

# Uplift website for depression: feasibility study

<b>Submission date</b>	<b>Recruitment status</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
18/05/2016	No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b>	<b>Overall study status</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
23/05/2016	Completed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b>	<b>Condition category</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data
14/06/2023	Mental and Behavioural Disorders	

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Depression affects people in different ways including feeling hopeless and losing interest in activities. It is one of the most common mental health conditions but available treatments meet just 15% of the need. Many people are on treatment waiting lists, have dropped out of treatment, or do not meet the threshold to access services. This is a problem because without help symptoms of depression can get worse. There is a need for basic treatments that people with symptoms of depression can easily access. This study aims to find out how acceptable and feasible a basic online support tool for people with depression is. The website uses ideas from positive psychology, which suggests that depression can be improved by promoting positive emotions, use of personal strengths and a sense of meaning and connection with others.

### Who can participate?

People experiencing depression who are over 18, who can regularly access the internet, who can understand English and who have capacity to consent can take part.

### What does the study involve?

This intervention comprises a self-help website, containing activities to promote strengths, positive emotions and social connections for people with depression. The activities in the website are adapted from those used in positive psychotherapy. The website is intended to be accessed independently by people with depression, to support them as and when they need it. It has been designed to complement, not replace, existing provision for common mental health conditions. As such people using the website may also be receiving treatment from their GP or psychiatrist, which may include taking medication or accessing counselling or psychological services. Participants are given access to the website for 6 weeks. When they first access the website participants see the four sections of the website, which contain a total of six discrete interventions; finding strengths, others finding strengths and a strengths plan; good things log; savouring activity; practicing positive communication; saying thanks; and sharing strengths. After being introduced to these exercises, participants are encouraged to select interventions which they feel they want to try. They are encouraged to use the website flexibly, although there is a recommendation that it may be helpful to pick a minimum of one activity to practice per week (on average this will be one hour in total).

### What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

We expect that the Uplift website will be beneficial to patients as it uses principles of positive

psychology, which evidence suggests reduces depression and improves wellbeing. Study participants will continue to receive treatment as usual and at no point will treatment be compromised. Consequently, no harms or risks are expected from this low-intensity intervention. In order to reimburse participants for their time spent completing questionnaires they will receive a £10 Amazon voucher per questionnaire. Previous research has suggested this level of compensation can increase follow up rates in online studies. A subsample of participants will be invited to an in-person interview to provide more in-depth feedback on the intervention. As this requires a greater burden in terms of travel and participant time participants will be reimbursed £20.

Where is the study run from?

East London NHS Foundation Trust (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

March 2016 to January 2017

Who is funding the study?

East London NHS Foundation Trust (UK)

Who is the main contact?

Sophie Walsh

[sophie.walsh@elft.nhs.uk](mailto:sophie.walsh@elft.nhs.uk)

## Contact information

**Type(s)**

Public

**Contact name**

Miss Sophie Walsh

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## Additional identifiers

**Protocol serial number**

2016\_05\_18 v1.0

# Study information

## Scientific Title

Self-help 'Uplift' website for depression: a feasibility study of a website using principles of positive psychology for people with symptoms of depression

## Study objectives

The overall aim of this study is to assess the feasibility and acceptability of a flexible self-help website using exercises from positive psychotherapy for people with symptoms of depression. The research will use a pre-post study design and collect a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data. The study objectives are to:

1. Establish the patterns of use of the website
2. Understand participants' views on the ease of use and helpfulness of the website
3. Establish if and how personal characteristics of participants are associated with website use
4. Estimate the variability in possible outcome measures (e.g. symptoms of depression, satisfaction with life)
5. Explore potential for change in outcomes

## Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

## Ethics approval(s)

North West - Greater Manchester West Research Ethics Committee, 09/06/2016, ref: 16/NW/0447

## Study design

Single-centre pre-post study

## Primary study design

Interventional

## Study type(s)

Treatment

## Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Depression

## Interventions

This intervention comprises a self-help website, containing six activities to promote strengths, positive emotion and social connections for people with depression. The activities in the website are adapted from those used in positive psychotherapy.

Participants will have access for six weeks and be advised to practice one activity per week, although they are able to use the site flexibly.

## Intervention Type

Other

## Primary outcome(s)

The feasibility and acceptability of the intervention will be measured by assessing:

1. Number of website log ins (during six weeks of intervention)
2. Number of times data submitted to the website (during six weeks of intervention)
3. Intervention satisfaction, benefits (after six weeks of intervention)

### **Key secondary outcome(s)**

The following outcomes will be measured before the intervention and after 6 weeks of using it in order to assess variability in outcomes and potential for change:

1. Depressive symptoms (PHQ-9) (Kroenke et al., 2001)
2. Life satisfaction (DIALOG) (Priebe et al., 2007)

### **Completion date**

31/01/2017

## **Eligibility**

### **Key inclusion criteria**

1. Aged over 18 years
2. Have regular access to the internet
3. Have sufficient command of English to complete the measures
4. Endorse one of the Whooley screening items for depression
5. Have capacity to consent

### **Participant type(s)**

Patient

### **Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

### **Age group**

Adult

### **Lower age limit**

18 years

### **Sex**

All

### **Key exclusion criteria**

This study has no exclusion criteria as the aim is to be as inclusive as possible. A recent review into how exclusion criteria are used in depression treatment research found that studies excluded between 75-85% of people with depression (Halvorson & Humphreys, 2015). This makes it difficult to generalise from research to the typical clinical population and is something the present study wishes to avoid by having an inclusive sample.

### **Date of first enrolment**

01/08/2016

### **Date of final enrolment**

01/12/2016

## Locations

### Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

### Study participating centre

**East London NHS Foundation Trust**

Trust Headquarters

9 Alie Street

London

United Kingdom

E1 8DE

## Sponsor information

### Organisation

East London NHS Foundation Trust (UK)

### ROR

<https://ror.org/01q0vs094>

## Funder(s)

### Funder type

Hospital/treatment centre

### Funder Name

East London NHS Foundation Trust (UK)

## Results and Publications

### Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

Anonymised study data will be made available on request, subject to data sharing agreement from the lead researcher Sophie Walsh (sophie.walsh@qmul.ac.uk)

### IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

## Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Results article</a>	results	01/09/2018		Yes	No
<a href="#">HRA research summary</a>			28/06/2023	No	No
<a href="#">Participant information sheet</a>	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes
<a href="#">Study website</a>	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes