

CONTNews



The Quarterly Newsletter of the CONTROL Research Programme

Vol 5 Issue 1 January - March 2026



Trial Updates

With consistent recruitment, follow-up, and monitoring across all sites, the CONTROL trial made significant strides in the first quarter of 2026.

Recruitment and Follow-Up Status

After reaching the desired sample size, recruitment was concluded on November 18, 2025. 496 participants had been successfully enrolled in the trial by this point, with recruitment being split equally between the two study arms. The planned follow-up activities went on. As of March 14th, 2026, 443 participants had finished the 8-week assessment, 346 had reached the 24-week milestone, and 228 had successfully completed the 32-week follow-up, indicating that follow-up progress was still on track.

These achievements demonstrate the team's commitment to maintaining the trial's advancement while guaranteeing high-quality data collection.

External and Internal Monitoring Visits Update

As part of the trial's strict oversight procedures, routine monitoring visits were conducted, with an emphasis on upholding protocol compliance and strengthening quality standards at every site.

On January 7th, 2026, a monitoring visit was conducted at Khyber Medical University (KMU) by external monitors, Dr. Naveed Afzal and Dr. Imran Gillani. During the visit, the external monitors reviewed and verified all hard data stored at KMU, including consent forms and pre-screening Case Report Forms (CRFs). This process was carried out to ensure compliance with established protocols and to assess the accuracy and completeness of the recorded data.



Process Evaluation

Data Collection & Data Analysis

The data collection for process evaluation has been in progress since July 2025. For quantitative data collection, coordination was established with the data manager, and a 10% random sample was selected, totalling 31 survey participants. All 31 survey questionnaires have been completed by patients in the intervention arm after the eighth week post-randomisation. For the qualitative part, patient IDs were intentionally selected from the sample to conduct semi-structured interviews (SSIs). To date, we have conducted 13 SSIs with patients in the intervention arm who completed five or six CBT sessions and three SSIs from those who couldn't complete the intervention (attended 1-4 sessions), after the eighth week post-randomisation. Seven SSIs were with control arm patients after the 24th week post-randomisation. Two focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted with DOTS facilitators, one with medical officers and three with trial staff. The qualitative framework data analysis has been in progress since 15 January 2026.



Process Evaluation



The CBT fidelity audio-recorded sessions were evaluated by independent CBT expert evaluators using the CTS-R scale and the CBT delivery assessment scale. In total, we have 140 sessions recorded. All fidelity data from the four evaluators have been combined into a single Excel sheet, and data cleaning has been in progress since 15 February 2026.

Way Forward

- Complete the qualitative data analysis by April 30th.
- Starting quantitative data analysis from 1st April 2026.
- Complete the SSIs from the health manager from 1st April to mid-May 2026.



Capacity Development

Non-Communicable Diseases (AKUPI-NCD) Research Certification Course

During this quarter, three Research Assistants and one CBT Master Trainer participated in the Fogarty–Aga Khan University Pakistan Initiative for Non-Communicable Diseases (AKUPI-NCD) Research Certification Course in Karachi through a fully funded scholarship by Aga Khan University. The course included modules on data analysis using R software, ethics in biomedical research, grant writing principles, career development and leadership.



Capacity Development

Workshop on Intellectual Property Rights

On 17th February 2026, ten Research Assistants from the CONTROL programme participated in a workshop on Intellectual Property Rights organized by the Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization, Khyber Medical University, which aimed to enhance participant's understanding of intellectual property management and related regulatory frameworks.



Research Spotlight: Publications by CONTROL PhD Scholars

Two PhD scholars successfully published their systematic reviews and meta-analyses. Safat Ullah's work was published in the Cognitive Behaviour Therapy journal, while Huma Mughal's research was published in the Cambridge Global Mental Health journal.



6th International Public Health Conference

Making waves in public health

The CONTROL team is leading a series of high-quality workshops at the 6th International Public Health Conference held at Khyber Medical University. These include sessions on mixed methods research by Fayaz Ahmad and Shaista Rasool, the basics of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) by Amir Aziz and Saara Khan, and an introduction to the rapid conversion of evidence summaries by Bushra Bibi. Additionally, workshops on conducting scoping reviews are being delivered by Rubab Farooqi and Bilal Ahmad.

These sessions are designed to strengthen research capacity, enhance practical skills, and promote the application of evidence-based approaches in public health. The active participation and engagement of attendees reflect the growing interest in integrating mental health, research methodology, and evidence synthesis within public health practice.



Facilitated By

6th International Public Health Conference

NAVIGATING A CHANGING WORLD : BUILDING RESILIENCE, EQUITY, AND INNOVATION IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Pre - Conference Workshop

**Bridging two paradigms:
Foundations of mixed-methods research for health researchers.**


Dr. Fayyaz Ahmad


Dr. Shaista Rasool

2nd & 3rd Feb 2026 09:00am-01:30pm Scan the QR code for workshop registration
03339090653 KMU, Peshawar



Facilitated By

6th International Public Health Conference

NAVIGATING A CHANGING WORLD : BUILDING RESILIENCE, EQUITY, AND INNOVATION IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Pre - Conference Workshop

Basics of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy


Dr. Amir Aziz


Ms. Saara Khan

2nd Feb, 2026 09:00am-01:30pm Scan the QR code for workshop registration
03339090653 KMU, Peshawar



Facilitated By

6th International Public Health Conference

NAVIGATING A CHANGING WORLD : BUILDING RESILIENCE, EQUITY, AND INNOVATION IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Pre - Conference Workshop

Introduction to Rapid Conversion of Evidence Summaries (RaCES)


Dr. Mark Good All


Ms. Bushra Bibi

2nd Feb, 2026 09:00am-01:30pm Scan the QR code for workshop registration
03339090653 KMU, Peshawar



Facilitated By

6th International Public Health Conference

NAVIGATING A CHANGING WORLD : BUILDING RESILIENCE, EQUITY, AND INNOVATION IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Pre - Conference Workshop

Conducting a Scoping Review: A step-by-step practical Guide


Dr. Rubab Farooqi


Mr. Bilal Khan


Ms. Rubab Zulfiqar

3rd Feb, 2026 09:00am-01:30pm Scan the QR code for workshop registration
03339090653 KMU, Peshawar

6th International Public Health Conference

CONTROL Study Stall at International Public Health Conference

CONTROL is proud to be part of the 6th International Public Health Conference at Khyber Medical University, where the team is showcasing the CONTROL Study through an interactive stall. The display highlights community-driven approaches to mental health and TB care, reflecting the project's commitment to inclusive, evidence-based interventions and meaningful community engagement.



Community Engagemnet and Involvemnet (CEI)

Voices from the PPIE Advisory Group

PPIE advisory group members are being interviewed to share their experiences of Community Engagement and Involvement (CEI) and their valuable contributions to the CONTROL study. Their voices play a vital role in shaping and strengthening the impact of our work.



Advancing CEI Work Across NIHR Projects

Dr. Saima Aleem, Project Manager and CEI Lead for the CONTROL study, discussed the CONTROL study's systematic review with Saeed Farooq, along with potential CEI-related publications. She also discussed facilitating the CEI work for another ongoing National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) project, TRANSLATE.



CONTROL Rising Stars

Bushra Shah, Research Assistant, CONTROL has been selected for a fully funded PhD at the University of Tasmania, Australia. She has been awarded the prestigious Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship, funded by the Commonwealth Government of Australia. She will be undertaking her doctoral studies at the Menzies Institute of Medical Research, University of Tasmania, where she will contribute to advancing research in her field.



Muhammad Younas, Psychologist with the CONTROL project, has been selected for an MS program through the Open Doors Russian Scholarship Project, an international initiative organized by the Global Universities Association. Younas's selection reflects his academic dedication and commitment to advancing his professional knowledge in the field.



CONTROL Rising Stars

Samim Ahmad, Research Assistant with the CONTROL project, has achieved a remarkable milestone by becoming the first Afghan national to successfully defend his MPH thesis at Khyber Medical University under the merit-based quota for Afghan nationals. This achievement highlights his dedication, academic excellence, and the growing impact of inclusive educational opportunities.



Muhammad Sohaib, PhD Scholar with the CONTROL project, and **Samina Ihsan**, MHR student, achieved top positions in the oral presentations at the 6th International Public Health Conference held at Khyber Medical University.



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