Motivational enhancement principles

Extremely

CBT

User input and control (flexible timing + content)

Review of best practice

Personalised normative feedback

Although flexibility, anonymity, cost, reach, and interactivity make the Internet an ideal means by which to engage young people in treatment, overcoming many traditional barriers. Although Internet-based interventions have been shown to be effective in treating depression[^2] and alcohol use[^2] alone, only one intervention addressing both disorders in adults (the computerised SHADE program) has been evaluated[^11]. No youth-focused or Internet-based co-morbidity interventions of this kind have been developed and trialled.

The DEAL Project program was well received by the young people and key experts and represents the first intervention of its kind. The evaluation trial of the program is forthcoming.

**Introduction**

Both depression and alcohol misuse represent two of the major social and health problems facing young people worldwide[^4]. Frequently, these conditions co-occur and this is associated with high rates of:

- Suicidal ideation and behaviours;
- Attrition, relapse and poor treatment response;
- Functional impairment.^[4]^ Yet less than 25% of affected young people access health services in a 12-month period[^4].

Advantages regarding flexibility, anonymity, cost, reach, and interactivity make the Internet an ideal means by which to engage young people in treatment, overcoming many traditional barriers. Although Internet-based interventions have been shown to be effective in treating depression[^2] and alcohol use[^2] alone, only one intervention addressing both disorders in adults (the computerised SHADE program) has been evaluated[^11]. No youth-focused or Internet-based co-morbidity interventions of this kind have been developed and trialled.

**Method**

Figure 1 illustrates the procedure used to develop the DEAL Project program.

**Program control**

- **Week 1**: Psycho-education, assessment, goal setting, mood/activity/alcohol use monitoring.
- **Week 2**: Behavioural activation, decisional balance (alcohol use), behaviour change, activity scheduling.
- **Week 3**: Mood monitoring, cognitive restructuring.
- **Week 4**: Coping skills: mindfulness + relaxation, problem solving, drink reduction + refusal, relapse planning + management.

**Delivery**

- Brief (9-week), online self-help intervention for mood and depressive and probielematic alcohol use.

The program components:

- CBT-based principles;
- Motivational enhancement principles;
- Solution-focused and skills-based interactivity and engagement;
- Self-selected case studies;
- Personalised normative feedback;
- User input and control (flexible timing + content).

**Results**

- Figures 2 and 3 present the results of the focus groups (N = 25, 18-25 year olds).

**Evaluation phase**

Recruitment for the evaluation of the program is set to commence. The trial will run the DEAL Project against an attention control condition, HealthyWalls[^2]. Figure 6 details the flow of participants through this effectiveness trial phase.

**Conclusion**

The DEAL Project program was well received by the young people and key experts and represents the first intervention of its kind. The evaluation trial of the program is forthcoming.

**References**

[^2]: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales, NSW, Australia; 2 National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales, NSW, Australia.
[^3]: Centre for Brain and Mental Health Research, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, NSW.