Online Therapy Unit
Information Page

Project Title: Internet delivered Psychoeducation Interventions for persons with Spinal Cord Injury: A Randomized Controlled Trial

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness, acceptability and feasibility of Online-CBT for assisting clients who have been diagnosed with a spinal cord injury.

Please take the time to carefully read the following information. If any information is unclear, please email the Online Therapy Unit at Online.Therapy.User@uregina.ca for clarification. You may also phone 306-337-3331.

Purpose of the Screening: The purpose of the screening is to assess your present concerns and determine whether you are eligible for one of the Online Therapy Unit courses and one of the associated research studies.

Overview of Online Therapy Unit: Our Online Therapy Unit Courses are designed to assist clients with managing symptoms of depression and/or anxiety. The courses provide education on depression and anxiety and also discuss cognitive, behavioural and physical strategies for managing symptoms. The courses are short-term and typically require clients to review the materials presented online on a weekly basis as well as to practice skills that are taught in the courses. All clients who receive courses from us are asked to complete brief questionnaires before, during and after participating the courses in order to help us evaluate the courses. The courses sessions take approximately 1-2 hours of a participants time a week, with additional self-learning assignments that can take another 1 hour. The screening takes approximately 30 minutes. The weekly questionnaires take 5 minutes.

Format of the Screening

Pre-Online Screening: Once you consent to the screening, you will be asked some basic eligibility questions. If you are not eligible for the course, the Online Screening will terminate and you will be given information about why you are not eligible. You can contact the Unit to discuss your eligibility further if you wish. This first part of the Online Screening will likely take 5 minutes.

Full Online Screening: If you meet basic eligibility for the course you will be asked to provide basic personal information such as name, address, telephone number, and email address before continuing. This information is necessary for Online Therapy Unit Staff to contact you to discuss the results of the Online Screening. In the screening, you will be presented with questions asking about your background, symptoms of anxiety and depression, other mental health concerns, health, relationships, occupation, and treatment history. Additionally, at this time we request the

name and contact information for a medical contact, such as your physician. Once you have consented to participate in the study, the Online Therapy Unit will send a Physician Notification Form to the medical contact you provided so that he or she is aware of your participation, and has the opportunity to express any concerns he or she may have regarding your participation in Online-CBT. Additional contact may occur between the Online Therapy Unit and your medical contact as needed in the case of an emergency and the purpose of continuity of care. Lastly, you will also be asked some questions about your perceptions of the Online Screening process. We anticipate that this Online Screening will likely take 15-35 minutes to complete, depending on the responses you provide.

Telephone Screening: Following the completion of the Online Screening an Online Therapy Unit staff member will contact you by phone to discuss the results of the Online Screening with you and let you know if you are eligible for one of our studies. It typically takes us 2 to 3 business days to arrange this phone call. We anticipate that this Telephone Screening will likely take 20 minutes to complete, depending on the responses you provide. Online Therapy Unit Staff may ask you some brief clarifying questions if more information is needed regarding your responses to the Online Screening. You may also use this time to ask any questions you may have. **Please note: Online Therapy Unit courses is not for everyone. Individuals that are experiencing high levels of distress may benefit from traditional face to face programs. Participation in the Online Screening does not guarantee participation in Online Therapy Unit courses.**

Voluntary Participation & Ability to Withdraw:

Participation in the screening is entirely voluntary. Should you choose not to participate, or if you wish to stop the screening at any time after starting, you may do so without any consequences to your present or future health care. However, once the data has been pooled for analysis after the course has been completed, withdrawal from the study will no longer be possible. The information you have provided will be retained by researchers.

Limits of Confidentiality:

The responses you provide are confidential although there are certain limits to confidentiality that every participant must be aware of:

- If you pose an immediate threat to your life, or another individual's life, confidentiality may be broken in order to prevent harm
- If you disclose information suggesting that any child is at risk of abuse, the appropriate authorities will have to be notified
- If you become involved in a legal case, the judge has the right to subpoena any information relevant to the legal problem

- There are unique risks that may compromise your privacy that exist with any Internet-based service. A description of these risks follows:

  1. Any computer connected to the Internet will store information about visited websites on the Internet in the browser's history list and the browser's cache. The responses to the questionnaires are only temporarily stored on your computer until you close down your browser window. In other words, after you complete and submit your responses, your computer will discard this information, although some of this information may remain in your browser's cache. You may delete this information by clearing your history list and browser's cache.
  2. After you complete the Online Screening, the information you provide will be sent directly to the survey software website over a secure connection. The information will then be encrypted and securely stored in the database at which point it is only accessible by Online Therapy Unit staff.

Methods Used to Protect Your Information:

The Online Therapy Unit staff has taken precautions to protect the security of your information. Both the University of Regina server and REDcap servers at Saskatchewan Health Authority are protected with generally available security technologies, including firewalls and data encryption. In addition, information transmitted from your machine to the server is encrypted using secure socket layer technology (SSL).

In addition to these security precautions, it is important for all users of internet-delivered services to take additional security precautions when submitting sensitive information electronically to ensure the safety of their information.

There are various things that you can do to protect your information:

1. Use your home computer instead of a computer in a shared space, such as a library or office.

2. When you leave your computer or are done working with the web application ensure you have exited the Online Screening.

3. Since your Internet browser stores information in its memory, or disk cache, you can clean the cache after you use the computer. Certain browsers have "Privacy" modes that can be enabled. Once in this mode, the user's interactions are not saved to browser history and no data is stored in browser cache. Once the browser is closed or this mode is exited, there are no browser records of any of the interactions that occurred while in the "Privacy" mode. Firefox has this feature, and is, therefore, highly recommended when completing the Online Screening. Browsers that do not have this mode, or users that do not use this feature, must manually purge their browser history and cache to prevent others from seeing their web interactions.

4. Enable either the firewall software that came with your operating system (e.g. Windows firewall), or install a reputable 3rd party software, such as ZoneAlarm. Firewalls protect your computer and information from network attacks and threats.

5. Use anti-virus software to both prevent and recover from virus programs. While most anti-virus software is for purchase, there are free software options available to download. However, one must still be cautious in order to avoid downloading and installing malicious software that appears to be legitimate.

6. Malware-detection software (such as Spybot: Search and Destroy, Microsoft Security Essentials) can be used to scan your computer for software and files that may be leaking your personal information to 3rd parties.

Use of Information Collected through the Screening:

Information gathered through the screening will be used for three purposes.

1. To determine eligibility for participation in Online Therapy Unit courses:

   - If in the process of the follow-up telephone discussion of your online screening with Online Therapy Unit staff it is determined that participation in Online Therapy Unit courses would be appropriate, your screening will become part of your file.
   - If in the process of the follow up telephone discussion of your online screening with Online Therapy Unit staff it is determined that you do not meet criteria for Online Therapy Unit , Online Therapy Unit Staff will attempt to provide you with options available to you in your community.

2. To better assist with the treatment you receive with the Online Therapy Unit.

3. To be used in de-identified form (identifying information removed) by researchers to evaluate the Online Screening and Online Therapy Unit Courses and to help guide the development of future screening tools and courses offered by the Online Therapy Unit. Any publications stemming from the evaluation of this information will examine all respondents as a whole and you will not be personally identified.

Storage of Online Screening Information:

1. Your responses to the online screening will be collected by REDcap and then stored on their secure server housed at the Saskatchewan Health Authority until we retrieve this information. This server is located in Canada and information on that server is covered by the Canadian Privacy Act.

2. Responses from the online screening will be retrieved from REDcap periodically by Online Therapy Unit staff and will be stored on the Online Therapy Unit secure server, located at the University of Regina.

3. All information (whether paper or online) is kept securely at the University of Regina for a period of seven years, which is consistent with standards of professional practice for psychologists in the province of Saskatchewan.

Participant Contact Information

Online Therapy Unit for Service, Education, and Research
Department of Psychology
University of Regina
Regina, SK S4S 0A2
Ph: 306-585-4203

Technical Questions: If you have any technical difficulty with the screening, contact the Online Therapy Unit Coordinator at 306-337-3331. You can also email us at Online.Therapy.USER@uregina.ca.

A copy of this consent form is available for download by clicking: **HERE**