

'Creating Spaces for Change'
An Evaluation
of
The Centre of Excellence in Interdisciplinary Mental Health
University of Birmingham
2005-2007

July 2007



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

'Creating Spaces for Change' is the interim, formative, evaluation report prepared for the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) on the Centre of Excellence in Interdisciplinary Mental Health (CEIMH), the University of Birmingham. The Centre is a partnership between six of the University's Schools offering mental health teaching and learning opportunities.

The evaluation has been designed as a tool to:

- promote reflection on teaching, learning and practice
- forward CEIMH planning and development
- provide a review of the Centre's development to date

The evidence presented is based on a review of CEIMH monitoring data, University and related policies, (e-)surveys and the views of 96 participants in individual or focus group interviews. It covers the period July 2005 – June 2007.

Key findings

CEIMH has achieved its interim goals and made substantial progress in promoting excellence in interdisciplinary teaching and learning in the challenging context of a continuously changing Higher Education and mental health service environment.

CEIMH is valued by those who use it as a high quality teaching and learning environment that provides unparalleled opportunities for networking between academic educators, researchers, service users, carers, students, practitioners and trainers.

The multimedia based learning materials developed by CEIMH are considered to be exemplars of new approaches to learning across the University and beyond.

CEIMH has laid foundations on which new teaching and learning programmes in mental health are being actively developed across its contributing Schools and with major mental health organisations locally.

CEIMH has strengthened the contribution that service user and carer groups are making to developing innovative approaches to teaching and learning in collaboration with academics and practitioners.

Key learning points

Key to CEIMH's success in its first two years has been:

- creating a teaching and social space designed by academics and service users which stimulates networking and creative exchange.
- establishing trust and commitment with key partners and CEIMH champions within and outside the University, in order to deliver on CEIMH objectives in spite of the complex and changing Higher Education and mental health service environments.
- building a critical mass of service user and carer involvement, and actively using their expertise in innovative teaching and learning initiatives.
- promoting sustainable approaches to the creation and use of innovative e-learning resources through fostering the development of technical skills amongst those developing and delivering mental health programmes.

Over the next three years CEIMH needs to:

- fully utilise its chosen evaluation framework and interim evaluation evidence to develop a strategy for success.
- create the time and space needed by the CEIMH team to successfully consolidate, evaluate and disseminate the range of development activities to date to achieve the longer term goals of changing attitudes, practices and learning in the field of mental health.
- develop a coherent marketing strategy which promotes the Centre, events, learning and web-usage to maximum effect.

In terms of **lessons** from the evaluation for CEIMH's development, HEFCE **funding** has been critical to:

- the design of a quality teaching and learning space
- the development of new learning resources
- raising the profile of mental health teaching and learning within the University and beyond.

CEIMH has been a catalyst for change both within the University and beyond. It is, however, too early to judge whether HEFCE funding is of sufficient duration to allow the Centre to embed change within the institution and with partner agencies

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 'Creating Spaces for Change' is a formative, evaluation report on the activities and development of the Centre of Excellence in Interdisciplinary Mental Health (CEIMH) from July 2005-June 2007. Its purpose is to reflect the distance travelled, or short term outcomes, that demonstrate progress against overall objectives, highlight key learning points to date and make recommendations for future developments

1.2 This report has been written to fulfil the requirements of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as the sponsoring body. It draws on a longer evaluation report which has been written to enable those involved with CEIMH to reflect on their achievements and to plan for the future within the context of a period of rapid change within Higher Education and the wider field of mental health policy and practice.

1.3 This report:

- outlines the aims and scope of CEIMH (Section 2).
- describes and reflects upon the evaluation process (Section 3).
- identifies key formative findings (Section 4).
- explores the lessons learned, noting adjustments made to original plans in the light of changing contexts and highlights recommendations for future developments (Section 5).
- concludes with reflections on the concept, and impact, of CEIMH as a change strategy within the University of Birmingham and as part of the overarching CETL initiative.

1.4 The evidence presented in this report is based on an analysis of routine monitoring data collected by CEIMH as well as materials gathered through individual interviews, focus groups and questionnaires involving (96) key CEIMH stakeholders – both within and beyond the academy. Supporting evidence is available in the [Appendices](#), [Examples of Activities](#), and [Examples of Evaluation Materials](#) as well as via the hyperlinks provided in the text.

1.5 This report represents a 'snapshot in time' of the development of CEIMH. It is intended that it becomes a living document with additional materials added and a digital documentary of the [evaluation](#) created as the Centre evolves in the next three years. In this way it will make a substantial contribution to the final summative evaluation report required by HEFCE.

2 CEIMH's VISION, AIMS AND SCOPE

2.1 CEIMH's vision

The Centre of Excellence subscribes to a vision that to be effective mental health teaching and learning in higher education must be underpinned by a commitment to interdisciplinary working and learning between different professional groups including service users and carers. In pursuing this vision the Centre's mission is to consolidate and expand the design, delivery, evaluation and dissemination of effective, innovative interdisciplinary mental health teaching and learning in higher education.

(University of Birmingham/Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Mental Health: Stage Two Proposal, October 2004)

2.2 CEIMH aims to:

- enhance the quality of mental health teaching
- provide opportunities for staff progression, development and reward
- collaborate with, and disseminate learning from, the wider Higher Education and mental health communities.

See the [Centre's aims and objectives](#) for further details.

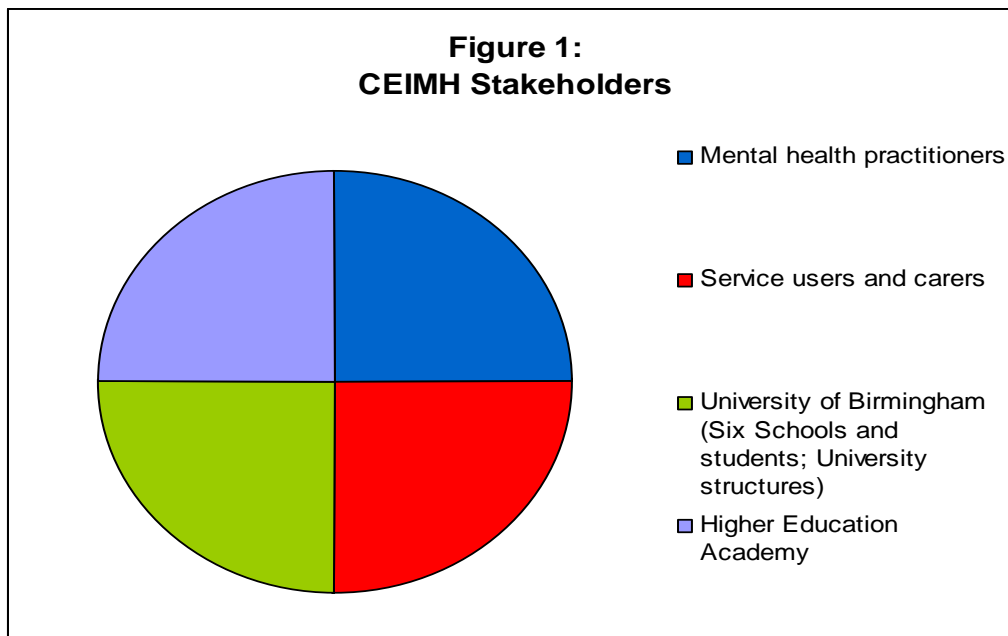
2.3 CEIMH is characterised by:

- A capital investment used to create a physical space which is conducive to interdisciplinary learning and innovation in teaching methods (For further material on the progress of the Centre's capital investment see the rationale behind the [design of the Centre](#) and how this relates to its objectives and the [Centre's building progress](#)).
- a primary focus within the University on working collaboratively across the six Schools involved in mental health teaching and learning i.e. Education, Health Sciences, Medicine, Psychology, Public Policy and Social Sciences. These Schools are represented on CEIMH's management and implementation groups.
- a commitment to engaging service users and carers in developing, delivering, evaluating and disseminating innovative approaches to mental health teaching and learning. CEIMH provides an office base for Suresearch, a West Midlands mental health service user network and their allies involved in research and teaching, and for Carers in Partnership, a regional organisation of people who care for those with enduring mental health problems who are involved in teaching and policy development. It has a presence on Developers of User and Carer Involvement in Education (DUCIE), a higher education network for service users employed in University user involvement posts.
- work with mental health practitioners and tutors who are involved in formal and informal teaching and learning and managers of mental health organisations responsible for workforce education and training. Members of the team have a presence on regional and local mental health and

social care bodies such as the Joint Initiative in Mental Health, West Midlands and the Capable Teams Interdisciplinary Continuing Professional Development (CPD) group of Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust (BSMHT). A range of mental health organisations are represented on CEIMH's advisory and implementation groups. CEIMH's Director is a stakeholder governor on the BSMHT Board.

- partnerships across the relevant Higher Education Subject Centres. CEIMH has a presence on the Mental Health in Higher Education (mhhe) advisory group, and CEIMH's Director is co-chair of the Social Policy and Social Work Subject Centre (SWAP) and a member of the Higher Education Academy's (HEA) Subject Centres' Chairs group. Members of HEA bodies are also represented on CEIMH's advisory and implementation groups

CEIMH stakeholders are represented in Figure 1.



2.4 CEIMH combines an 'outward looking' face with its role as a change agent in relation to the mental health programmes offered by its collaborative Schools. The distinct approach it takes to the promotion of interdisciplinary learning is represented in Figure 2.

2.5 Activities

Given its remit CEIMH has generated a wide range of activities across its stakeholder constituencies. These activities utilise differing combinations of its resources. Activities undertaken during 2005-7 include:

- promoting mental health service user and carer engagement with University teaching, learning and research (see [Examples of Activities - Carers \(Equal Opportunities\) Act 2004](#)). For a description of this project

and other activities funded through CEIMH's Teaching and Learning Development Fund see [Appendix 1](#)).

- creating e-learning and other technology-based teaching and learning tools, which reflect CEIMH's distinct approach to interdisciplinary mental health (see *Examples of Activities* – Online Assessment Workbook: [Holly case study](#) and [Nicki and Gena case study](#), as well as the Supplementary Experiential Learning Framework (SELF): [Miscommunication](#) and [Ward scenario](#) trigger videos).

Figure 2: Three Dimensions of CEIMH



- working with the University and relevant statutory health, social care and voluntary organisations to establish new teaching and learning opportunities in the field of mental health at pre-qualifying, qualifying and continuing professional development levels.
- raising awareness of how the mental health issues for students impact on their access and completion of University programmes locally and nationally.
- establishing a national and international profile through publications, the CEIMH website, CEIMH events and workshops, conference papers and presentations (see [Appendix 2](#) for a list of CEIMH's conference presentations and publications).

2.6 Roles and participants

CEIMH has developed a clear management structure and systems for accountability. These comprise:

- an advisory group – with representation from local and national service users, practitioners and managers in the mental health field. It provides a wider contextual base for informing CEIMH's direction and development.

- a management group – drawn from senior staff within the University and six partner Schools. It has a strategic oversight role.
- an implementation group – with membership from the contributing Schools and the wider HE sector. This group plays an important role in operationalising plans for teaching and learning development across the six partner Schools.

Full details of the membership of each of these groups is available in [Appendix 3](#).

CEIMH's recruitment process was completed in December 2006. The team comprises:

- a Director and two Associate Directors with specific developmental remits
- two Service User Involvement Co-ordinators and a Service User Network Co-ordinator
- a Centre Manager and an Administrative Co-ordinator, both with multimedia expertise
- a Projects and Events Co-ordinator
- a Clerical Assistant with service user training and research expertise
- three Research Fellows with a responsibility for evaluation activity, research development and support
- an Artist in Residence (to view the type of activity undertaken by the Artist in Residence see [Examples of activities - Mural Project Launch](#))



Most of CEIMH's posts are part-time – and represent 8.6 full-time equivalent staff. In addition CEIMH part funds and provides accommodation for the mhhe Project Development Officer.

In addition to the six collaborative Schools, CEIMH is working closely with a range of University bodies as well as:

- service user and carer groups in Birmingham, Solihull and Sandwell
- the Strategic Health Authority, Mental Health Trusts and Social Services in Birmingham and the Black Country
- local and national voluntary organisations (e.g. MIND, Aquarius, Birmingham Institute for the Deaf and the Alzheimer's Society)
- the Practice-based Professional Learning CETL at the Open University which is seconding some of its health and social care staff to CEIMH in 2007-2008 to pursue joint interests and initiate joint projects
- CETLs at Middlesex University, CIPeL CETL (Coventry and Sheffield Hallam Universities) and a number of other HE institutions including, the University of Central England, Staffordshire University, Warwick University and Wolverhampton University
- regional and national mental health teaching, learning and research networks in both Higher Education and practitioner settings e.g. the Care

Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP), mhhe and HEA subject centres.

- international service user groups and academic institutions delivering mental health teaching and learning in Europe (e.g. Universities of Ljubljana, Slovenia; Parma, Italy; Seinajoki and Tampere, Finland)



Italian service user group visits CEIMH

3 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH

3.1 CEIMH's evaluation team comprise two part-time research fellows, based in the School of Social Sciences. To ensure the objectivity of the process and findings of this internally managed evaluation, CEIMH commissioned two external validators to oversee the evaluation:

- Professor Diane Waller; Professor of Art Psychotherapy, Goldsmiths, University of London
- Dr. Val Harris; an independent trainer and consultant with a background in community development and informal adult education.

The commentaries of the external validators on this interim evaluation report are in [Appendix 4](#).

3.2 The evaluation adopted a Theories of Change model, originally developed in the United States as a means of assessing the impact of complex community initiatives where the attribution of change to any one agency or intervention may be problematic (Connell and Kubisch, 1998¹). This approach requires those involved in delivering activities to ask, and continually reflect on, a series of questions:

- What is the situation we are trying to change?
- What is the (changing) context we are working in and what resources do we have to effect change?
- How are we going to bring about change (what is the rationale which underpins particular approaches and activities)?

¹ Connell, J. P. and Kubisch, A. C. (1998) 'Applying a Theory of Change approach to the evaluation of comprehensive community initiatives: progress, prospects, and problems' in K. Fulbright-Anderson, A. C. Kubisch and J. P. Connell *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives Volume 2: Theory, Measurement and Analysis*, Washington DC: The Aspen Institute, pp15-44.

- How do we know we are achieving short and medium term outcomes as well as working towards longer term goals and overall objectives?

A comprehensive [evaluation framework](#) was developed with the CEIMH team in a series of workshops.

3.3 The evidence gathered by the team draws on 96 interviews, participant observation and analysis of CEIMH and University monitoring data and reports. In keeping with the spirit of CEIMH and the CETL initiative, innovative methodologies were used including arts-based and narrative techniques, as well as new technologies to record evaluation evidence.

3.4 HEFCE guidance invites reflections on the evaluation process. This is particularly welcome, as the approach taken has involved new learning in terms of integrating new technologies into the gathering and presentation of evidence.

Further, the nature and range of the Centre's activities has posed a number of particular challenges:

- how to 'measure' the soft outcomes of CEIMH – in particular the enhanced confidence of service user and carer groups? This has required the evaluation not simply to record outputs but capture 'the feel' of the Centre, to try to 'measure what cannot be measured', and reflect on how appearance and atmosphere can be a factor facilitating learning.
- stakeholders and staff also had initial concerns about 'being evaluated'. These concerns were particularly acute for service users who may have had negative experiences of evaluation as something that is 'done to' people – or as one service user put it, drawing on their own personal experiences within the mental health system:

An evaluation...so are you here to close us down?

- the tension between internal/external evaluation – and balancing a critical objectivity with evaluation as a developmental tool. The advice and critical readership of the evaluation's external validators has been important not only in reflecting on a range of evaluation techniques, but also in facilitating that balance between objectivity and engagement.

3.5 The approach taken therefore required building trust with participants and stakeholders as a pre-requisite of evaluation activity. In turn, this involved careful reflection on both what HEFCE required in terms of formative evaluation and the questions and methodologies which would yield material that was useful to all those involved in CEIMH (beyond 'The Academy') and enabled reflections on difficulties and problems as a means of developing effective forward planning (rather than being 'a judgement').

Evaluation has, therefore, been used as a tool to promote reflection on teaching and practice as well as a means of forward planning – as much as a retrospective review of the Centre's development to date.

4 KEY FINDINGS

CEIMH is about creating spaces for change. This is about physical space. About creating a place where service users, carers and different professionals and academics can meet and exchange ideas. Space to network beyond 'a discipline'. But it's also about other kinds of space. The space, the time to reflect, to discuss and develop new ideas and new ways of learning that are truly interdisciplinary. The space to take risks, experiment, but in a safe environment where taking risks is supported and encouraged. [...] If something does not work, that's not a judgement. We can all learn from that.
(CEIMH Team Member Interview)

4.1 Introduction

CEIMH has achieved its primary objectives for Years 1 and 2, namely:

- building stakeholder engagement
- completing staff recruitment
- creating a physical, purpose designed Centre (see [Introductory Video](#)) which since opening in September 2006 has hosted 409 education, training and related events involving all of the collaborative Schools as well as key stakeholders external to the University (see [Examples of activities - Making Mental Health Visible](#))
- building an ICT infrastructure with 10,969 visits to the CEIMH website between December 2006 and June 2007 of which 82.9% were from the UK (see [Appendix 5](#) for a summary of Centre usage statistics)
- developed a range of arts based initiatives in mental health promotion – Recovery through the Arts, the [Mural Project](#) and involvement in the city wide mental health [Arts All Over the Place](#) events.



These objectives have been realised in a context in which the mental health teaching and learning activities of the contributing Schools are overwhelmingly uni-disciplinary in focus and marginal to the Schools' main teaching and learning activities. At the same time, the external context in which CEIMH works is characterised by the changing service configurations of a low status, under-resourced area of health and social care provision, in which training budgets are contracting in a response to financial pressures.

The context is an important one in which to view CEIMH's achievements not least because:

The CEIMH works beyond the University and therefore those involved in learning (service users, carers and in many cases practitioners) are not students in the traditional HE sense of the word – but may be involved in informal/unaccredited learning through CEIMH or involved in continuing professional development initiatives which are not course based.

(From CEIMH response to the National Evaluation of CETLs, June 2007)

4.2 What the Centre means

Evidence from the evaluation suggested that the range of groups using CEIMH view it as having a meaning and importance that goes beyond its remit of promoting excellence in mental health teaching and learning. The quality of its teaching space together with the welcome and value that the CEIMH team give to those who use the facilities were repeatedly mentioned in interviews, feedback sheets and the visitors' book.

The analysis of the range of material gathered from the main users of the service is summarised below.

- **Service Users, Students and Course Participants**

Service users described CEIMH as 'a sanctuary', 'a safe place', 'a haven', 'it feels like it's our Centre'. To many of the service users interviewed CEIMH represents a sea change in their status and how they are seen by practitioners and academics (for more about the experiences of service users see [Appendix 6](#) and *Examples of evaluation materials - [Dave's song: Another railroad trip](#)*).

University students described CEIMH in terms of the high quality facilities it provided, compared to other places in the University where they were taught. For some it is a lifeline in relation to the way in which they manage the mental health issues in their lives.



'Celebrating 20 Years of Service User Involvement'

I think I would not be still at university without it. I'm in my second year [on an arts undergraduate course] and have had mental health [problems] for a long time...and I'm a mature student...and you can feel really out of place. So I come here when I'm stressed, really stressed, and people seem to understand, if I want to talk, they talk and they respect [you]. You're a person, not a box of problems. And if you don't want to talk, that's fine too. You can sit and chill.

(University Student Interview)

Participants on courses hosted at CEIMH noted in their feedback forms:

The staff are extremely welcoming and the décor and layout of rooms are excellent.

Nice environment, spacious and comfortable.

Clean, airy, light. Coffee in the distance comforting ☺

Comfortable, welcoming space

Very warm and welcoming building. Staff friendly and helpful.

- **By University and Visiting Tutors**

As ‘somewhere you can experiment, take risks and try out ideas...before using [new] ways of doing things with students’. (University Staff Interview)

(For more University tutors’ views of CEIMH see *Examples of evaluation materials* - [Achievements of CEIMH to date: some perspectives](#))

In feedback forms, tutors also commented:

The space is multi-functional and comfortable.

Brilliant staff, relaxing clean environment, ambience. State of the art IT equipment – lack of fresh air though.

Relaxing, new and clean makes the impression you’re worth such a nice new bright centre.

Well-designed, friendly.

Great to have mental health teaching ‘hub’.

Yes, definitely helped create good teaching climate and contributed to group cohesion.

- **By Practitioners**

as a place which ‘says something important about mental health and that mental health is important’

When I came, there was this really important message. You arrive at the University entrance. There is the Barber Institute [art gallery]...known internationally...and just past that is a sign that says Centre of Excellence in Interdisciplinary Mental Health. That sort of said to me...this place takes mental health seriously.

(Practitioner Interview)

4.3 The student learning experience

The initial impact of the physical appearance of the Centre and what its environment comes to mean to people is difficult to quantify in terms of how far this contributes to positive outcomes for students, but evidence suggests that the following factors are significant.

- CEIMH has broadened the range of technologies available in the classroom and this is seen by all involved as enhancing the learning experience.

- CEIMH's commitment to interdisciplinary learning as embracing the expertise of service users and carers has extended the knowledge base and resources of those involved in mental health teaching and learning within the University.

that's got to be one of your achievements...that actually you've raised the profile...the importance of understanding mental health issues from the client's perspective. (Academy Interview)

(See *Examples of evaluation materials* - [Involving service users: student practitioner views](#) for additional materials on the value of service user involvement in delivery.)

- CEIMH's involvement in a range of teaching and learning beyond the University's academic programmes adds considerably to the resources that are available for student learning

4.4 External partners/agencies

Evidence gathered from the range of statutory and voluntary health and social care agencies that provide mental health services locally and regionally showed that:

- CEIMH has played an active role formally and informally with local Trusts in developing and guiding interdisciplinary work around the Ten Essential Shared Capabilities (DOH, 2003²) and Capable Teams agendas.

[CEIMH], you know, pulled people together across my Trust who also have responsibility for Education and Practice Development. (Practitioner Interview)

- CEIMH has worked in developing teaching and learning resources and approaches which 'cut across' organisational and geographical boundaries (see [CEIMHtv](#) for examples)
- CEIMH, through its team membership, is influencing academic and professional practice, and thinking in terms of moving from multi-professional to interdisciplinary models of teaching and learning:

I think you've got a wonderful model there of paying your service users and really having them there as part of the team. And I think that's something else that would be really, really nice to do something together on. (Academy Interview)

- The Centre has extended the scope of its local and regional networks and partnerships and has developing relationships with, for example, the Care Services Improvement Partnership Joint Initiative in Mental Health Workforce, Sandwell Mental Health NHS Trust and service user groups within voluntary organisations such as Birmingham Institute for the Deaf and Aquarius.

² Department of Health (2003) *Mental Health Services Workforce Design and Development: Best Practice Guidance*. London: DOH

- CEIMH has begun to build a national and international reputation in innovation in interdisciplinary mental health teaching and learning through publications and conference activity (see [Appendix 2](#) for further details. [Text-based resources](#) are also available on CEIMH's website).

4.5 The host institution at a strategic level

Evidence suggests that CEIMH has established a high profile within the University.

- It is the sole initiative referenced in the University's Forward Strategy as an exemplar of interdisciplinary learning and therefore key to future teaching and learning initiatives in the University's forthcoming reorganisation.
- It is actively involved in working across the University's contributing Schools to raise the profile of mental health programmes and works collaboratively to develop new programmes. It is therefore working towards its longer term goals of developing new programmes and increasing student intake. The baseline study (see [Appendix 7](#)) indicates the fragmented nature of current provision.
- Through its activities and links with the Student Guild, Counselling Services and its presence on the University's Diversity and Equality and Wellbeing Groups, CEIMH has been instrumental in raising the profile of student mental health and enhancing the mental health component of the University's counselling and support services.
- It has been invited by the University to assist in developing a greater awareness of mental health issues for staff and the promotion of appropriate services for academic, administrative and support staff with, often unrecognised, mental health problems.
- CEIMH is playing a key role in the development, across the institution, of new multimedia approaches to learning as well as developing a greater awareness of how multimedia learning can contribute to widening participation in HE and open up learning to new 'markets' (see *Examples of evaluation materials* - [Reaching a wider audience: developing e-learning skills](#)).

It's a slow process...academics talk about podcasts and the like...but there seems to be a reluctance to embrace e-learning opportunities in some quarters [...] [CEIMH] has been really useful in giving us exemplars...we can then show these to academics, show them what is possible and hopefully convert them (University Staff Interview)

In terms of strategically embedding innovation in teaching and learning across the University, CEIMH plays an important role in:

- The Innovations Group (Teaching and Learning)
- Corporate web developments
- Learning and Development Unit – Education Enhancement Group

This has involved not only extending the integration of existing technologies and blended learning methods through, for example, podcasting, but also the

exploration of the application of 'Web 2' potentials (such as Second Life) to future teaching and learning developments.

4.6 Teachers, trainers and learning designs

CEIMH has had an evidenced impact on teachers and trainers because of the access to high quality resources and technology it offers:

I'd never been able to run an event where you could just, people could just break off and all go and work on computers...people were doing a bit of work on the computer, putting it onto a memory stick and then we were putting it up on the screen and looking at it and I suppose it opened my eyes a bit to what's possible with that kind of technology.
(Practitioner Interview)

In addition the evidence suggests that there has been movement in terms of:

- supporting University teaching staff and external trainers to reflect on and rethink the relationships between academic and professional disciplines
- developing academic/practitioner links (see *Examples of evaluation materials* - [The SELF team: a new approach to developing learning materials](#))
- rethinking the use of teaching technologies (see *Examples of evaluation materials* - [Introducing blended learning](#) and [Innovations in interdisciplinary assessment tools](#))

...it's about trying to bring together the ideas and the technology rather than separating the technology off, [...] some people who have developed reusable learning objects haven't learnt much about the technology and I think that we need to have a bit of a different balance there [...] there is more capacity for the influence to spread if they develop those skills whereas if all they do is end up with a product that they can use, it's limited in terms of its actual impact really.
(Academy Interview)

The Centre's Teaching and Learning Development Fund has been a key mechanism for promoting innovation (see [Appendix 1](#) for full details of the 18 projects supported to date).

Applications for the Teaching and Learning Development Fund are encouraged from internal applicants (from within the six Schools), external organisations and service users and carers, reflecting the interdisciplinary focus of CEIMH). Applications are assessed against the Centre's goals by a panel drawn from the staff team. Each Teaching and Learning Development Fund project is allocated a member of the CEIMH team (chosen because of their particular **expertise**) who works with the applicants from a project's inception to completion.

Figure 1 3 Dimensions of CEIMH: Dimension One - Expertise

- user and carer involvement
- embedding learning technology
- interdisciplinary collaboration
- diverse professional knowledge-base

Strands of expertise range from: developing user and carer involvement in interdisciplinary mental health education and training, through to developing the capacity and knowledge-base of professionals and developing innovative approaches to pedagogic practice using multimedia teaching and learning resources (see Figure 1).

Projects rarely progress through the application process without being reformulated. Often there is a refocusing towards embedding the voice of service users into project designs. This has ranged from instigating advisory groups to comment on project content and delivery (for example, the Tidal Model® project and the [Online Assessment Workbook](#) trigger videos), to setting up and running a focus group with people with learning disabilities who have mental health problems to inform project design (Learning Disability and Mental Health Training Pack – see [Appendix 1](#)) and involving service users in script writing and acting (see the [Supplementary Experiential Learning Framework \(SELF\)](#) trigger videos).

Figure 2
3 Dimensions of CEIMH:
Dimension Two – Space

3 types of space:

- social space
- formal teaching and learning space
- resource space

The Centre has taken an innovative approach to rethinking and reforming teaching and learning in terms of the development of its e-learning **resources** (Resource space is just one aspect of the space available through CEIMH. See Figure 2 for a description of the types of **space** offered). The 'traditional' approach to resource development has tended to involve a division of labour between

academics (responsible for content) and technicians/designers responsible for final design and production. This can lead to a disjuncture between content, intended learning outcomes and the means of delivery. CEIMH, instead, has worked to develop the technical skills of academics as a means of enhancing their skills in relating learning content with the technological design and relating 'real-time' (or class-based teaching) to e- and virtual learning environments.

In this way the Teaching and Learning Development Fund supports individual initiatives, whilst being part of a wider agenda of 'rethinking and reforming' teaching and learning. The development of new skills and ways of thinking has an

influence far beyond the life of the funded project and results in the embedding of 'reformed' practices alongside the production of a range of reusable learning objects. Thus, by providing **time** for the development of new e-skills, innovation, experimentation and risk-taking are encouraged and supported by CEIMH (see Figure 3).

Figure 3
3 Dimensions of CEIMH: Dimension
Three – Time

Time for:

- innovation
- experimentation
- skills development
- risk taking in professional development

4.7 Staff development and academic rewards

CEIMH operates within the academic reward and progression frameworks laid out by the University and has access to all Staff Development Unit training programmes. However, as an innovator, it has challenged the traditional distinctions made between academic, academic-related and administrative staff in its creation of posts that have sought to blend differing skills/expertise, e.g. mental health service user expertise and teaching development; administrative and multimedia skills; mental health service user expertise and administrative skills.

To support these appointments CEIMH has put in place systems, in addition to those required by the University, demonstrating innovation in staff development.

- All members of CEIMH receive quarterly supervision from the CEIMH Director (rather than the annual/bi-annual reviews offered in most Departments)
- All staff are encouraged to pursue qualification and publication opportunities and are actively supported in doing so
- No distinction is made in supervision between academic, academic-related and support/administrative staff and there is a focus on team as well as individual progression
- The development of new skills are actively encouraged. This has involved:
 - members of staff attending multimedia learning programmes (e.g. Final Cut Pro video editing and DVD Studio Pro for DVD authoring - certified and accredited by Apple)
 - partnering new staff from outside traditional HE settings with experienced teachers and researchers to develop their writing skills and offer opportunities to build their profile at national and international conferences through joint presentations

The presence of CEIMH's Director on the University's Education Enhancement Group, chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Quality and Students (who is also the Chair of CEIMH's management group) provides a University wide teaching and learning strategy forum for sharing learning from CEIMH .

4.8 Conclusions

CEIMH offers the time and space to enable service users, carers, practitioners and academics to think strategically about learning and practice in the field of interdisciplinary mental health:

...it's about actually having the space to sit and think about what you know we should be doing more strategically [...] It's given us the time and space to think about it but also to have people in the room that are quite good at facilitating those sorts of discussions and getting us to think about those things as well. So I think that's probably the biggest

thing that it's done to date, you know, it's made us as an organisation create good time to think about it properly. (Practitioner Interview)

It is ironic, that the sheer volume of activity generated by the staff team during its first two years has limited the time and space they have to jointly reflect on their learning and develop a strategy for CEIMH's future. This is a key issue which the CEIMH team need to focus on when they consider the implications of the interim evaluation's findings for planning CEIMH's future direction and priorities.

5 LESSONS LEARNED AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

5.1 CEIMH has succeeded in establishing itself as a catalyst for change. This has involved substantial learning which has resulted in:

- the design and development of creative learning environments
- the creation of ICT infrastructures and the design of multimedia materials
- managing the interface between Higher Education and practice
- delivering the 'wrap round' care that can enhance learning opportunities

5.2 Developing CEIMH has also raised a number of questions which have a broader relevance to the concept of CETLs. A key theme of the CETL initiative is the reward of academic excellence. Yet how can the **energy** of staff be sustained to achieve the activity required to bring about change and promote innovation:

- within a large corporate institution
- in academic teaching and learning
- around attitudes to mental health and the involvement of service users and carers
- in professional practice and the application of learning
- in the face of resistance to innovation and change

Innovation takes **time**. This applies both to the development of new, high quality, teaching and learning materials and to changing attitudes, mindsets, developing skills and embedding change.

Moving people out of the silo, or maybe the comfort zone, of their academic discipline, their own professional 'body of knowledge'...now that really does take effort and time. (University Staff Interview)

Developmental work is difficult. It involves working where there are no clear boundaries, where there are failures as well as successes and these need to be managed and rewarded in a culture that tends to reward only achievement.

It's hard...you work with a group...you get so far and then they pull back, for whatever reason. So you have invested time and there is no result. What does that say? I've failed? I took a risk? How do you

reward people that take risks? It's easier to play the game and get recognition. (CEIMH Team Member Interview)

Networking has been used as a change mechanism by the CEIMH team. The University is moving towards a radical reorganisation in 2008. Schools will disappear and the question is whether what CEIMH has built to date proves sufficient to continue to effect change on a systemic basis.

Developing e-learning and the use of new technologies is a key objective of the CETL programme. CEIMH's experience raises a series of important questions about the balance between e-learning, direct teaching and the appropriate technologies to use in enhancing the student experience. On the one hand:

The web can extend access...students who are not able to come in to the University because they have jobs and busy lives, can learn and can be supported through discussion groups and the like... it's a really good way of widening access... (University Staff Interview)

On the other:

Look, I don't want [the University] on my iPod... that's my place, it's where I relax...do they really think I'll sit on a bus and listen to a lecture? (University Student Interview)

These issues of how students and practitioners use – or do not use – new technologies should be a key learning outcome from the CETL initiative as a whole.

Consolidating development work is crucial. CEIMH has developed a wide range of materials and resources to stimulate innovation in teaching and learning. What the team now need to do is to systematically review their knowledge and understanding of what they have produced. There are a number of strategic opportunities for doing so:

What might be quite nice to push forward some of the development in terms of partnership would be to pull some of the Trusts in together to talk about where there might be shared opportunities for projects, for example, the other mental health trusts across the West Midlands patch. Because I'm sure there are opportunities for us to be working more collaboratively together and sometimes it takes an external facilitator to start to make that happen. (Practitioner Interview)

This applies equally to building on the learning from CEIMH to:

- move from building service user and carer perspectives and their body of knowledge to integrating these into future pedagogic research
- embed developments into partner Schools and their programmes as the University goes through a period of transition and re-structuring
- disseminate across the CETL network and to the wider academy

Building ‘critical mass’ is an important feature of embedding change. To date CEIMH has played the role of ‘*a hub that holds different spokes together*’ (Practitioner Interview). Central to this has been stimulating and supporting the development of service user and carer groups and networks of academics and practitioners committed to change. Whilst this approach requires investment, it offers the opportunity to embed change – beyond the individual champion – in the University and beyond.

5.3 Recommendations for action and future adjustments

There have been no major adjustments to CEIMH activity and focus (as expressed in the original proposal to HEFCE in 2004). CEIMH is now shifting from a developmental phase to one of embedding change within its constituent parts. However, it is doing so in changing University and service contexts – and this is bound to have a major impact on what it is able to achieve by 2010.

Firm foundations have been built. CEIMH, however, needs to consider some very practical actions to build on those foundations.

- Time is required to consolidate and disseminate the outcomes of developmental work to date and for reflection and strategic planning so that CEIMH can fully engage with the new University structure.
- CEIMH should develop a more coherent marketing strategy in order to establish a distinctive identity within the University and beyond. Raising the profile of its website is central to this work.

5.4 Reflections on CETLs as a change strategy

I think [CEIMH] has really empowered mental health service users to have a voice. It’s really been a focal point for people to come together and share their ideas and promote positive practice and progressive ways of bringing about change. I think it has been a catalyst for change in many ways. It’s been quite a radical force in the world of mental health. (Practitioner Interview)

Within the academy, those interviewed had divided opinions. For some academics:

[HEFCE] funds have been really useful in bringing together teaching and learning [in mental health] that has always been marginal and divided up between different academic disciplines.
(University Staff Interview)

For others using the HEFCE model of allocating teaching and development funding on a ‘whole institution’ basis (Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund)

makes more sense if you are going to change [HE] institutions and how they deliver learning, rather than piecemeal on the basis of individual disciplines or departments (University Staff Interview)

- Other pressures within HE were mentioned as mitigating against the potential impact of CETLs in the long term:

...an awful lot of CETLs are actually quite reluctant to engage in national dissemination through direct channels because they're so preoccupied with RAE and publication routes that they're saying "oh no we can't, we can't run a dissemination event because we've got to publish first". Now to me that is a gross misuse of CETL funding streams because yes, you can get publications but they should be, you know, the second tranche...there is clearly a role for CETLs in providing leadership and I think that's what, you know, hopefully the CEIMH will be doing, being an example to some other CETLs about how its learning, and achievements and outputs can be more widely shared and that publications could come on the back of that rather than the other way round. (Academy Interview)

The National Evaluation of the CETL initiative will hopefully identify whether these are commonly shared views or tensions within and across the academy. What is not in doubt is that the HEFCE funding invested in CEIMH has already raised the profile of issues in mental health teaching and learning within and beyond the University of Birmingham.