

# Virtual reality hypnotherapy for healthcare students

<b>Submission date</b> 31/12/2023	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
<b>Registration date</b> 03/01/2024	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Last Edited</b> 03/01/2024	<b>Condition category</b> Mental and Behavioural Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input type="checkbox"/> Results
		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data
		<input type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Poor student mental health is a priority for universities and there is some evidence that both hypnotherapy and virtual reality (VR) can be helpful in reducing perceived stress in the general population. This is a feasibility trial of an intervention combining hypnotherapy and VR which was trialled in a group of healthcare students.

### Who can participate?

Students aged over 18 years registered at St George's University of London

### What does the study involve?

The students will be asked to try the VR hypnotherapy experience once a day over 3 days, and it lasts about 7 minutes.

The students will be asked to complete some questionnaires regarding their wellbeing and anxiety levels before and after the 3-day trial, and scales before and after each session measuring how relaxed/happy/sad they feel on a scale of 1 to 10. Pulse and blood pressure will be measured before and after each experience and at the end of the 3 days the students will be asked how they found it overall, what was good and what was bad about it.

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

The main risk is of feeling nauseous (cybersickness). Students will have an opportunity to try a novel experience.

### Where is the study run from?

St George's, University of London (UK)

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

February 2021 to July 2022

### Who is funding the study?

St George's, University of London (UK)

Who is the main contact?

Dr Aileen O'Brien, aobrien@sgul.ac.uk

## Contact information

### Type(s)

Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

### Contact name

Dr Aileen O'Brien

### ORCID ID

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2824-7190>

### Contact details

SGUL

London

United Kingdom

SW17

+44 (0)7961174521

aobrien@sgul.ac.uk

## Additional identifiers

### Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)

Nil known

### Integrated Research Application System (IRAS)

22022.0122

### Protocol serial number

Nil known

## Study information

### Scientific Title

Virtual reality hypnotherapy for healthcare students: a feasibility trial

### Study objectives

A virtual reality hypnotherapy experience will be tolerated and acceptable to healthcare students

### Ethics approval required

Ethics approval required

### Ethics approval(s)

approved 06/06/2022, St George's Research Ethics Committee (SGREC) (SGUL, Cranmer Terrace, Tooting, London, SW17 7DJ, United Kingdom; +44 (0)208 266 6073; sgulrec@sgul.ac.uk), ref: 22022.0122

## **Study design**

Single-arm non-randomized feasibility pilot trial

## **Primary study design**

Interventional

## **Study type(s)**

Other

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

Perceived stress

## **Interventions**

This was a pilot so there was only one arm and no randomisation. Students who volunteered for the trial and met the eligibility criteria were allocated a project id and their sex, age group and ethnicity were recorded. Participants were asked to attend a quiet annex of the Student Union for a maximum of 1 hour each day (timed for the end of the teaching day) on three consecutive days. Students tried the virtual reality hypnotherapy experience over 3 days each lasting 7 minutes, involving the voice of a clinical hypnotherapist guiding the user through a series of virtual spaces.

## **Intervention Type**

Device

## **Phase**

Not Applicable

## **Drug/device/biological/vaccine name(s)**

Virtual reality hypnotherapy in oculus headset

## **Primary outcome(s)**

1. Wellbeing measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) at the start of the first session and the end of the third session
2. Perceived stress measured using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) at the start of the first session and the end of the third session
3. Depression measured using the Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ2) at the start of the first session and the end of the third session
4. Anxiety measured using the Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7) questionnaire at the start of the first session and the end of the third session
5. Stress, happiness, sadness, calm, and anxiety measured using visual analogue scales before and after each VR session
6. Students' experience of the VR assessed using qualitative analysis of an open-ended question at the end of the 3 days

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

Pulse and blood pressure readings assessed as proxy indicators of stress by junior doctors manually (pulse) and with an electronic blood pressure reader before and after each VR session

**Completion date**

26/07/2022

## Eligibility

**Key inclusion criteria**

1. Aged over 18 years
2. Student at St George's University of London

**Participant type(s)**

Healthy volunteer

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

**Age group**

Adult

**Lower age limit**

18 years

**Upper age limit**

65 years

**Sex**

All

**Total final enrolment**

14

**Key exclusion criteria**

1. Epilepsy
2. Pacemaker

**Date of first enrolment**

07/06/2022

**Date of final enrolment**

15/06/2022

## Locations

**Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

**Study participating centre**  
**St George's University of London**  
Cranmer Terrace  
London  
United Kingdom  
SW17 7DJ

## Sponsor information

**Organisation**  
St George's, University of London

## Funder(s)

**Funder type**  
University/education

**Funder Name**  
St. George's, University of London

**Alternative Name(s)**  
St. George's

**Funding Body Type**  
Private sector organisation

**Funding Body Subtype**  
Universities (academic only)

**Location**  
United Kingdom

## Results and Publications

**Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan**  
The datasets generated will be available on request from Dr Aileen O'Brien (aobrien@sgul.ac.uk).

**IPD sharing plan summary**  
Available on request

