What would evidence-based research in mental health and wellbeing within education look like?

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In this plenary session, the concept of evidence-based research will be considered as a framework for conducting research in mental health and wellbeing and translation of findings to educational policy and practice. This is with the aim of initiating panel discussion of the areas of evidence-based research and approaches we are currently utilising bridging education and mental health and wellbeing research. The discussion will also give us the chance to share and address challenges of achieving evidence-based research we are currently experiencing such as interdisciplinary research, small-scale research, research methodology (approaches), systematic reviews and meta-analysis, as well as translation of findings to educational practice and policy.

I will introduce a conceptualisation of evidence-based research in education and mental health that I have been following within the field of educational neuroscience. I will also share a couple of examples of my research to illustrate bridging between evidence-based research with practice and policy. The first example is an interdisciplinary research to design and evaluate a computer-based social and emotional intervention called SEE+ in which I engage school-based practitioners in participatory research. The second example is an impact evaluation research in which the effectiveness of the Youth Mental Health First Aid school-based intervention is being determined from the perspective of education practitioners who were implementing this policy driven intervention within their educational settings.

*Sveta Mayer’s* teaching and research is inter-disciplinary within the field of educational neuroscience. Her research includes design and evaluation of interventions for social-emotional and cognitive development for children with developmental delays (specifically low SES) or neurodevelopment disorder (specifically Autism). She also undertakes evaluation research of effectiveness and implementation of school-based mental health interventions. Sveta is co-PI for UnLocke project funded by Education Endowment Fund/Wellcome Trust and PI for the SEE+ Autism project funded by UCL Seed funding. She is also co-PI for the Youth Mental Health First Aid One Day Programme Evaluation funded by Mental Health First Aid England.