

## Chandni Hindocha

*University College London*

### Winner of the BAP Senior Public Communications Prize

Dr Chandni Hindocha was awarded the senior public communication award in 2020. Chandni is currently an NIHR Biomedical Research Centre Fellow at the Clinical Psychopharmacology Unit and the Translational Psychiatry Research Group at UCL working independently under the mentorship Prof Val Curran and Dr Michael Bloomfield. Her research aims to gain insight into the effects of cannabinoids, both potentially medical and potentially harmful effects, and their interactions with other drugs on brain and behaviour.



Chandni read psychology at UCL, conducting her research assistantship on a phase 2a clinical trial of cannabidiol for cannabis use disorder, before completing an MRC-funded PhD in Psychopharmacology where she worked on interactions of cannabinoids and nicotine using experimental medicine methodology. Chandni has published widely as well as attending the BAP since undergraduate level. She has received several awards including the 2020 Rafaelsen Young Investigators Award from International College of Neuropsychopharmacology and a Pre-Doctoral Scholar Award from the Society of Biological Psychiatry. In 2019, Chandni spend time in the Schizophrenia Neuropharmacology Group at Yale on a Bogue Scholarship from UCL.

Chandni is an impassioned public communicator of the science of cannabis, which as a drug is increasingly being liberalised and politicised and where there is a huge amount of misinformation is readily available. Most recently, her public engagement work has surrounded the effects of cannabidiol (CBD) which has become a “wellness” product. Chandni has been at the forefront of describing the use of CBD as a treatment for disorders of brain and behaviour including its targets, mechanisms of action, effectiveness, and side-effects in her many talks as well as in outlets such as The Guardian, Scientific American, Newsweek, Vice and the Huffington Post.

Chandni is the scientific co-curator of Cann-Talks, which is developing cannabis information for the public patients. She is a member of the Expert Working Group for the Labour Campaign for Drug Policy Reform as well as peer reviewer of the Conservative Drug Policy Reform Group. She and her colleagues have been disseminating cannabis policy in the BMJ for the education of medical doctors.