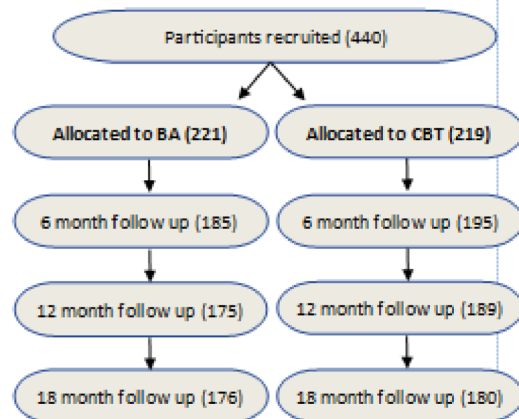


The COBRA Trial

COBRA was a clinical trial comparing the effectiveness and costs of Behavioural Activation (BA) versus Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for depression. We found that BA was as effective as CBT at reducing symptoms of depression, and was more cost-effective.

Background

- Depression is a common and debilitating condition that is set to become the second biggest cause of global disability.
- CBT is recommended as a treatment for depression by the UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). However, it is a complex treatment delivered by highly trained professionals who are expensive to employ, and this limits access to CBT.
- BA is also an effective treatment for depression and is relatively simple, meaning it can be delivered by junior staff with less training, making it a cost-effective option.
- NICE recommended research to directly compare the outcomes and costs of BA with CBT. COBRA was a randomised controlled trial designed to do this.



What is Behavioural Activation?

BA is based on the idea that certain behaviours such as inactivity are key factors in depression. The therapist encourages patients to focus on meaningful activities driven by their own personal values as a way of overcoming depression.

What is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy?

CBT is based on the idea that certain ways of thinking can maintain depression. The therapist helps patients to identify any unhelpful thoughts that may make them feel depressed. CBT aims to change those ways of thinking and help people think in more realistic and helpful ways.

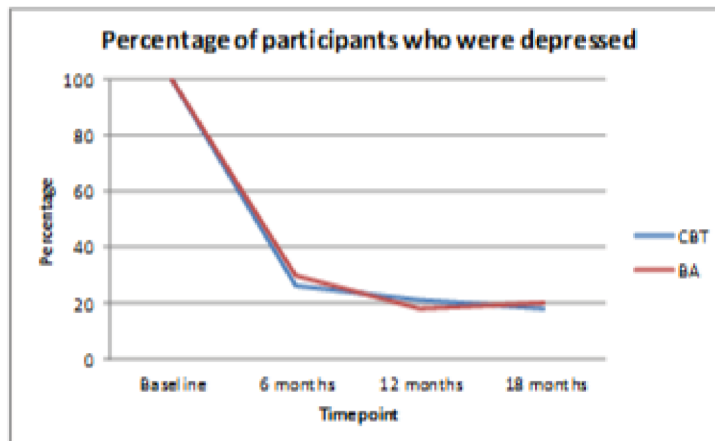
The Research Questions

1. What is the clinical effectiveness of BA compared to CBT for depressed adults in terms of depression treatment response at 12 and 18 months?
2. What is the cost-effectiveness of BA compared to CBT at 18 months?

Results

Clinical outcomes: We used a structured clinical interview called the SCID to assess whether participants met criteria for depression at each of their research interviews. All participants who were accepted into the trial were depressed at their baseline interview. At 12 months, 79% of participants who received CBT and 82% of participants who received BA were no longer depressed. This finding shows that BA is as effective as CBT for the treatment of depression.

Costs: To work out the costs of each treatment we calculated direct costs such as the therapists' salary, as well as indirect costs such as participants' use of other healthcare services, medication use and work productivity. BA was around 20 per cent cheaper than CBT, making it cost-effective and more realistic for a wider range of countries worldwide.



What does this mean?

Junior mental health workers with no professional training in psychological therapies can deliver BA, a simple psychological treatment, with no lesser effect than CBT and at less cost.

Effective psychological therapy for depression can be delivered without the need for costly and highly trained professionals.

THANK YOU!

We would like to thank everyone involved in the study, especially the patients and therapists who gave up their time to help us.

If you would like to read the published paper it is available free of charge online at: <http://www.thelancet.com/> Richards et al., to be published 22/07/2016

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