

Online depression therapy proves a success

30 November 2015



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A new internet-delivered intervention for depression, devised by Trinity spin-out company SilverCloud Health, could lead to greater access to treatment and improved outcomes for those suffering from mental health difficulties.

A national randomised controlled trial (RCT) – just published in *Behaviour Research and Therapy* – has shown the efficacy of the SilverCloud "Space For Depression" programme. The trial was a joint initiative of SilverCloud Health, the charity Aware as well as Dr Derek Richards and Dr Ladislav Timulak, School of Psychology and Dr Gavin Doherty, School of Computer Science.

In the study, Space For Depression, a [cognitive behavioural therapy](#) (CBT) delivered via seven online modules, more than 50% of participants were observed to be in either remission and/or recovered from their symptoms. Importantly, these gains were maintained at both three and six-month follow-ups.

One hundred and eighty eight people volunteered to participate in the randomised controlled trial, which took place during 2014. In addition to completing the seven online modules over the

course of eight weeks, candidates also had access to a trained supporter from Aware.

This success of "Space For Depression" is significant as it provides an easily accessible and

cost-effective means of treatment for those suffering from mild to moderate depression and anxiety.

Dr Derek Richards, Director of Clinical Research & Innovation at SilverCloud Health and Research Fellow at the School of Psychology TCD, commented: "Together with the positive outcomes reported for [depression](#), this study also highlights the possibilities for innovative models of [health](#) service delivery."

Such a model of delivery could overcome issues regarding cost, personal stigma and other barriers that prevent people from accessing treatment.

More information: D. Richards et al. A randomized controlled trial of an internet-delivered treatment: Its potential as a low-intensity community intervention for adults with symptoms of depression, *Behaviour Research and Therapy* (2015). [DOI: 10.1016/j.brat.2015.10.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2015.10.005)

Provided by Trinity College Dublin

APA citation: Online depression therapy proves a success (2015, November 30) retrieved 22 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-11-online-depression-therapy-success.html>

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