



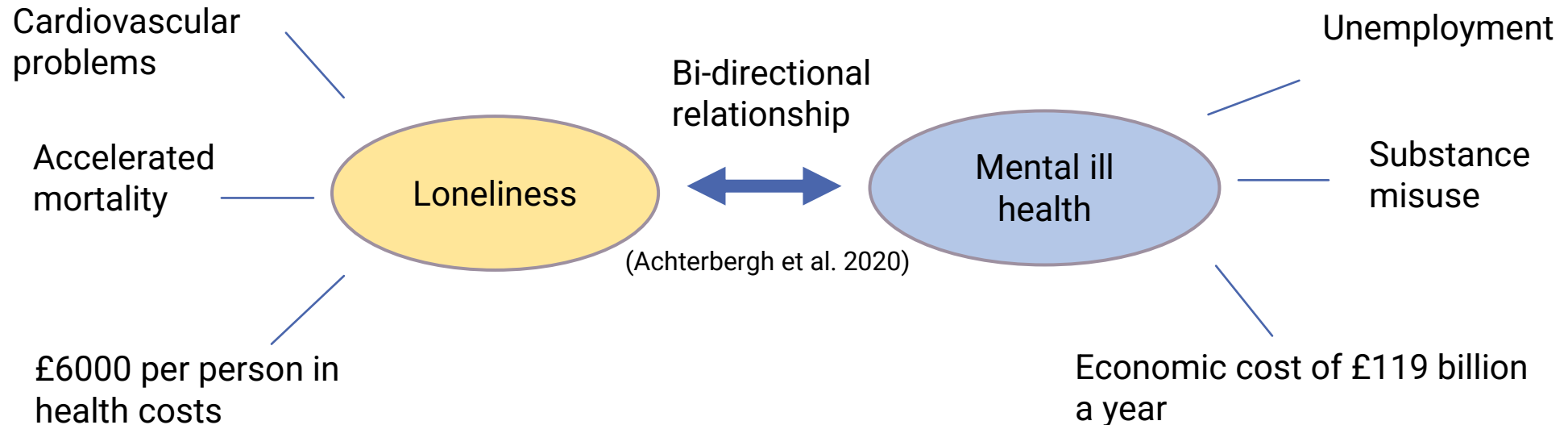
Loneliness & Social Isolation in Mental Health
Research Network

Testing the success of a community intervention to reduce loneliness and improve mental health for young people with mild-moderate mental health problems

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Young adults (age 16-25)

- experience loss of social networks and new psychosocial stressors
 - **40%** often or very often feeling lonely
- **Most likely age group** to report mental health concerns



Loneliness and mental health in young people

The Young Adult Wellbeing Service (YAWS)

- 6 month multi-component peer group programme
- Weekly group activities
- Co-designed with young people who participated in the pilot phase

30% - Capabilities

e.g. sports, arts, cultural, social

50% - Skills development

e.g. Employability, mental health prevention

20% - Community

e.g. MH campaigns, local events

Creating positive experiences

“Creating space for sessions talking about **emotions and self-esteem** were really good.”

“It was good to have a **variety of activities** so there was **something for everyone.**”

“I never thought I would end up in a band **working with other people.**”

“I picked up guitar quicker than I thought I would which has **boosted my confidence.**”

Kinds of group activities

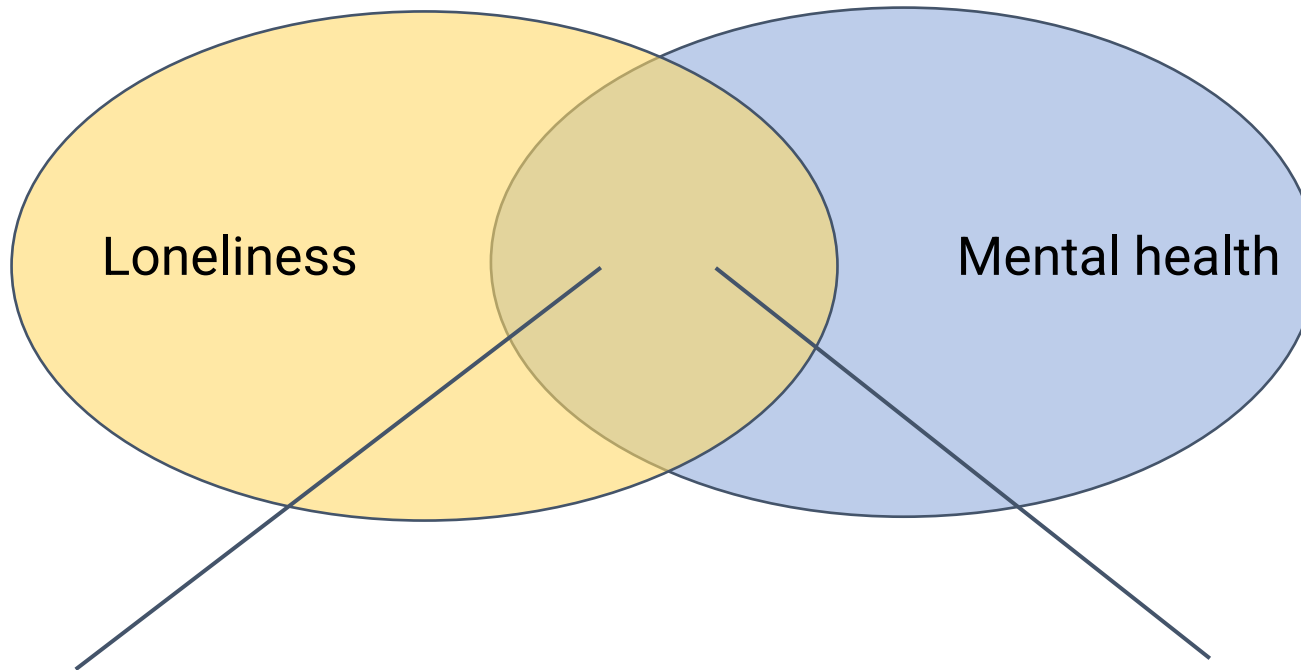
“I didn’t know Glasgow at all. Attending the group has helped me **get to know the city better.**”

“When I first went I **didn’t know how** to socialise with anyone but now I would **be able to** speak in front of people”

Community as physical spaces

“Before the group I never really left the house”

“Today (for the gig) was the **first time I’d used the Subway.** I didn’t know I could do that. That in itself helped me realise all the other places I could go to”



How we feel about ourselves



How and how much we approach, evaluate and participate in interactions with others

- Self-esteem
- Self-efficacy

- Rejection sensitivity
- Wider community involvement
- Engagement with group

Constructs targeted by peer-based community interventions

Associated social and psychological factors

Testing the success of the intervention...

1. Does YAWS group participation lead to improvements in (1) loneliness and (2) mental health outcomes?
2. Does YAWS group participation lead to improvements in related psychological constructs, wider community involvement, or engagement with group participants?
3. Are effects of YAWS group participation on loneliness mediated by mental health outcomes (or vice versa)?

GP, GAMH services, Primary Care MH teams, CMHT, CAMHS, social work, self-referral

Referred to YAWS for mild-moderate mental health difficulties

Not suitable for group intervention



Signposting and discharge

Suitable for group intervention

Accept service



Decline service



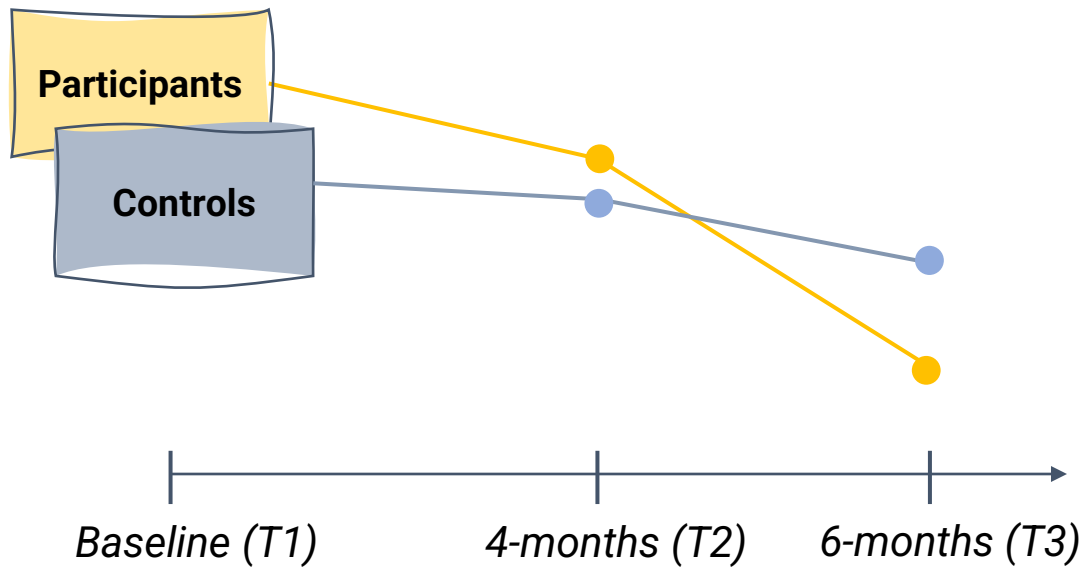
- *Contact via phone call, email*
- *Complete online questionnaires including informed consent (on tablet or mobile phone)*



Methods

Linear mixed-effects model

- Effect of Timepoint (reference to baseline)
- Interaction effect of Group x Timepoint
- 1 model for each outcome



Outcome measures

Primary

Loneliness

Depression

Anxiety

Recovery
(service
measure)

Rejection
sensitivity

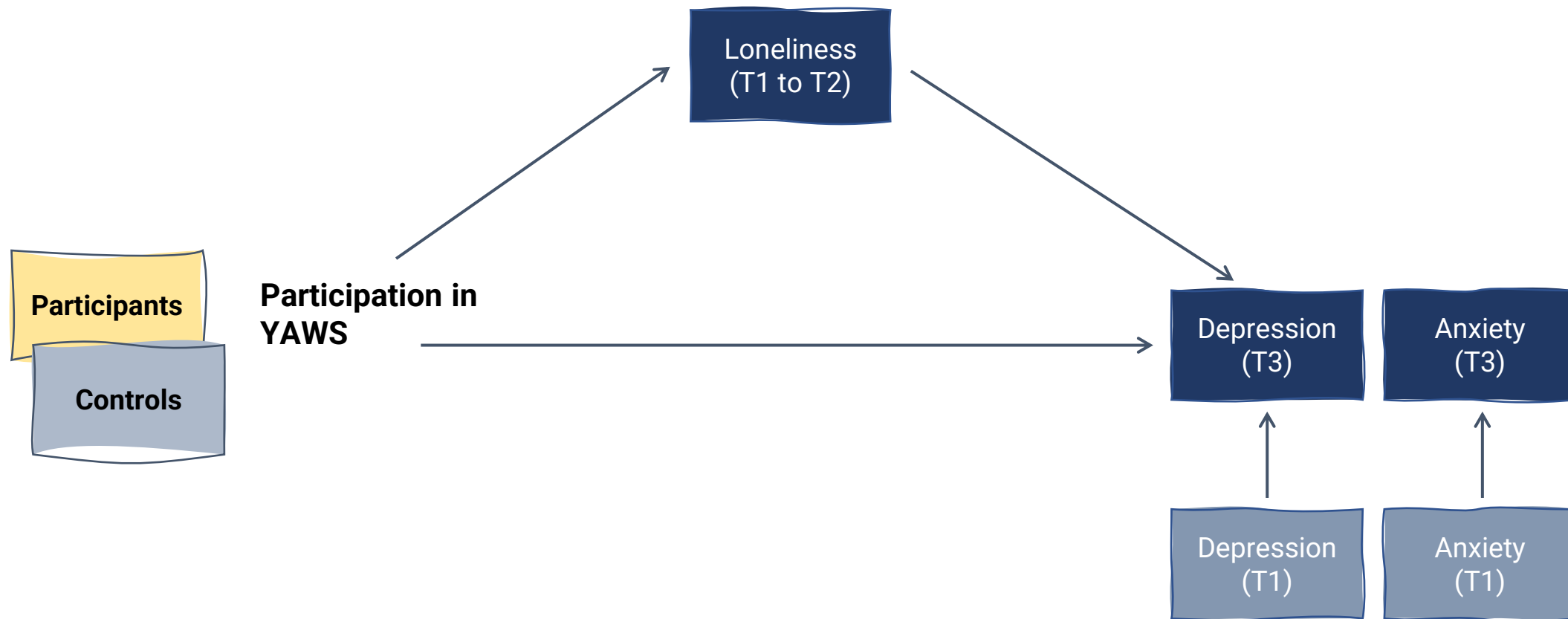
Self-esteem

Self-efficacy

Engagement

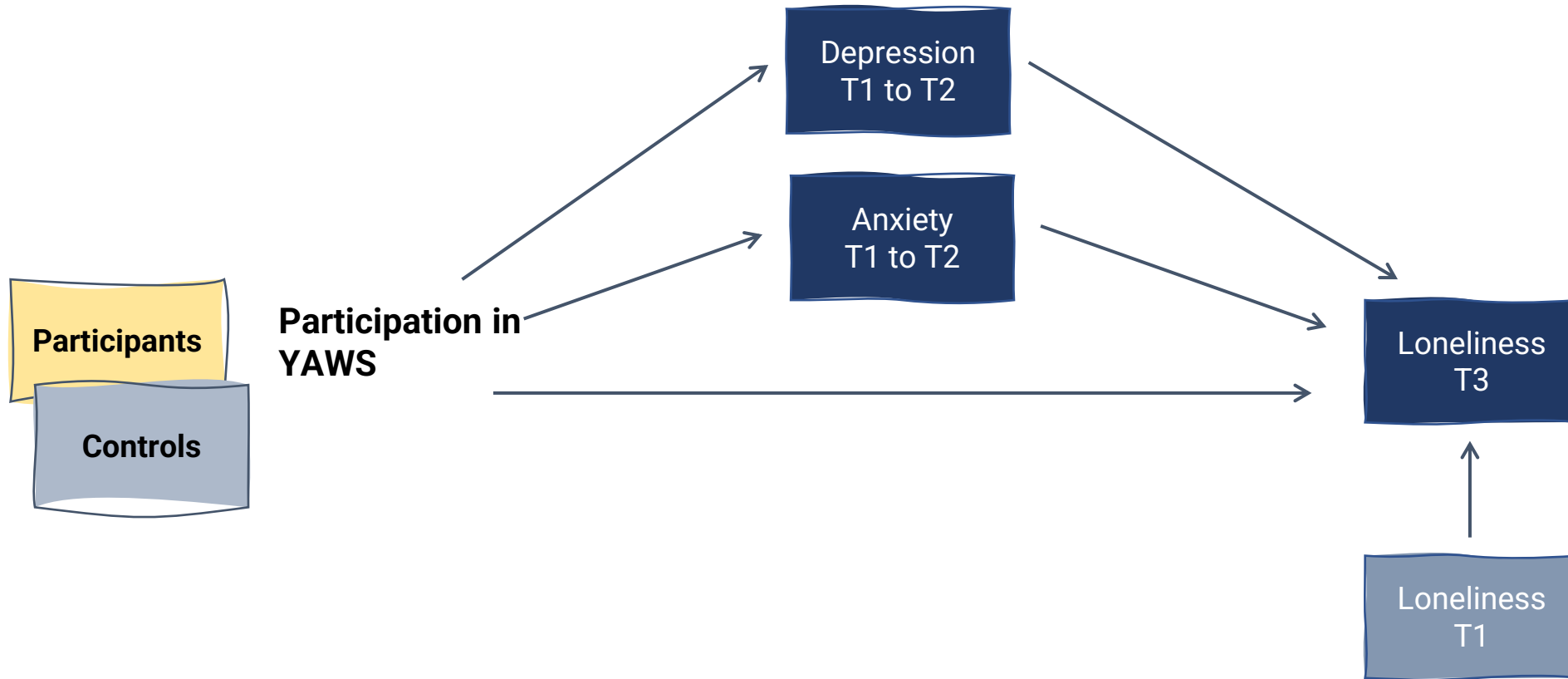
Community
involvement

Analysis plan

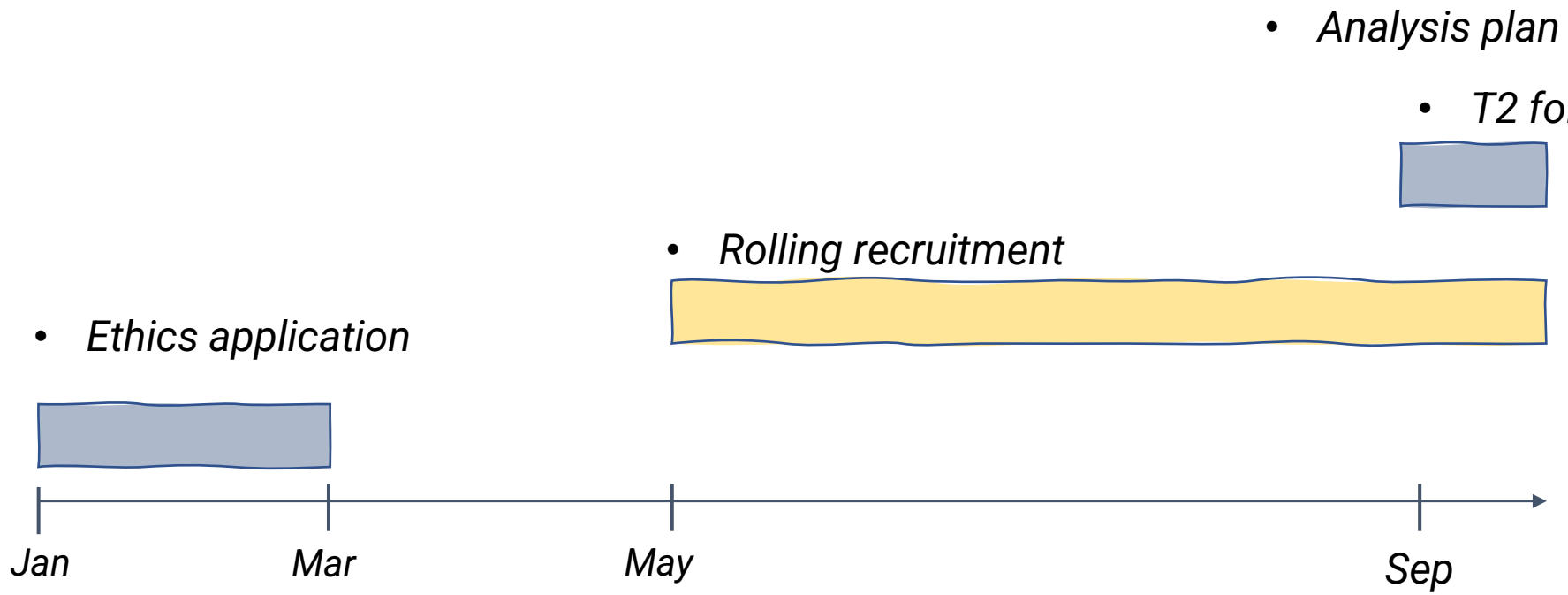


Do improvements in **loneliness** mediate the relationship between **YAWS participation** and (1) **depression**, (2) **anxiety** at T3

2-mediator
Parallel mediation



Do improvements **depression and/or anxiety** mediate the relationship between **YAWS participation** and **loneliness** at T3?



To date:

N=28 recruited
 (5 controls - declined
 YAWS groups)

N=3 followed-up at T2

Progress

Discussion

A group of young women are shown from the chest up, laughing and smiling joyfully. They are arranged in a circle, with their heads tilted back and eyes closed. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue. Two semi-transparent circular callouts are overlaid on the image, containing text. The callout on the left is white with black text, and the callout on the right is light blue with white text.

Engaging young people in groups during pandemic

- Digital sessions, face-to-face when lockdown eased late June
- Difficult to re-engage (non-engaging) young people

Considerations for research

- Comparison group (Controls + *non-engaging participants*)
- Power of statistical analyses (Simple mediation, compare group characteristics)



1

Build evidence base for
community interventions

2

Knowledge of how
improving social wellbeing
impacts mental health

3

Considerations for
effective community
interventions

Thank you!

Young people who participated in consultations and questionnaires

Mary Wilson – Research assistant

Husnara Khan – YAWS coordinator

Zara Qateel – YAWS project worker

Rena Ali – YAWS manager, Co-investigator

Pamela Qualter – Co-Investigator

Manuela Barreto – PI

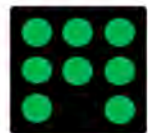
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University of Manchester

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