Improving Psychological Treatments

What works to promote emotional wellbeing in older people?

- Do you constantly feel overwhelmed?
- Do you constantly feel worried or concerned about things?
- Do you often feel tense and anxious?
- Do you feel like you don’t have the motivation to participate in your usual activities?
- Do you find it hard to get out of bed or to get on with tasks that need to be done?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions you might be eligible to participate in a research study to treat feelings of worry, anxiety and low mood in older adults.

WHAT IS THIS STUDY ABOUT?

This study is funded by National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and Beyond Blue. The purpose of this study is to compare the effectiveness of two psychological approaches to treating symptoms of low mood and anxiety in older adults. Both use cognitive behavioural therapy, a type of therapy that helps change unhealthy habits of thinking, feeling or behaving, which has been shown to be effective for managing symptoms. The two approaches differ in the emphasis on social interactions. You are eligible to participate if you are aged 65 years or older. This treatment program is available to ALL eligible older Australians.

WHAT PARTICIPATION INVOLVES:

If you agree to participate, we will first conduct a brief screening with you over the telephone, then we will ask to complete a more detailed interview, some memory and concentration tasks, and some questionnaires. If suitable, you will then be offered one of the two cognitive behavioural therapy programs. Both involve 12 face-to-face sessions (each 1 hour) at the Centre for Emotional Health clinic, Macquarie University (treatment can also be conducted via telehealth or telephone). Allocation to the two programs will be random (like drawing names out of a hat). At the end of the program you will complete the same assessment again, and again 9 months later.

If you are interested in finding out more about this treatment study, please contact the research program coordinator at SPAA@mq.edu.au or (02) 9850 8715.