



CLAHRCBITE

Brokering Innovation Through Evidence

May 2019

Implementing low-cost individually tailored cognitive therapy (CBT) for patients with chronic musculoskeletal pain in Salford



The National Institute for Health Research Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (NIHR CLAHRC) Greater Manchester is a partnership between providers and commissioners from the NHS, industry, the third sector and the University of Manchester.

We aim to improve the health of people in Greater Manchester and beyond through carrying out research and putting it into practice.

What was the aim of the project?

We implemented and evaluated the use of individually tailored programmes of talking therapies for patients with chronic widespread pain (CWP).

This 12 month project, supported by NHS Salford Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) research and innovation fund aimed to improve patient care for people in Salford who experience CWP.

Our aim was to harness the opportunity for service innovation by evaluating the implementation of a flexible pain pathway offering stepped care (using both high and low intensity interventions), including evidence-based, telephone-delivered talking therapy.

This was delivered by specially trained Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (PWP) from the Salford Six Degrees Improved Access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT) service, taking account of patient preferences and ensuring that patients receive the most appropriate option(s) for treatment.

Why is it important?

CWP is a major public health problem as it affects between 11 and 13% of the population. It is largely referred to as pain that persists for more than three months. We also know that CWP is associated with lost work productivity, mental ill health, reduced quality of life and high healthcare costs.



What next?

Despite the Pain Pathway being valued, the findings provide insight into some of the key challenges and areas for development in implementing and sustaining a Pain Platform for psychological support within a local service. The introduction of new referral processes was not wholly welcomed and difficulties introducing new interventions to patients highlighted. The importance of sharing a common ethos and workable referral process between services and referrers to ensure that professional stakeholders can manage referrals and support the psychological needs of patients effectively is vital.

Previous research conducted under controlled conditions by the Universities of Aberdeen and Manchester has shown that a short course of telephone-administered cognitive behavioural therapy (8 sessions with a total therapist time of 4.5 hours) resulted in improvements which were sustained over 24 months in patients experiencing CWP. It is highly cost-effective and has the potential to facilitate faster access to talking therapies for patients with CWP. However, this approach has not yet been implemented into routine practice.

Telephone-delivered talking therapy is convenient and offers the potential of making the therapy available to a much wider range of patients.

Who did we work with?

NHS Salford CCG
Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
Six Degrees

What is NIHR CLAHRC GM?

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Find out more

www.clahrc-gm.nihr.ac.uk/projects/telephone-based-cbt

0161 206 8551

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