dagbladet. She has delivered public talks, including SEED Talks on trauma and recovery, and presents research at conferences and training events. Her media and public engagement focus on making complex research accessible and relevant to practitioners, policymakers and the public.

Professional and voluntary

Rebecca has served as a trustee with Survive in York, contributing to governance for services supporting survivors. She maintains professional development in information governance, GDPR, Prevent, health and safety, risk assessment and methodological and ethical practice in trauma-informed research. Recent training includes trauma recognition and response and working with autistic people and autistic allyship.