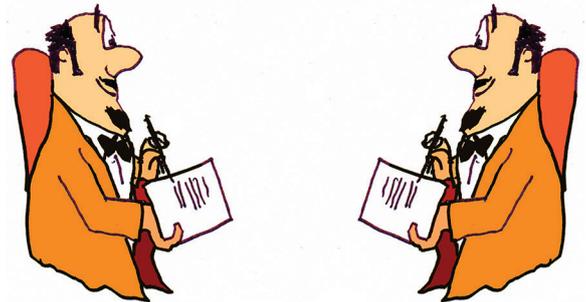


Helping urgent care users cope with distress about physical complaints

CLAHRC East Midlands

About the study

People with high health anxiety often are not offered or don't receive appropriate care. This study by CLAHRC East Midlands aims to find out if remotely delivered Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) can relieve symptoms causing distress, improve physical and emotional health and reduce service use. Two Public Contributors, **Fred Higton** and **Dave Waldram**, were involved in different ways alongside Lead Researcher **Shireen Patel**.



'Being your own therapist' a cartoon by Fred Higton from the patient booklet



Fred Higton



Dave Waldram

Our Public Involvement Journeys Fred Higton and Dave Waldram Urgent Care Study Public Contributors

What has been your involvement in the study?

Fred: When patients used to do talking therapies they were given patient information sheets. Normally, these were photocopied sheets stapled together which were not very impressive and didn't have much value. So we agreed to produce a booklet which was perceived by the patient and the therapist as being of greater value. I did some cartoons for it which also brightened it up. It really did look like something worth having.

Dave: My technology background has been really useful to the research which is about delivering a form of CBT mainly using video conferencing. I have also applied myself to other aspects of the study such as checking the instructions for using the video conferencing system in this application as well as patient information sheets.

"To me it's one of the most important things you can do that is going to make a difference." Fred Higton

What do you think your involvement brings to the team?

Fred: One thing that the people getting involved can bring to a project is their own skills that have been developed elsewhere. For example, David is absolutely brilliant at networking. I really haven't known anybody like him at doing it.

Dave: Having anxiety and depression, I do suffer from mild health anxiety myself, I can empathise with the participants and convey this to the team.

How has it been working alongside researchers at the CLAHRC East Midlands?

Fred: Basically, we are part of the team and we aren't something added on. We are included in all the team meetings and network of practice meetings. Anything we say is given the same value as that from other team members.

What would you say to other people wanting to get involved in research?

Fred: I would recommend it totally. To me it's one of the most important things you can do that is going to make a difference. Making sure that what is done actually takes in the opinions of patients and the public.

A researcher's view of public involvement

Shireen Patel, Lead Researcher, CLAHRC East Midlands



What have Fred and Dave brought to the study?

Shireen: I think from the beginning what has been really useful for us has been Dave and Fred's perspective. They look at things in jargon free language, from a patient and public perspective. This has been enormously helpful in enabling us to communicate complicated ideas effectively to the public – an otherwise difficult task. They have also been advocates for the study, not only getting involved in reviewing documents and providing feedback but actively promoting the study as well.

Dave is an engineer by background so he is also good with technology so he's helped to test out the video conferencing platforms, trying to see which one might be the best. Also, there's been a text messaging service, that again is part of the intervention and he also helped to test that as well.

Fred is a cartoonist and has created excellent images for us which have been used in study documents such as the therapy booklet and posters presented at academic conferences. It's led to us winning more than one poster competition!

“Their involvement has been extremely valuable. They both have specific skills which have really helped us to recruit participants to our study and enabled us to promote the study in a more user-friendly way.”

Shireen Patel

INVOLVE is part of the National Institute for Health Research and supports active public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research.

Tel: 023 8059 5628

involve@nhr.ac.uk

www.involve.nihr.ac.uk

December 2017