



Online Therapy Unit

The Online Therapy Unit is led by Dr. Heather Hadjistavropoulos from the University of Regina and makes use of online therapy programs that were initially developed in Australia.

The Online Therapy Unit allows trained therapists or guides to provide Internet-delivered Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to individuals who have difficulties with depression, generalized anxiety, and other health conditions. The Unit provides education and training to diverse registered health professionals and students and conducts research on how to best deliver ICBT.



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DIRECTOR MESSAGE

We have so much to celebrate this year! Interest in Internet-delivered cognitive behaviour therapy continues to grow and we are so thankful for all the support we have received from everyone. The Online Therapy Unit team has now provided over 4000 screening interviews! Here are some highlights of what happened in 2017:

- Total New Funding: 1.4 Million
- Total Papers Published: 8
- Total Presentations/Workshops: 22
- National/International Consultation: 23 Groups
- Total Therapists Treating This Year: 52

We are excited to see what the New Year brings. Given the growth we have seen this

year we anticipate that in 2018 the Online Therapy Unit will:

- Screen Clients: 1200
- Treat Clients: 1000

We are excited to share what has happened in the Unit over the last 6 months. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. From the Online Therapy Unit team, we wish you and yours a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season and we look forward to working with you in the New Year.

Heather Hadjistavropoulos, Ph.D.
Director, Online Therapy Unit

NEW TRIAL IN ONLINE THERAPY UNIT UNDERWAY!

In May, the Unit was awarded new funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) to study the effectiveness of personalized ICBT. This fall we began a randomized controlled trial comparing standard once weekly therapist support to personalized responsive therapist support. In the personalized condition, therapists respond to client emails throughout the week, as they receive them, rather than only

one time per week. This allows therapists to match the level of support to client needs. We are interested in whether offering greater support to clients who request it will improve outcomes, especially among clients with greater symptom severity. During this trial, we will be exploring the feasibility and cost effectiveness of offering personalized care. We anticipate having preliminary results from this trial in **Fall 2018**.





NEW ICBT TRIAL FOR SPINAL CORD INJURY NOW UNDERWAY!

Studies show that fewer than half of the people with spinal cord injuries have their emotional counseling needs met. Postdoctoral fellow Dr. Swati Mehta is now exploring the effectiveness of guided internet-delivered cognitive behavioural therapy course for individuals with spinal cord injury across Canada. The hypothesis is that the Chronic

Conditions Course for persons with Spinal Cord Injury will help to improve resiliency and quality of life for people with spinal cord injury and their caregivers. Brief interviews with care recipients and their caregivers will also assess acceptability of the program and caregiver needs. Preliminary results for the trial should be available in **Fall 2018**.

To Find Out More About Online Therapy

Call: 306-337-3331

Email: Online.Therapy.USER@uregina.ca

Watch the course videos on our website: www.onlinetherapyuser.ca

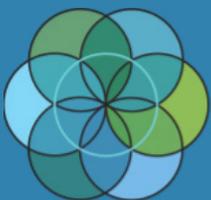
PILOTS UNDERWAY EXAMINING USE OF ICBT FOR EMPLOYEES WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

This past spring, the Unit began two pilot projects to examine the effectiveness of ICBT for clients who are on long-term disability and the effectiveness of ICBT with employees who continue to work,

but self-identify as having symptoms of depression and anxiety. It is estimated that almost 30% of disability claims are related to mental health issues. ICBT could improve client access to treatment.

We want to say a very big thank you to the following therapists for their work in delivering ICBT in Saskatchewan. The therapists below were all active therapists in delivering ICBT this past year. The numbers below reflect the total number of clients they have treated since the therapists started offering ICBT. We are truly appreciative of their willingness to learn and offer this emerging treatment method. They are making a real difference in improving patient access to mental health care in Saskatchewan.

	#Clients treated		#Clients treated		#Clients treated
Kelly Adlam	429	Sarah Chan	33	Mike Hodson	21
Kim Larson	246	Deanna Nilson	30	Dawna Karalash	19
Lori Abbott	153	Amy Janzen-Claude	30	Victoria Walton	18
Luke Schneider	90	Breann Heatherington	25	Caroline VanDyck	16
Katherine Owens	61	Wendy Martin	24	Taneil Stevens	15
Kerry Spice	59	Haley Lapointe	24	Tasha Beauchamp	15
JoAnne Salido	51	Jai Richards	23	Sheryl Fehr	15
Meghan Woods	36	Hema Harrison	22		



WELLBEING COURSE UPDATED AND BEING OFFERED

The Wellbeing Course materials were updated in summer 2018. Responding to patient feedback, the case studies were expanded. The materials

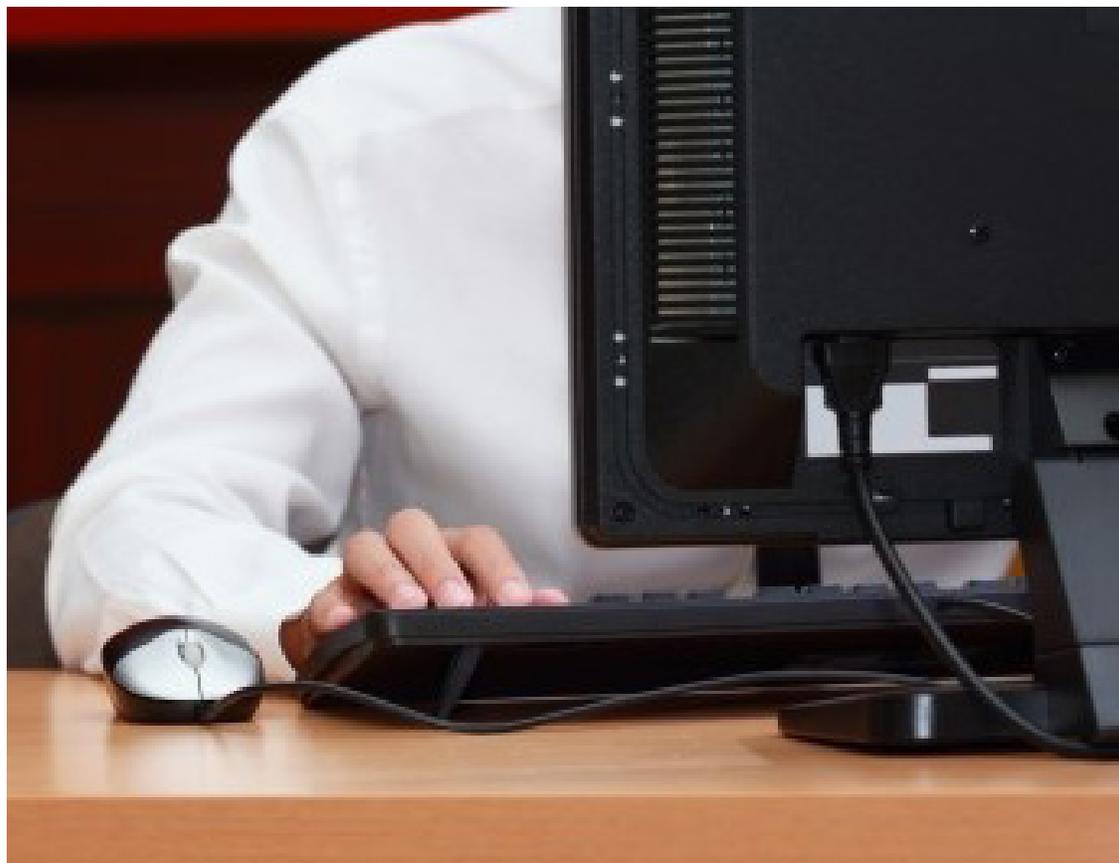
were updated to better address post-traumatic stress disorder, panic and worry.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MINDSPOT CLINIC IN AUSTRALIA ON THEIR 5TH BIRTHDAY

The MindSpot Clinic is truly inspiring. They have had:

- More than 1.3 million unique visitors to their website
- 5 million pages of information viewed
- 500,000 people using their depression and anxiety quizzes
- >80,000 registered for their services and receiving an assessment, consultation, or support

- 20,000 enrolled in an online treatment course
- Clinical improvements have been large and satisfaction rates have been high
- Findings demonstrate virtual clinics can successfully provide a high quality and safe service to people who would otherwise be unlikely to access care
- For more details visit: <https://mindspot.org.au/>



To participate in a course, visit:

www.onlinetherapyuser.ca

1. Click Apply Now for the course you wish to enroll in and complete the online screening.
2. Take part in a telephone conversation with a Unit staff member to discuss if the course, or another treatment method, would best meet your needs at this time.





NEW FINDINGS

Randomized controlled trial of Internet-delivered cognitive behaviour therapy comparing standard weekly versus optional weekly therapist support

Hadjistavropoulos, H. D., Schneider, L. H., Edmonds, M., Karin, E., Nugent, M. N., Dirkse, D., Dear, B., Titov, N.

We examined the relative benefits of offering standard weekly (n = 92) compared to optional weekly (n = 88) therapist support in conjunction with ICBT. The optional approach resulted in therapists receiving half as many messages from (1.70 vs. 3.96) and sending half as many messages to patients (3.62 vs. 7.29). Optional Support was associated with lower completion rates (56.6% versus 82.4%), but, similar to Standard Support, resulted in large reductions in symptoms. Optional Support appears clinically effective and acceptable for many patients and may reduce costs, but safety requires monitoring given lower completion rates. This paper was published in the *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2017.09.006>.

Development and evaluation of a therapist-assisted Internet-delivered cognitive behavior therapy fidelity rating scale

Hadjistavropoulos, H. D., Schneider, L., Klassen, K., Dear, B.F. & Titov, N.

We developed and evaluated a rating scale called the ICBT Therapist Rating Scale (ICBT-TRS) in order to better understand therapist-assistance during ICBT. We used the ICBT-TRS to rate 610 de-identified emails sent by 33 therapists to 75 randomly selected patients. Emails were examined for the following behaviours: Builds Rapport, Seeks Feedback, Provides Symptom Feedback, Provides Psychoeducation, Facilitates Understanding, Praises Effort, Encourages Practice, Clarifies Administrative Procedures, and Communicates Effectively. Importantly, most behaviours were identified as being present in 72-100% of emails and the vast majority of emails were rated as adequate (86-97% of messages).

The ICBT-TRS is currently being used to provide supervision to therapists. The paper was presented at the International Society for Research on Internet Interventions.

What are clients asking their therapist during therapist-assisted internet-delivered cognitive behaviour therapy? A content analysis of client questions

Soucy, J. N., Hadjistavropoulos, H.D. Pugh, N. E., Dear, B. F. D & Titov, N.

We identified questions that 80 clients asked their designated therapist over the course of ICBT. Approximately, 47% of questions were designed to enhance client understanding of materials and techniques reviewed in the program. Additional questions were categorized as clarifying the therapeutic process (23%), addressing technical challenges (18%), and seeking assistance with problems outside the scope of ICBT (12%). The number of client questions asked was not significantly correlated with the number of lessons completed, symptom change, or perceptions of therapeutic alliance. Findings are being used to improve ICBT therapist education materials. This paper has been submitted for publication.

Client correspondence in Internet-delivered cognitive behaviour therapy: Relationship to client outcomes

Soucy, J. N., Hadjistavropoulos, H. D., Couture, C., Owens, V. A. M., Dear, B. F. & Titov, N.

Client emails (on average 5.69 per client) from 80 randomly selected clients were examined for the presence of 10 themes. Alliance bolstering statements made up 39% of statements and sharing of patterns and patterns and problem behaviours made up 25% of statements. Greater frequency of maladaptive repetitive thinking and problems with treatment content in the emails were correlated with smaller improvements in anxiety. This paper has been submitted for publication.

Current Online Therapy Partners



CIHR IRSC

Canadian Institutes of Health Research / Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

Canadian Institutes of Health Research



Government of Saskatchewan

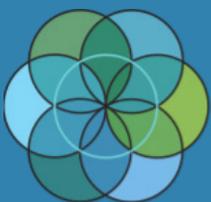
Ministry of Health

Ministry of Health



Saskatchewan Health Authority

Saskatchewan Health Authority



AWARDS

Dr. Heather Hadjistavropoulos was named as one of 150 leading Canadians for Mental Health by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). The award was created to recognize people who are changing the course of mental health care in Canada. Dr. Hadjistavropoulos was selected for the

award for “leading the way in bringing publicly funded, online cognitive behavioural therapy to Canadians” and helping “many who might not otherwise have access to psychotherapy”. This award is really an achievement for the entire team. More than 3,700 people were nominated from across Canada.



Photo credit: University of Regina, Photography.

Dr. Swati Mehta received the Alice Wilson Award by the Royal Society of Canada for her work on improving access to mental health services for people with spinal cord injury. The award is given annually to three women with

outstanding academic qualifications at the post-doctoral level. She also recently received the 2017 Santé Award for Top Research Fellowship in Socio-Health Research by the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation.

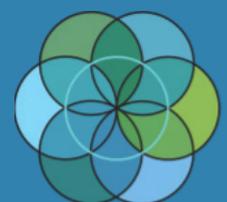


Photo credit: Photo courtesy of Michael Bellfor and Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation

Is Online Therapy for You?

- Are you 18 years of age or older?
- Do you have Internet access?
- Do you feel comfortable using the Internet and writing emails?
- Do you have access to a computer and printer in a space where you could work on the Course online?
- Do you have symptoms of anxiety and/or depression?

If you answered “Yes” to all of the above questions, then you may qualify to participate in an Online Therapy Course.



NEW AND RETURNING TEAM MEMBERS



Vanessa Peynenburg

Vanessa completed her B.A. Honors in Psychology at the University of Alberta in 2016. During her undergraduate career, she assisted the Centre for Research on Eating Disorders at Oxford with the development of an online early intervention for eating disorders. She also contributed to assessing a measure of therapist competence after receiving internet-based training in CBT. The following summer, she worked at King's College London on a project looking at the gender differences in eating disorder prognosis. During her Master's, Vanessa intends to examine how ICBT impacts emotional eating.



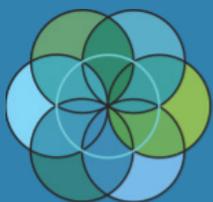
Nichole Faller

Nichole is enrolled in the Ph.D. Program in Clinical Psychology. She received a B.A. Advanced degree from the University of Manitoba in 2012 and received a second B.A. Honour's from the University of Regina in 2014. Nichole completed her M.A. under the supervision of Dr. Mary Hampton. Her M.A. thesis focused on the experiences of mental health disclosure in the workplace. For her PhD dissertation, Nichole is working with Dr. Heather Hadjistavropoulos. Her dissertation will focus on the management of mental health concerns in small- to mid-sized enterprises in Canada.

Total Direct
Funding
Received by the
Online Therapy
Unit to 2021:

\$ 3,170,735.00

Thank you to our
many supporters!



CURRENT ONLINE THERAPY UNIT TEAM

Director:

- Heather Hadjistavropoulos, PhD., Psychology, U of R

Researcher Collaborators:

- David Gerhard, PhD, Computer Science
- Harminder Guliani, PHD, Economics, U of R
- Nuelle Novik, PhD, Faculty of Social Work, U of R
- Amy Zarzeczny, LLM, Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, U of R
- Thomas Hadjistavropoulos, PhD, Psychology
- Lynn Loutzenhiser, PhD, Psychology
- Julia Witt, PhD, University of Manitoba, Economics

International Collaborators:

- Blake Dear, PhD, eCentreClinic and MindSpot Clinic, Macquarie University
- Nickolai Titov, PhD, eCentreClinic and MindSpot Clinic, Macquarie University

Health System Collaborators:

- Mary Lee Booth, Mental Health and Addictions, Saskatchewan Health Authority
- Lorri Carlson, Mental Health and Addictions, Saskatchewan Health Authority
- Penni Caron, Mental Health and Addictions, Saskatchewan Health Authority
- Dori Gaudet, Mental Health and Addictions, Saskatchewan Health Authority
- Tracy Muggli, Mental Health and Addictions, Saskatchewan Health Authority
- Phyllis O'Connor, Canadian Mental Health Association- Saskatchewan Division
- Terry Romanow, Mental Health and Addictions, Saskatchewan Health Authority

- Chad Sayers, Mental Health and Addictions, Saskatchewan Health Authority
- Lorne Sier & Kathy Willerth, Saskatchewan Ministry of Health

Coordinator:

- Marcie Nugent, MSW

Personnel:

- Lori Abbott, BSW
- Kelly Adlam, MSW, M.Ed.
- Shelley Adrian-Taylor, M.A.
- Amber Klatt, B.Ed., B.Phil.,
- Giuliano LaPosta
- Kimberly Larson, BSW
- Adriana Mora, B.A.
- Kerry Spice, M.A.

Students and Fellows:

- Dale Dirkse, M.A.
- Dani Earis
- Michael Edmonds, B.Sc.
- Nichole Faller, M.A.
- Swati Mehta, PhD
- Victoria Owens B.A.
- Vanessa Peynenburg, B.A.
- Luke Schneider, M.A.
- Joelle Soucy, M.A.

Information Technology Development Team:

- Garrett Harnish
- Max Ivanov
- Shawn Jenkins

Our Values

Accessible Mental Health Care

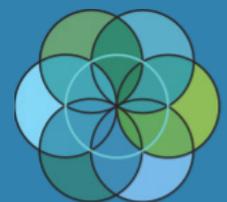
Best practices

Coordinated care

Provider and student education

Research driven improvement

University community partnership



PRESENTATIONS JUNE-DECEMBER 2017

Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. & Nugent, M. (2017, June). *Informing referrers about Online Therapy in Saskatchewan*. Presentation to RQHR. Regina, SK.

Hadjistavropoulos, H. D., Schneider, L. & Klassen, K. (2017, October). *Rating fidelity of therapist-assistance in Internet-delivered cognitive behaviour therapy: Reliability, validity, and utility*. Poster presentation at the International Society for Research on Internet Intervention 9th Scientific Meeting, Berlin, Germany

Hadjistavropoulos, H.D. (2017, October). *Internet-delivered cognitive behaviour therapy in Saskatchewan, Canada; The Online Therapy Unit*. Symposium presented at the International Society for Research on Internet Intervention 9th Scientific Meeting, Berlin, Germany

Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2017, December). *Feasibility of Internet-delivered cognitive behaviour to address mental health concerns in University students*. Oral presentation to U of R Deans' Council, Regina. SK.

Mehta S & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2017, December). *The Online Therapy Unit*. Presentation to Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation: Sante Awards Evening. Saskatoon, SK.

Schneider, L. H. & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2017, November). *Chronic pain management in the digital age: Effectiveness, benefits and challenges of an Internet-delivered course for coping with chronic pain*. Symposium presentation given at the Arthritis Society Joint Health Symposium. Regina, Saskatchewan.

Schneider, L.H., & Hadjistavropoulos, H.D. (2017, June). *Internet-delivered cognitive behavioural therapy in Canada: Introduction to the Online Therapy Unit*. Presentation given to the Mindspot Clinic. Sydney, NSW, Australia.

Schneider, L.H. & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2017, October). *Introduction to novel treatments for chronic pain and concurrent mental health conditions: Considerations and use in special populations*. Symposium presentation given at the Current Options for Managing Pain and Addiction Conference. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

