



**18th Canadian Collaborative
Mental Health Care Conference (2017)**

Connecting People in Need with Care

June 2 and 3, 2017 | Delta City Centre, Ottawa, Ontario

Results From a Randomized Controlled Trial of Coach-facilitated Online Therapy in Patients with Depression Referred to Secondary Care Services

*Dr. Simon Hatcher
University of Ottawa*

PRESENTER DISCLOSURE

- **Presenter:** Dr. Simon Hatcher
- **Relationships with commercial interests:**
 - **None**



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Department of Family Medicine
Department of Psychiatry



CANADA 150
1867-2017



MITIGATING POTENTIAL BIAS

- **Presenter:** Dr. Simon Hatcher
- **Mitigation of conflict:** I was involved in the creation of one of the online therapies in this presentation.



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of e-therapies
2. Identify ways in which e-therapies can benefit patients on waitlists to receive services for depression
3. Identify opportunities to incorporate coach-facilitated e-therapies and coaches into routine practice



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What are online therapies?

Moodgym

Sparx

The Journal



Guided or unguided?

- Unguided – most people drop out but some evidence of effectiveness
- Guided – use a “e-coach” – new health service role – can be a qualified health professional or “technician”
- In meta analyses guided therapy better than unguided but head to head comparisons not so clear cut.

UK REACT study (Gilbody 2015)

- Primary care (n=691)
- Beating the Blues (commercial) vs. MoodGym (free) vs Usual Care
- Both therapies guided
- No difference in outcomes

- BUT

- Very low engagement (1 or 2 sessions; 6 minutes technical support; 20% did not access online treatments at all)

Does a guided on-line therapy for people referred to a mood and anxiety clinic improve outcomes after 12 weeks and change service use?

Referral
from
primary
care



Rx



Mood and
Anxiety
Program



What is Rx?



THE JOURNAL A WAY THROUGH DEPRESSION

CHALLENGE
With the world's second highest suicide rate and depression the leading cause, we needed more people to seek help - only 500 a month were visiting their doctor.

THE IDEA
Partner with medical experts and create an online self-help programme - The Journal. But success relied on motivating sufferers to self-help, so we targeted their medical barriers preventing engagement with The Journal and employed specific media strategies to overcome these:

RESULTS

- Sign-ups 3 times greater than doctors visits
- Website traffic increased 376%
- Average Time On Site 11-12min
- Estimated \$23.8m in economic savings

Some doctors now recommend The Journal as a complement or alternative to medication. That's because we've proven it saves lives.

www.depression.org.nz

POTENTIAL PROBLEM	MEDIA SOLUTION
IMPAIRED DECISION MAKING People may not consider or believe in The Journal.	PR & Medical Media gave it credibility as a self-help tool.
BEING UNMOTIVATED People may not actively search for The Journal.	Response TV & Online targeted personal moments making it easy to visit the site.
SOCIAL ISOLATION People may not talk with friends or family but need support.	Social Online gave anonymous comfort with integrated content in digital communities.
DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING & LOW ENERGY People may lose interest or energy to finish The Journal.	Text & Email provided ongoing support & kept people returning.
MOOD SWINGS & SUICIDAL THOUGHTS People could need help at anytime.	Search 24/7 made it instantly easy to find.

www.depression.org.nz

Outcomes

- At 12 weeks after consent

Depression (PHQ-9) change in scores and improvement (PHQ-9 <10 or 50% improvement in scores)

Quality of Life

- At one year

Service use at ROH

Patients referred to the
Mood and Anxiety
program at The Royal
Ottawa Hospital

Information
leaflet about
online therapies



Week 12 –
PHQ-9



One year -
Service use at
ROH

The Journal plus
coach



Week 12 –
PHQ-9

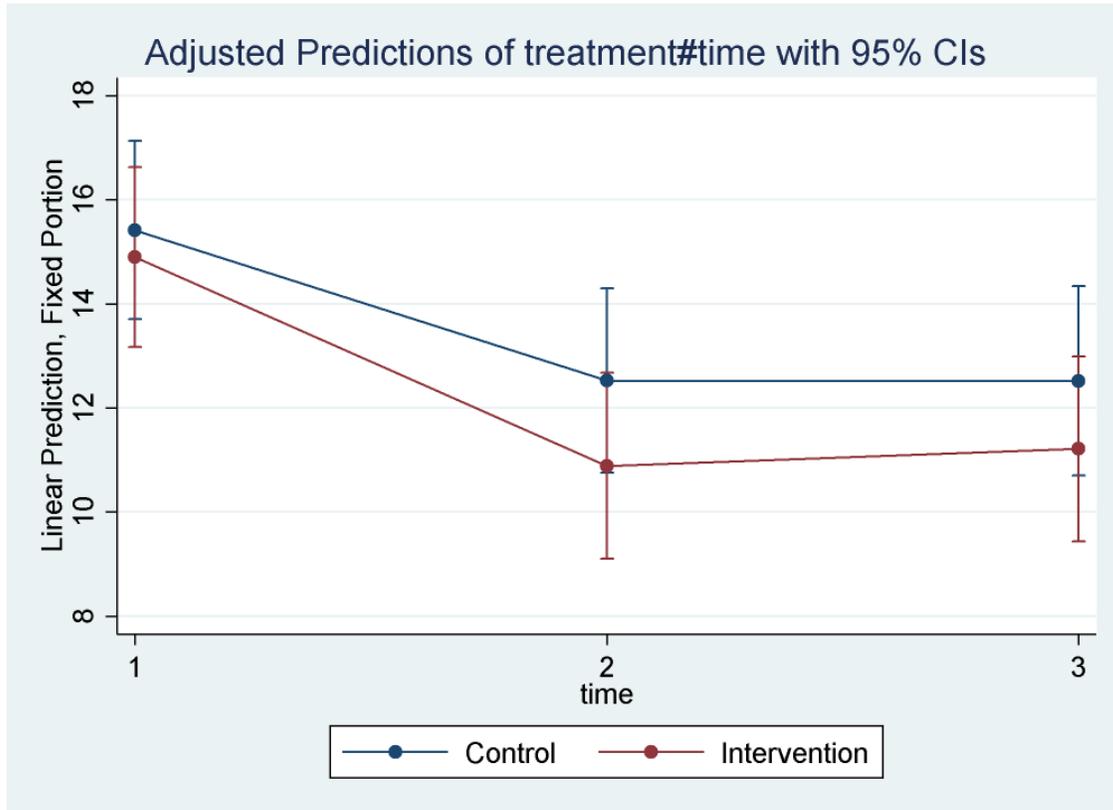


One year -
Service use at
ROH

Who was in the study?

	Overall (n=95)	Control (n=48)	Intervention (n=47)	P-value
Age (years)	44	45	44	
Female	66 (70%)	28 (58%)	38 (81%)	0.02
Full time employment	23 (24%)	11 (23%)	12 (26%)	
Bachelors degree or above	40 (42%)	18 (38%)	22 (47%)	
PHQ-9	15	15	15	

Did guided therapy improve depression compared to control at 12 weeks?

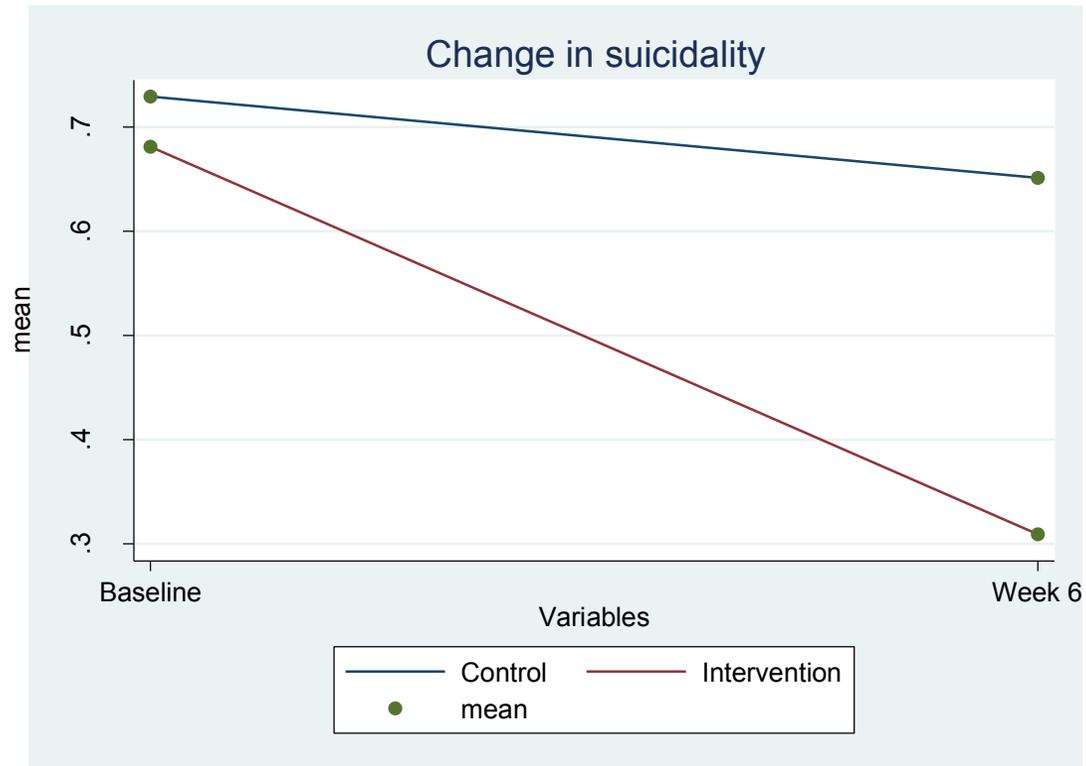


	Control	Intervention
Baseline	15.4 (n=48)	14.9 (n=47)
Week 12	12.5 (n=40)	10.9 (n=43)
Difference week 12 from baseline	-2.6	-3.5 (95% CI -3.7 to 1.3)

Improvement at 12 weeks

- Improvement is PHQ-9 9 or less or 50% reduction in score
- Control group 18/47 improved (38%)
- Intervention group 24/47 improved (51%)
- P=0.3

What about suicidality?



**T-test of difference in means at week6:
p=0.047

Service use at ROH in the 12 months after the guided therapy

	Control (n=45)	Intervention (=46)
Mean time from referral to first appointment	205 days	219 days
Number of people seen in the mood and anxiety clinic	34 (75%)	37 (80%)
Number of people who had psychiatric follow-up	19 (42%)	18 (39%)
Mean number of psychiatric follow up appointments	2	3
Mean number of all appointments	5	4

So what treatment did the guided therapy group get?

- Mean number of lessons completed 5
- Mean number of coaching sessions 9
- Mean length of coaching call 31 minutes

- 29 people completed 6 or more sessions
- Significant correlation between number of lessons completed, number of coaching call, average length of calls and reduction in PHQ-9 scores

If people actually got the treatment did they improve?

- Control group 18/47 improved at 12 weeks (38%)
- Intervention group (6 lessons or more) 19/29 improved at 12 weeks (66%)
- **P=0.03** NNT three people need to be treated with at least 6 lessons for one extra person to improve compared to control group

Conclusion

- People need to be engaged in the therapy for it to work – but it does work
- There may be a small effect on suicidality whilst on a waiting list
- In this context it doesn't seem to make much difference to what happens in the psychiatric out-patient clinic
- Was this a test of telephone coaching supplemented by online therapy rather than a “guided online therapy” - is the coach more important than the computer?