

# Testing a psychological training intervention for physiotherapy students; a randomized control trial

<b>Submission date</b> 18/02/2020	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 19/02/2020	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 18/01/2022	<b>Condition category</b> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Physiotherapy students need to understand the basic principles of psychological care for patients. Aspects of psychological care have been missing from the education of physiotherapists traditionally. However, the organisations which govern the professional support the need for this type of education. Currently, there is no standardised approach for how skills provided to psychological support patients is and care is taught during the physiotherapy course across the UK. Research is needed that establishes what psychological skills training physiotherapists are required to have. Basic skills include empathy and listening and both aspects of communication are needed for patients to feel trust and be able to feel confident to tackle their own challenges during rehabilitation. Past review evidence has suggested that students feel underprepared to deliver basic communication to patients. However, there is evidence to show that even a single training session can improve empathy in physiotherapy students. Further research is needed that has theory and practical application of skills as part of the psychological training. The model of emotions, adaptation and hope (MEAH) provides this. Researchers have developed a single session of training that can educate physiotherapy students and improve care but this work needs testing. The aim of this study is to test the content of MEAH training against a standard communication skills training session across all years of physiotherapy students based at Birmingham to see if the training can improve empathy and other psychological indices important for patient care.

### Who can participate?

Student physiotherapists from the University of Birmingham who are registered on the pre-registration programmes

### What does the study involve?

Students will be allocated to either the education as normal group or the intervention group (with MEAH training). The intervention group will receive a single 2-hour training session around the model of emotions, adaptation and hope. This will include how the model differs from current understanding of psychological adaptation, how the model links to illness stories, how the model can be used for screening and as the basis for a psychological intervention. Students

allocated to the education as normal group will receive THE standard communication lecture that is given within the first year of the program.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Benefits include students being better at clinical communication and understanding of how psychological adaptation is important for people they treat. It also could impact on health outcomes for the patient and the student. Risks are small. Part of the training will ask students to consider their own current challenges to reflect on these. The training is about how to adapt to such situations so this could cause distress but none was reported within the feasibility study.

Where is the study run from?

University of Birmingham (UK)

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

February 2020 to December 2020

Who is funding the study?

Investigator initiated and funded

Who is the main contact?

Dr Andrew Soundy

a.a.soundy@bham.ac.uk

## Contact information

**Type(s)**

Scientific

**Contact name**

Dr Andrew Soundy

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<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5118-5872>

**Contact details**

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## Additional identifiers

**Protocol serial number**

1.0

## Study information

**Scientific Title**

Testing the model of emotion, adaptation and hope (MEAH) training for physiotherapy students; a randomized control trial

**Acronym**

MEAH1

**Study objectives**

That the MEAH training will have a greater impact on empathy and other indices when compared to a standard communication teaching session.

**Ethics approval required**

Old ethics approval format

**Ethics approval(s)**

Approved 26/02/2020, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Ethical Review Committee, University of Birmingham (Aston Webb Building, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston B15 2TT UK; +44 0121 414 8825; s.l.cottam@bham.ac.uk), ref: ERN\_18-1970B

**Study design**

External Pilot randomised control trial with parallel groups

**Primary study design**

Interventional

**Study type(s)**

Other

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

Student physiotherapists

**Interventions**

The method of randomisation will be simple randomisation but the researchers will use randomised block sizes to allocate.

Intervention: Students will be asked to consent to take part in a study and given the information sheet at the start of a whole cohort lecture. After 48 hours students will be allocated to a single two-hour lecture of training around mental health, psychological adaptation, hope and illness stories

Control: After 48 hours students will be allocated to a control group that will receive standard communication lecture that is given within the first year of the program.

The duration of the intervention is 2 hours. Assessments will take place pre intervention, immediately post intervention and at 6 weeks follow up.

**Intervention Type**

Behavioural

**Primary outcome(s)**

Empathy measured using the interpersonal reactivity index at pre and post intervention then at follow up at 6 weeks

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

1. Student attitudes towards the treatment of people with mental illness, measured using the Mental Illness Clinicians' Attitudes Scale (MICA) at pre and post-intervention then at follow up at 6 weeks
2. Attitudes towards treatment, measured using the open minds scale for health care providers at pre and post-intervention then at follow up at 6 weeks
3. Self-confidence measured using the General Self Efficacy Scale (GSE) at pre and post-intervention then at follow up at 6 weeks
4. Communication practices linked to students in health care, measured using the Froehlich Communication Survey at pre and post-intervention then at follow up at 6 weeks

### **Completion date**

01/12/2020

## **Eligibility**

### **Key inclusion criteria**

Current participant inclusion criteria as of 27/04/2020:

1. Studying for a degree in physiotherapy at the University of Birmingham
2. Able and happy to consent

Previous participant inclusion criteria:

1. Studying for a degree in physiotherapy at the University of Birmingham
2. Studying on a pre-registration program
3. Able and happy to consent

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

Other

### **Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

### **Age group**

Adult

### **Sex**

All

### **Key exclusion criteria**

Current participant exclusion criteria as of 27/04/2020:

1. Not based at the University of Birmingham
2. Unable to consent
3. Currently taking part in other communication or psychological based interventions

Previous participant exclusion criteria:

1. Not based at the University of Birmingham
2. Unable to consent

**Date of first enrolment**

01/04/2020

**Date of final enrolment**

01/07/2020

## Locations

**Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

**Study participating centre**

**University of Birmingham**

School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences

Birmingham

United Kingdom

B15 2TT

## Sponsor information

**Organisation**

University of Birmingham

**ROR**

<https://ror.org/03angcq70>

## Funder(s)

**Funder type**

Other

**Funder Name**

Investigator initiated and funded

## Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are/will be available upon request from Dr Andrew Soundy (a.a.soundy@bham.ac.uk). The data will be limited to anonymised data which relates only to published work. Published work will have supplementary files which will include this data as well.

## 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>		20/01/2021	18/01/2022	Yes	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