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Waiting list support for mental health patients

Submission date	Recruitment status	[X] Prospectively registered
04/04/2018	No longer recruiting	[ ] Protocol
Registration date	**Overall study status**	[ ] Statistical analysis plan
06/04/2018	Completed	[ ] Results
Last Edited	**Condition category**	[ ] Individual participant data
04/04/2023	Mental and Behavioural Disorders	[ ] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims:
Of the 1.4 million people referred to the NHS Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service in 2015/16, almost two in three people did not complete their course of treatment. The service currently experiences a relatively high rate of missed appointments (roughly 11%). This imposes a cost on the services and increases waiting times for others. The aim of this study is to test whether sending a series of text messages to patients awaiting IAPT treatment can reduce unscheduled dropout. The study measures whether patients who receive the text messages while waiting are more likely to attend two or more IAPT appointments than those who do not. In addition to this, the study tests whether the text messages can reduce unscheduled dropout, increase completion of treatment and ultimately improve health outcomes (depression and anxiety).

Who can participate?
Adult patients of one of the seven participating IAPT services who are referred to the service during the study period

What does the study involve?
Participants are randomly allocated to either receive a series of additional text messages while they are on the IAPT waiting list (the intervention), or to continue to receive standard communication from services (business as usual). The intervention involves sending patients a series of up to nine text messages based on the concept of operational transparency. Operational transparency is the idea of de-shrouding a process so that people know what is happening behind the scenes and know that they are progressing. The study assesses whether or not operational transparency increases engagement with the IAPT waiting process. The number of text messages a patient receives depends on how long they are held on waiting lists.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
The intervention aims to increase the likelihood that patients engage with the IAPT service and attend their appointments. Attending an appointment should increase the likelihood that the patient recovers and also help them recover sooner. The main risk is that the new messages have a backfire effect and increase missed appointments or dropout from the service. The messages have been carefully worded to guard against this happening.

Where is the study run from?
1. Talking Changes (Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust)
2. Talking Therapies (Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust)
3. Talking Matters Northumberland
4. Mersey Care - Talk Liverpool (Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust)
5. Talk Wandsworth (South West London & St George's NHS Mental Health Trust)
6. Sutton Uplift (South West London & St George's NHS Mental Health Trust)
7. Outlook South West

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
September 2017 to December 2018

Who is the main contact?
Victoria Fussey

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

Contact name
Ms Victoria Fussey

Contact details
Behavioural Insights Team
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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
37752

Study information

Scientific Title
A randomised controlled trial to measure the impact of operational transparency text messages during waiting periods on attendance and engagement with treatment among Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) patients

Study objectives
Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services provide treatment to people with anxiety and depression. The IAPT programme began in 2008 and has successfully increased access to psychological therapy for many people, but there is room for improvement in the service. Of the 1.4 million people referred to the service in 2015/16, almost two in three people did not complete a course of treatment. This imposes a cost on the services and increases waiting times for others. This study will test whether sending a series of text messages to patients awaiting IAPT treatment can reduce unscheduled dropout.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
Yorkshire & The Humber - Bradford Leeds Research Ethics Committee, 28/03/2018, ref: 18/YH/0105

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Randomised; Interventional; Design type: Process of Care, Other

Study type(s)
Quality of life

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Specialty: Mental health, Primary sub-specialty: Study not assigned to a MH Clinical Studies Group; UKCRC code/ Disease: Mental Health/ Unspecified mental disorder

Interventions
At the point of referral into a participating IAPT service eligible patients will be allocated at random through a statistical randomisation procedure implemented by Mayden. Patients will be allocated with equal probability either to receive the series of text messages (the intervention), or to continue to receive standard communication from services (business as usual).

The intervention that will be tested in this trial will be a series of text messages sent to patients on IAPT waiting lists. The text messages will be based on the idea of operational transparency, and will provide regular contact from the IAPT service to the patient letting the patient know the effort that is being exerted behind the scenes.

The trialists will measure whether patients who received the text messages while waiting were more likely to attend two or more IAPT appointments than those who did not. They will also look at unscheduled dropout, completion of treatment and health outcomes (depression and anxiety) as secondary outcome measures.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
Whether a patient completes 2 or more appointments, routinely collected by the IAPT service and uploaded to Mayden the iaptus service provider, collected at the end of the trial

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Patient has unscheduled dropout from treatment, routinely collected by the IAPT service and uploaded to Mayden the iaptus service provider, collected at the end of the trial
2. Patient completes treatment, routinely collected by the IAPT service and uploaded to Mayden the iaptus service provider, collected at the end of the trial
3. Mental health outcomes (anxiety and depression), assessed using the PHQ-9 and/or the GAD-7 at the first and the last appointment

Completion date
09/11/2018

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Patient has been referred to a participating IAPT service during the recruitment period of the trial period
2. Patient has consented to receive SMS communication from their IAPT service
3. Patient has supplied a valid mobile phone number to their IAPT service

Participant type(s)
Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Adult

Sex
All

Key exclusion criteria
Does not meet the inclusion criteria

Date of first enrolment
23/04/2018

Date of final enrolment
07/09/2018

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
Talking Changes
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust
Tarncroft
Lanchester Rd Hospital
Durham
United Kingdom
DH1 5RD

Study participating centre
Talking Therapies
Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Mallard Court
Express Park
Bristol Road
Bridgwater
United Kingdom
TA6 4RN

Study participating centre
Talking Matters Northumberland
Unit 4, Telford Court
Morpeth
Northumberland
United Kingdom
NE61 2DB

Study participating centre
Mersey Care - Talk Liverpool
Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust
151 Dale Street
Liverpool
United Kingdom
L2 2AH

Study participating centre
Talk Wandsworth
South West London & St George's NHS Mental Health Trust
Springfield University Hospital, 15,
61 Glenburnie Rd
London
United Kingdom
SW17 7DJ

Study participating centre
Sutton Uplift
South West London & St George's NHS Mental Health Trust
Springfield University Hospital, 15,
61 Glenburnie Rd
London

United Kingdom
SW17 7DJ

Study participating centre
Outlook South West
2D Restormel Estate
Lostwithiel
United Kingdom
PL22 0HG

Sponsor information

Organisation
The Behavioural Insights Team

ROR
https://ror.org/03mk5b468

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
Cabinet Office, UK Government; Grant Codes: RM-BIT/1

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not expected to be made available as data sharing agreements with the participating organisations states that the data will only be used for analysis of the trial and that it will not be shared publicly.

IPD sharing plan summary
Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
HRA research summary			28/06/2023	No	No