

Peer support training for adolescents during the COVID-19 outbreak

Submission date 28/05/2020	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 29/05/2020	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 04/03/2022	Condition category Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Young people in the UK report anxiety, loneliness and a lack of control as immediate impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. Given the current need for physical distancing, digital tools to support young people's mental health and wellbeing (MHWB) during this time are urgently needed. Equally, it is critical that we involve young people as active stakeholders in the design and delivery of such interventions, rather than passive 'recipients' of support. Indeed, in consultations with 14-25 years old in the UK, peer-to-peer support was ranked as one of the most desirable methods of support for MHWB, and evidence shows these interventions can be effective.

Most young people consulted expressed high motivation to support their peers, and aspired to develop skills to do so effectively. However, few peer support training courses are available to young people online. Together with a peer support charity and young people, researchers plan to co-produce and deliver online training to equip young people with skills to provide peer support and an opportunity to share experiences with a community of peer supporters. This study will evaluate whether this training improves young people's ability to support others during this time, including motivation to provide peer support, perceived support giving skills, frequency of support provided, compassion to others, and connectedness to peers, mental wellbeing and emotional symptoms, and self-efficacy and civic engagement, relative to a wait-list control group. This study will also explore young people's experiences of the training and self-reported impacts. Therefore, the project responds to young people's expressed resource needs and to gaps in the existing evidence on the benefits of digital training for peer supporters. The project will focus on young people aged 16-18 years, experiencing significant disruption to their education or early working life.

Who can participate?

Young people aged 16-18 years who are resident in the UK

What does the study involve?

Participants will be randomly allocated to peer support training or a wait-list control group. Participants allocated to peer support training will complete an online training course,

consisting of five sessions (4 hours per session) delivered over a period of 5 days. Outcomes for both arms will be assessed 1 week later, and participants allocated to peer support training will also complete follow-up measures after 2, 3 and 4 weeks.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Participants will take part in co-produced week-long online peer support training targeted at the COVID-19 crisis and identified needs of UK 16-18-year-olds. There are no known risks of participating in the training.

Where is the study run from?

The study is run from the University of Oxford, Department of Psychiatry. Training will be delivered online by YouthEra, a non-profit organisation with extensive experience in youth empowerment and peer support training programmes for adolescents

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

April to July 2020

Who is funding the study?

Economic, Social, Cultural, & Environmental Impacts of COVID-19: Urgent Response Fund (UK)

Who is the main contact?

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Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

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Additional identifiers

Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)

Nil known

ClinicalTrials.gov (NCT)

Nil known

Protocol serial number

R69810/RE001

Study information

Scientific Title

Peer support training for adolescents during the COVID-19 outbreak: a pilot randomised controlled trial

Acronym

PS-COVID

Study objectives

Does peer support training improve adolescents' ability to support others during the COVID-19 outbreak, relative to a wait-list?

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 22/05/2020, University of Oxford, Medical Sciences Interdivisional Research Ethics Committee (Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JD, UK; +44(0)1865 616577; ethics@medsci.ox.ac.uk), ref: R69810/RE001

Study design

Pilot randomised controlled trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Quality of life

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Peer support during the COVID-19 outbreak

Interventions

After providing consent and completing baseline measures, an independent researcher will randomise participants to Peer Support Training or wait-list using randomisation software. Participants allocated to Peer Support Training will complete an online training course, consisting of five sessions (4 hours per session) delivered over a period of 5 days. Outcomes for both arms will be assessed 1-week post-randomisation, and participants randomised to Peer Support Training will also complete follow-up measures at 2, 3 and 4 weeks post-randomisation.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

1. Motivation to provide peer support, perceived support giving skills, and frequency of support provided, measured using Adolescent Social Connection & Coping During COVID Scale Items at 1

week post-randomisation

2. Compassion towards others, measured using Compassionate Engagement and Action Scale-Compassion for Others Scale at 1 week post-randomisation
3. Connectedness to peers, measured using Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale at 1 week post-randomisation

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Mental wellbeing, measured using Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale at 1 week post-randomisation
2. Emotional symptoms, measured using Strengths and Difficulties-Emotional symptoms subscale at 1 week post-randomisation
3. Self-efficacy, measured using General Self-Efficacy Scale at 1 week post-randomisation
4. Civic engagement, measured using Civic Engagement Scale-Civic Behaviours & Civic Attitudes Scales at 1 week post-randomisation
5. Participant experiences of Peer Support Training, measured using responses to open-ended questions at 1 week post-randomisation among participants allocated to Peer Support Training
6. Intentions to use peer support skills, measured using bespoke questions developed for this study at 1, 2, 3, 4 weeks post-randomisation among participants allocated to Peer Support Training
7. Motivation to provide peer support, perceived support giving skills, and frequency of support provided, measured using Adolescent Social Connection & Coping During COVID Scale Items at 2, 3, 4 weeks post-randomisation among participants allocated to Peer Support Training
8. Connectedness to peers, measured using Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale at 2, 3, 4 weeks post-randomisation among participants allocated to Peer Support Training

Completion date

10/07/2020

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. 16–18 years old
2. UK residents
3. Sufficient English level to be able to take the course
4. Able to complete training and measures independently
5. Access to Wi-Fi for the duration of the course
6. Access to a computer, camera and speakers for the duration of the course
7. Happy to be randomly assigned to one of two iterations of the training course
8. Consent to participate (this includes those aged 16–17 who are considered 'competent youths' as per BPG 04) and provided baseline measures

Participant type(s)

Healthy volunteer

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Child

Lower age limit

16 years

Upper age limit

18 years

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

100

Key exclusion criteria

Does not meet inclusion criteria

Date of first enrolment

30/05/2020

Date of final enrolment

05/06/2020

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre

University of Oxford

Department of Psychiatry

Warneford Hospital

Oxford

United Kingdom

OX3 7JX

Sponsor information

Organisation

University of Oxford

ROR

<https://ror.org/052gg0110>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Research organisation

Funder Name

Economic, Social, Cultural, & Environmental Impacts of COVID-19: Urgent Response Fund

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The data-sharing plans for the current study are unknown and will be made available at a later date.

IPD sharing plan summary

Data sharing statement to be made available at a later date

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article		17/02/2022	04/03/2022	Yes	No
Other files	Qualitative Analysis Plan	03/07/2020	06/07/2020	No	No
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes