



Title	Computerized Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Depression and Anxiety Update: A Systematic Review and Economic Evaluation
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Reference	Health Technol Assess 2006;10(33). September 2006. www.hta.ac.uk/execsumm/summ1033.htm

Aim

To evaluate computerized cognitive behavior therapy (CCBT) in treating anxiety, depression, phobias, panic, and obsessive-compulsive behavior (OCD). Software packages to be considered include Beating the Blues (BtB), Overcoming Depression: a five areas approach, FearFighter (FF), Cope, and BT Steps.

Conclusions and results

Twenty studies were identified in the clinical effectiveness review. Analysis of these results showed some evidence that CCBT is as effective as therapist-led cognitive behavior therapy (TCBT) in treating depression/anxiety and phobia/panic and is more effective than treatment as usual (TAU) in treating depression/anxiety. CCBT also appears to reduce therapist time compared to TCBT.

In reviewing cost-effectiveness studies, only one published economic evaluation of CCBT was found. This was an economic evaluation of the depression software BtB alongside a randomized controlled trial (RCT), which found that BtB was cost effective against TAU in terms of cost per quality-adjusted life-year (QALY) (less than GBP 2000). However, it contained weaknesses that were then addressed in the cost-effectiveness model developed for the study.

For the depression software packages the incremental cost per QALY compared with TAU (and the chance of being cost effective at GBP 30 000 per QALY) were GBP 1801 (86.8%) for BtB, GBP 7139 (62.6%) for Cope, and GBP 5391 (54.4%) for Overcoming Depression. The strength of the BtB software being that it has been evaluated in the context of an RCT with a control group. Subgroup analysis found no differences across severity groupings. For phobia/panic software, the model showed an incremental cost per QALY of FF over relaxation of GBP 2380. Its position compared with TCBT is less clear. For OCD packages, a practice-level license cost for BT Steps was dominated by TCBT, which had significantly better outcomes and was cheaper. However, the

cheaper PCT level license resulted in the incremental cost effectiveness of BT Steps over relaxation being GBP 15 581 and TCBT over BT Steps being GBP 22 484.

Recommendations

Evidence based on randomized controlled trial supports the effectiveness of BtB and FF. BtB and FF would appear to be cost effective. The cost effectiveness of the two other depression packages and the package for OCD is less certain.

Methods

A systematic review was performed to identify all studies describing trials of CCBT. The cost-effectiveness assessment includes a review of the literature and the evidence submitted by sponsors for each of the products. A series of cost-effectiveness models was developed and run by the project team for the 5 CCBT products across the 3 mental health conditions.

Further research/reviews required

Research is needed to compare CCBT with other therapies that reduce therapist time, in particular bibliotherapy, and to explore the use of CCBT via the Internet. Independent research is needed, particularly RCTs, that examine areas such as patient preference and therapist involvement within primary care.