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Peter qualified in medicine at Westminster Medical School following a first degree in neurobiology at KCL. Having first work as a physician at The Whittington Hospital and KCH, he trained in psychiatry at the Maudsley Hospital and epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene. He has been Professor of Psychiatry at Cambridge since 2000 and in October 2014 stepped down as Head of Department to become Deputy Head of the School of Clinical Medicine. He is a NIHR Senior Investigator.

Peter's research interests are in the epidemiology of mental illness, particularly early life determinants, and in evaluation of effective interventions at the individual and system level. Clinically, with Ed Bullmore, he led the award-winning CAMEO.nhs.uk early intervention service until taking on his NIHR responsibilities in the Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research & Care East of England, a partnership between researchers and health services to accelerate the generation and application of evidence from applied health research in policy and practice.