

2014
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Online Therapy USER Update

Online Therapy USER

The Online Therapy Unit for Service, Education, and Research (Online Therapy USER) is led by Dr. Heather Hadjistavropoulos from the University of Regina and makes use of online therapy programs that were initially developed in Australia, either at Swinburne University or Macquarie University.

The Online Therapy Unit allows trained therapists to provide Online Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to residents of Saskatchewan who have difficulties with depression, generalized anxiety, and/or panic. The Unit also provides education and training to diverse registered health professionals and students on how to deliver services online. This unit is also responsible for conducting research on how to best train therapists and deliver online-CBT in Saskatchewan.



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Director and Coordinator's Message

Hello and Happy New Year!

We hope you all had a great holiday and that 2014 is off to a good start. With the New Year here, we thought this would be a good time to provide you with an update on how things have been going in the Online Therapy Unit for Service Education and Research. Below, we've briefly summarized our activities since obtaining new funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation and Rx & D Health Research Foundation in June 2013. Overall, we think we've made great progress and the second phase of research on Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy is off to a good start. We are looking forward to seeing what we can accomplish in 2014. We are so appreciative of the support and enthusiasm that we receive from everyone and as a result feel optimistic about the project. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns or want any further information other than what we have provided below.

With best wishes for 2014!

Heather Hadjistavropoulos, Director, Online Therapy USER
Marcie Nugent, Coordinator, Online Therapy USER

Online-Cognitive Behavior Therapy Increasing Access to Mental Health Care in Saskatchewan

In their lifetime, approximately 16% of adults will suffer from a major depressive disorder and upwards of 28% will be diagnosed with an anxiety disorder (Kessler, Chiu, Demler, & Walters, 2005). These conditions are frequently **undertreated**, often due to inadequate access to providers, limited time available to seek care, mobility difficulties, and concerns about stigma (Collins, Westra, Dozois, & Burns, 2004).

Online-CBT has many **advantages** including being more available, convenient, and efficient than CBT delivered in person.

Clients with limited time, mobility concerns, living in rural and remote areas have the potential to benefit from this service.



Summary of Online Therapy Unit Research

Depression and anxiety are highly prevalent and disabling conditions that are frequently undertreated. There is strong evidence that Internet Cognitive Behavior Therapy (ICBT) is effective for treating these conditions. ICBT involves patients reviewing strategies for coping with symptoms over the Internet along with patients communicating with a therapist over a secure messaging system. ICBT is advantageous for those who have difficulties accessing care. Our past research shows that it is feasible to train providers from multiple disciplines in ICBT and for them to deliver ICBT effectively and safely within the community. There are some barriers to delivering ICBT, however, that need to be overcome before this approach can be routinely incorporated into clinical practice. The current grant involves a partnership between researchers and decision makers responsible for mental health programming in rural and urban areas of Saskatchewan to improve access to ICBT. Specifically, we aim to: 1) develop and evaluate an online presentation to inform patients about ICBT; 2) develop and evaluate an online screening process to identify patients who are eligible for ICBT; 3) implement and evaluate a 5-module ICBT program that can be used for depression and or anxiety and can be offered either as a first step in care, as an alternative method of delivering care or as an adjunct to face-to-face care; 4) examine therapist perceptions of ICBT; and 5) explore decision-making related to ongoing use of ICBT in Saskatchewan resulting from this research. We are particularly interested in factors that will facilitate or constrain health regions adopting ICBT in the longer-term. Patient feedback will be sought throughout the project. The research has the potential to significantly influence how ICBT is managed and delivered not only in Saskatchewan, but in other areas of Canada.

Online Therapy User Website: The website has been updated to include the 5-module Wellbeing ICBT Course materials. We've also updated the website to include automated reminder messages sent to clients as they work their way through the program. We want to say a special thank you to Max Ivanov for the exceptional work he has done updating the website. We also want to thank Drs. Nick Titov and Blake Dear for their willingness to collaborate with us and allow us use of their 5-module Wellbeing materials.

Ethics approval: We've obtained ethics approval for the research from the Research Ethics Boards (REBs) of the University of Regina, the University of Saskatchewan, the Regina Qu'Appelle, Cypress, Five Hills, Sun Country, and Saskatoon Health Regions.

Training: We put together a workshop to update previously trained and new therapists in how to deliver the Wellbeing ICBT Course. We've now trained therapists in Five Hills, Saskatoon, Sun Country, Cypress and Regina Qu'Appelle Health Regions for a total of 30 therapists. We've also trained 13 students from Psychology and Social Work. In early 2014, we plan to train therapists in Prince Albert Parkland along with HealthLine and will train several more student therapists. Unofficial feedback on the training has been positive.

Online Screening: We have improved our screening process for ICBT. Individuals who are interested in services can now complete an online screening to determine if they are appropriate for services. This screening is followed up with a telephone interview. To date, we have had 36 clients complete the online screening. The screening takes approximately 15-20 minutes and individuals who have completed this screening process have had very positive feedback. The link for the screening can be found at::

<https://www.onlinetherapyuser.ca/wellbeing/welcome/>

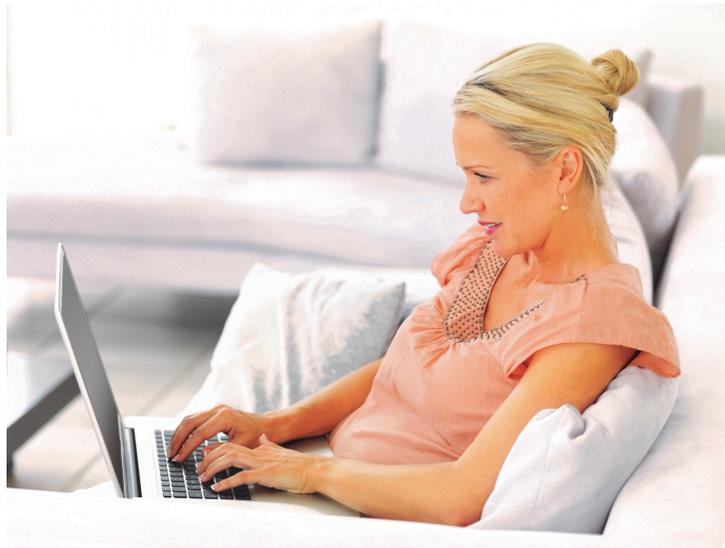
Wellbeing Course: We've now screened 116 clients and offered the Wellbeing Course to 51 patients. In 2014, we anticipate treating over 100 more patients.

Pain Course for Fibromyalgia: Lindsay Friesen, a PhD student in Psychology, will soon be offering a Pain Course for Fibromyalgia on the online-therapyuser.ca website.

ICBT for Postpartum Depression: Nicky Pugh's study on ICBT for postpartum depression has now concluded. We expect to have results from this study posted on our website very soon.

ICBT for Generalized Anxiety in Older Adults: Shannon Jones' study on ICBT for the treatment of generalized anxiety in older adults has also concluded. We expect to have results released on our website very soon.

ICBT for Wellbeing After Cancer: Nicole Alberts is wrapping up her research on ICBT for the treatment of depression and anxiety following cancer treatment. Next up, she will be sharing her results with clinicians in the community and seeking their feedback on her results.



What is Online Cognitive Behavior Therapy?

Online-CBT is an evidence-based treatment that has been proven effective in multiple research studies.

Online-CBT consists of psycho-educational information and strategies for dealing with specific disorders and/or symptoms.

The materials are presented over the internet in a structured modularized format (between 5 - 12 modules) using various multi-media features such as text, animation, and video.

To facilitate learning, clients work on off-line assignments following the completion of each module.

Online-CBT also involves a *therapist* who provides support, encouragement, and directs therapeutic activities remotely. This contact typically occurs once a week via e-mail or telephone.

Online Therapy 2013-2017

Researchers

Dr. Heather Hadjistavropoulos
University of Regina

Dr. Cory Butz
University Of Regina

Dr. Greg Marchildon
University of Regina

Dr. Nuelle Novik
University of Regina

Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos
University of Regina

Dr. Gill White
University of Saskatchewan

Dr. Nick Titov
Macquarie University

Dr. Blake Dear
Macquarie University

Dr. Gerhard Andersson
Linköping University, Sweden

2013 Peer-Reviewed Presentations:

1. Dirkse, D.A., Gullickson, K., & Hadjistavropoulos, H.D. (2013, April). Therapist-Assisted Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: An Analysis of Client Communications. Poster presentation at the annual conference of *the Anxiety and Depression Association of America Conference*, La Jolla, California.
2. Friesen, L., & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, April). Examination of Psychology Graduate Students' Experiences with Therapist-Assisted Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: Implications for Training. Poster presentation at the annual conference of the *Anxiety and Depression Association of America Conference*, La Jolla, California
3. Hadjistavropoulos, H. D., Marchildon, G. & Butz, C. (2013, May). Lessons Learned Integrating Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy into Community Mental Health Clinics in Saskatchewan, Canada. *International Society for Research on Internet Interventions (ISRII) 6th Scientific Meeting*, Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago, IL, USA.
4. Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, May). Past President's Panel: Lessons Learned in Using Technology to Facilitate the Delivery of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. *Canadian Association of Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies*, Montreal, Quebec.
5. Jones, S. & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, April). Therapist-Assisted Internet Cognitive-Behavior Therapy for Older Adults with Generalized Anxiety: Using a Case Study to Demonstrate Process and Outcome. *Individual oral presentation at the annual conference of the Anxiety Disorders Association of America*, La Jolla, California.
6. Pugh, N., Alberts, N., Jones, S., & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, June). The provision of therapist-assisted internet cognitive behaviour therapy: Lessons learned from three clinical populations. Poster presented at *Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region Annual Research Showcase*, Regina, SK.

To Find Out More About Online Therapy in Saskatchewan

Call:(306)337-3331

Email: Online.Therapy.User@uregina.ca

Or

Visit: www.onlinetherapyuser.ca

Is Online Cognitive Behaviour Therapy right for everyone?

The support provided through online therapy is not appropriate for all clients.

Online therapy is not appropriate for clients who:

- Report thoughts about harming oneself or others
- Have recently harmed themselves or others
- Reports delusions or hallucinations
- Report primary problem with drugs or alcohol
- Experience manic or hypomanic symptoms.

Clients who are not appropriate candidates for Online-CBT are referred to other services. In our study, approximately, 32% of patients we exclude from our research have problems that are considered too severe for ICBT. Approximately, 18% of patients who are excluded from ICBT, have problems that are considered too mild for ICBT.

2013 Invited Presentations:

1. Dear, B. & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, October 2, 2, 3). Fostering Innovation and Overcoming Barriers to Mental Health Care through Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: The Role of Mental Health Providers. Regina, SK. (three separate presentations; Purpose: Education & Engagement; Audience: Mental Health Providers Saskatchewan HealthLine, Regina Qu'Appelle, Cypress, Five Hills, Sun Country, Saskatoon Health Regions).
2. Dear, B. & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, October 1). Fostering Innovation and Overcoming Barriers to Mental Health Care through Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: Student Involvement Regina, SK. (Purpose: Education and Engagement; Audience: Students and Faculty University of Regina).
3. Dear, B. & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, October 4). Fostering Innovation and Overcoming Barriers to Mental Health Care through Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: What Role can Managers Play? Regina, SK. (Purpose: Education & Engagement; Audience: Managers/Directors Saskatchewan Health, Saskatchewan HealthLine, Regina Qu'Appelle, Cypress, Five Hills, Sun Country, Saskatoon Health Regions).
4. Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, December 10). From Research to Clinical Practice: Bringing Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to Saskatchewan. Broadening the Scope: Emental Health Conference 2013. Vancouver, B.C. (Purpose: Education: Audience: students, faculty)
5. Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, October 30). Saskatoon Health Region Psychology Residency Program Retreat. Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatoon, SK. (Purpose: Education: Audience: faculty and residents).
6. Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, June 28). Panel Presentation Focused on Connecting to Clients through Online Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. Connective Communities: A Saskatchewan Mental Wellbeing Forum. Regina, SK. (Purpose: Education; Audience: Various stakeholders interested in enhancing the continuum of mental health care in Saskatchewan)
7. Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, April 12). Decrypting Online Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: Learning through Implementation. University of Calgary Colloquium. Calgary, AB. (Purpose: Education; Audience: Faculty, Students, Providers).
8. Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, April 12). Considerations in Delivering Online Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. Alberta Health Services. Calgary, AB. (Purpose: Education; Audience: Decision Makers).
9. Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, Feb 20). Considerations in Delivering Online Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. Vancouver Coastal Health. Skype Presentation to Vancouver, AB. (Purpose: Education; Audience: Decision Makers and Providers).
10. Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, January 15). Update on Southern Saskatchewan Health Regions Involvement in the Online Therapy Unit. Description, Evaluation, Next Steps. Presentation to the Directors of Mental Health Southern Saskatchewan. Regina, SK. (Purpose: Information and Planning Next Steps; Audience: Decision Makers).
11. Jones, S. & Hadjistavropoulos, H. D. (2013, November 20). Online Therapy for Older Adults with Anxiety. Lifelong Learning Centre, Centre for Continuing Education. Regina, SK. (Purpose: Education; Audience: Community).

Online Therapy USER Community Partners

Current Partners

- Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region
- Five Hills Health Region
- Sun Country Health Region
- Cypress Health Region
- HealthLine
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Health
- Saskatchewan Health Quality Council
- Saskatoon Health Region
- Prince Albert Parkland Health Region
- Keewatin Yatthé Health Region
- University of Saskatchewan –Support Services
- University of Regina, Counselling Services
- Canadian Mental Health Association- Saskatchewan Division

Online Therapy Unit Publications:

1. Alberts, N. & **Hadjistavropoulos, H. D.** (2013). Wellbeing after cancer: Exploring the use of the Internet for providing psychological care to cancer survivors. *Psynopsis*.
2. Pugh, N., **Hadjistavropoulos, H. D.** Klein, B., & Austin, D. (2013). A case study illustrating therapist-assisted Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Depression. *Cognitive Behavioral Practice*. Available online. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cbpra.2013.08.002>
3. **Hadjistavropoulos, H. D.**, Thompson, M., Klein, B., & Austin, D. (2012). Dissemination of therapist-assisted Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: Development and open pilot study of a workshop. *Cognitive Behaviour Therapy*, 40-230-240. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1080/16506073.2011.645550
4. **Hadjistavropoulos, H. D.**, Thompson, T., Ivanov, M., Drost, C., Butz, C., Klein, B., & Austin, D. (2011). Considerations in the development of a therapist-assisted internet cognitive behavior therapy service. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 42, 463-471. doi: 10.1037/a0026176
5. **Hadjistavropoulos, H. D.**, Alberts, N., Nugent, M., Marchildon, G. (2013 submitted). Improving access to psychological services through therapist-assisted Internet cognitive behaviour therapy.
6. **Hadjistavropoulos, H. D.**, Pugh, N. E., Nugent, M., Hesser, H., Andersson, G., Marchildon, G. P., et al. (2013 submitted). Therapist-Assisted Internet-Delivered Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Depression and Anxiety: Evidence to Practice

Is Online Therapy for You?

- Are you 18 years of age or older?
- Are you a Saskatchewan resident?
- Do you have access to a computer and printer in a space where you could work on Online Therapy?
- Do you have Internet access in a private space?
- Do you feel comfortable using the Internet and writing emails?
- Do you have symptoms of Generalized Anxiety, Panic, and/or Depression?

If you answered "Yes" to all of the above questions, then you may qualify to participate in Online Therapy. In order to qualify you will be required to take part in an online screening. Visit our website at www.onlinetherapyuser.ca or contact the Online Therapy Unit at 306-337-3331.

Online Therapy Unit Team

'Improving Access to Internet Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Depression and Anxiety: Overcoming Barriers and Fostering Innovation'

Principal Investigator: Heather Hadjistavropoulos (Psychology U of R)

Coordinator: Marcie Nugent (Psychology U of R)

Co-investigators: Cory Butz (Computer Science U of R), Greg Marchildon (Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy U of R), Thomas Hadjistavropoulos (Psychology U of R), Nuelle Novik (Social Work U of R), Gil White (Medicine U of S)

Primary Current Knowledge Users: Lorri Carlson, Fiona O'Connor, Heather Bregenser, and Katherine Owens, Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region; Rudy Bowen & Karyn Kawala, Saskatoon Health Region; Terry Hutchinson, Dan Fraser, Mary Lee Booth, Five Hills Health Region; TBA, Sun Country Health Region; Christopher Bohun, Cypress Health Region; Roberta Weist & Edward LeBlanc Saskatchewan HealthLine

International Collaborators: Nick Titov & Blake Dear, Macquaire University, Sydney Australia; Gerhard Andersson, Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden

Future Knowledge Users: Maudlin Forde, Keewatin Yatthé Regional Authority; Gary Bridge & Brett Enns, Prince Albert Parkland Health Region; Peter Cornish, Support Services, Student & Enrolment Services Division U of S; Brian Sveinson, Counselling Services U of R

Provincial Collaborators:

Terry Gudmundson, Kathy Willerth, Lorne Sier, Saskatchewan Health
Dave Nelson, Saskatchewan Division, Canadian Mental Health Association
Bonnie Brossart, Health Quality Council

Statistical Consultant: Rob Cribbie, York University

Online Therapy Unit Staff/Students/Volunteers: Marcie Nugent, Max Ivanov, Shannon Jones, Nicole Alberts, Nicky Pugh, Lindsay Friesen, Luke Schneider, Dale Dirkse, Chantalle Fuchs, Tori Owens, Nichole Faller, and Kat Mazenc

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