Training in Cognitive Behavioural Techniques for the Management of Dental Phobia

Outline Proposal

Overview

There is significant evidence from clinical trials that the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for the management of Dental Phobia leads to sustained change in self-reported levels of dental anxiety, and importantly an increased likelihood to attend primary dental care and receive treatment without the need for pharmacological interventions such as conscious sedation and general anaesthesia (Kvale et al 2004; Boman et al 2010).

The Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Trust Dental Psychology Service (DPS) set up in 2008 was the first service dedicated to the management of dental phobia in NHS settings. It has established not only that such services are acceptable to patients, but can be effective in supporting patients to receive dental care without sedation - 93% of patients attending the service achieve this goal (Kani et al 2015).

As part of our ongoing desire to provide all individuals with dental phobia the opportunity to benefit from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy we have devised a Training course for services who wish to incorporate CBT into their dental services. To date we have run the course and helped set up 8 services.

The Training provided aims to provide the skills and knowledge required for a team of dental health care professionals to set up and deliver cognitive behavioural techniques for the management of dental phobia. By the end of the training period attendees will be able to:

1. Undertake an assessment to determine the suitability of patients for the use of cognitive behavioural techniques to manage their dental anxiety.
2. Plan a course of sessions for each patient, based on the initial assessment, to undertake cognitive and behavioural exercises with the goal of the patient being able to attend and receive dental treatment without sedation or general anaesthesia.
3. Undertake a course of sessions for each patient, based on the initial assessment, to undertake cognitive and behavioural exercises with the goal of the patient being able to attend and receive dental treatment without sedation or general anaesthesia.
4. Understand the need for clinical supervision as part of their work.
5. Identify common problems arising during treatment and devise methods to address them.
6. Outline the infrastructure needs to support the service (for example, space, clinical co-ordination, other resources etc)

Please note

a) The training provided cannot be considered sufficient for individuals to practice as CBT therapists. This would require a more extensive training.
b) There is a need for external supervision of all trained personnel which is ongoing. WE recommend that staff meet at least monthly with a suitably qualified Cognitive Behaviour Therapist or Practitioner Psychologist for supervision.

Format

The training course takes place over Two days, typically four weeks apart. The two days adopt a range of pedagogic approaches with a strong emphasis on experiential learning. Methods used include:

- Role playing
- Small group discussions
- Task setting and homework (between sessions)
- Self-directed learning
- Demonstrations
- Lectures

These approaches are supplemented by a range of resources (see below)

Audience

The course is open to dental health care professionals, practitioner psychologists or cognitive behaviour therapists who are developing services designed to work with individuals with dental phobia.

Typically we have trained groups of dental nurses.

Resources provided

All attendees are provide with the following:

- A copy of Hare J, Bruj-Milasan G, Munzandi V & Newton JT *Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Dental Anxiety: A Manual for the Dental Team*. Shancocks Publishing, 2023.
- Copies of all assessment materials
- Copies of resources to be used during CBT sessions including:
- Draft Information Leaflets
    - Worksheets
    - Video materials
    - Audio resources
    - Photographs

The Training Team

The training team are all members of the Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Trust Dental Psychology Service (DPS), a specialist service that exists to identify, assess and treat psychological difficulties that are related to and/or impact on dental care , treatment and outcomes. The DPS provides evidence based assessment and treatment. It has strong academic links and plays an active role in teaching, training, research and dissemination.

Jennifer Hare is Consultant Health Psychologist. As Clinical Lead, her role is to develop the NHS-based service, providing psychological interventions (including CBT) to patients with dental phobia and other dental-related issues.

Geanina Bruj-Milasan is Clinical Nurse Specialist and Trainee Health Psychologist. Her role is to support and deliver patient intervention and treatment for patients receiving Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. She works closely with Jen and Tim in assessing and devising a treatment plan to suit the needs of each individual patient.

Veronica Munzandi is Clinical Nurse Specialist and Oral Health Educator. Her role is to support and deliver patient intervention and treatment for patients receiving Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Working closely with Jen and Tim, Veronica assesses and devises treatment plans to suit the needs of each individual patient.

Tim Newton is Professor of Psychology as Applied to Dentistry at King's College London Faculty of Dentistry and Honorary Consultant Health Psychologist at Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Trust. Tim was one of the founding members of the Dental Psychology Service in 2008 and has worked within the dental field for nearly four decades. His research interests lie particularly in theory-based interventions to change behaviour in relation to oral health and the management of dental anxiety and phobia.

Jen Hare and Tim were contributors to the development of NHS Clinical Guide for Dental Anxiety Management https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/clinical-guide-for-dental-anxiety-management/

Costs

The cost per participant is £1000 including all resources

The minimum number of participants per course is 4, the maximum 16

Venues & catering are the responsibility of the service who are booking the training (the purchaser), but could be costed by the team on request.

Travel and overnight accommodation for the training team if required will be invoiced to the purchaser.