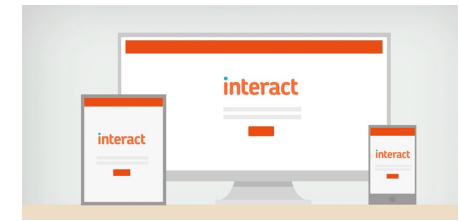


## Analysing CBT approaches for depression to inform a new integrated treatment



Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), a form of talking therapy, is an effective treatment for depression. However, some patients can't get face-to-face therapy because it's expensive and there's a lack of therapists. Online CBT was designed to address this, but people haven't tended to engage with it. Integrating face-to-face CBT with online materials could improve access, while costing less than face-to-face and being more effective than online alone.

### What translational research was done?

The INTERACT study aimed to develop an integrated CBT approach, which would then be tested in a major trial. We developed new ways to combine and analyse data across randomized control trials (RCTs) on CBT treatments, to explore which aspects of the treatments are most effective. RCTs are the gold standard of research studies.

We systematically reviewed RCTs of depression treatments which included CBT. We then used our new methods to explore the features of interventions, such as how it's delivered or how long it lasts, and what parts of an intervention are most effective and how they interact with each other<sup>1</sup>.

We found face-to-face CBT was more effective than online CBT. There was some evidence that combining face-to-face and online elements was as effective as face-to-face. We couldn't find any evidence about the effects of the parts of an intervention or how they interacted. There was an effect from the number and length of face-to-face sessions of CBT. We looked at how cost-effective different CBT interventions were, although there was a lot of uncertainty in these results<sup>2</sup>.

### References

1. López-López et al., *Psychological Medicine*, 2019;DOI:10.1017/S003329171900120X
2. Wu et al., *Value in Health*, 2020;DOI:10.1016/j.jval.2020.07.008
3. Stawarz et al., 2020;DOI:Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), 10.1145/3313831.3376510

### Translation into later phase research, clinical practice and patient benefit

INTERACT developed an integrated CBT treatment based on the systematic review, analysis of results across studies and cost-effectiveness work, together with findings from a survey of CBT practitioners. The integrated CBT intervention has been piloted in a study with 17 patients<sup>3</sup>.

We are now evaluating the clinical and cost-effectiveness of the integrated CBT platform we developed in the early years of INTERACT. The main trial started recruiting participants in early December 2020 with the first patient randomly assigned a treatment in 2021. We will follow up participants for a year, and results are expected in Spring 2024.

