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International Mental Health Consulting, Inc. team publishes two important research studies on EMDR & Ukrainian Clinicians in War

Alexandria, VA – Two new research papers by International Mental Health Consulting, Inc. [IMHC] team members, Dr. Cindy Palen and Dr. Amber Quaranta-Leech have been recently published in the *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*.

"Early Intervention for Clinicians in War Zones" by Dr. Cindy Palen, along with Dr. Olya Zaporozhets, Dr. Lisa Compton and Dr. Marilyn Luber, studied Ukrainian clinicians operating in war zones and enduring ongoing traumatic stress - the same symptoms as their clients. This quantitative randomized controlled trial studied Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Group Traumatic Episode Protocol (EMDR G-TEP) with profound results in reducing symptoms of wartime psychological distress in Ukrainian mental health clinicians. Results of this study suggest that virtual delivery of EMDR G-TEP may be an effective intervention in reducing symptoms of wartime psychological distress among clinicians working with clients amid war. The full research paper can be accessed at: <https://spj.science.org/doi/10.34133/jemdr.0012>

There is a need to understand ways to reduce traumatic stress impact on those who live and work in ongoing stress environments. **"Randomized Controlled Trial on the Provision of the EMDR-IGTP-OTS-R for Reduction of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Symptomology with Mental Health Professionals in Ukraine during the War"** by Dr. Amber Quaranta-Leech, along with Dr. Olya Zaporozhets, Dr. Ignacio Jarero, and Dr. Daniel Holland, shows through a randomized controlled trial how this specific EMDR protocol can have positive and lasting results for our colleagues living in a nation at war. Results of this study show the EMDR-IGTP-OTS-R protocol as a beneficial treatment for the reduction of PTSD symptomology in those who are living and working in an ongoing war-related traumatic stress situation. The full research paper can be accessed at: <https://spj.science.org/doi/10.34133/jemdr.0007>



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In addition to this new research showing the efficacy of EMDR during war and not just after the fact, IMHC's partner organization **Ukraine Institute of Traumatherapy** is part of an international collaboration: **VR-Ukraine**. This project was launched on April 30, 2025, with the support of the UPF program of the Government of the Netherlands.

On 1-4 September 2025, an international team led Ukrainian doctors, psychologists, and rehabilitation specialists through the first trainings on state-of-the-art VR solutions in Uzhhorod, Kyiv, and Cherkasy. In the coming months, the program will expand to other regions of the country, and bring together Ukrainian specialists from eight hospitals. It is expected to run until 2028. 33 psychologists have already begun training and will receive highly specialized psychotherapeutic education in evidence-based methods, including EMDR, one of the most effective approaches in working with trauma.

The goal is to implement innovative VR methods to support people with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and provide physical rehabilitation for patients with injuries. The focus of the project, however, is not technology but people. VR therapy (VRET/EMDR-VR) is an evidence-based method that enables safe processing of traumatic experiences, reduces PTSD symptoms, and complements traditional therapy, making it deeper and more accessible.

"For us at UIT, this project is not just an innovation. It is a chance to provide real help to people who have experienced incredible trials. This is the first step of a pilot program that can become the basis for the large-scale implementation of VR therapy throughout Ukraine," says **Dr. Oksana Syvak, MD, Co-Founder & Director** of the **Ukraine Institute of Traumatherapy**.

To receive the press release with more information on VR-Ukraine,, please contact Carrie Ann Alford, U.S. Project Manager

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The **mission** of IMHC, Inc. is providing critical mental health, wellness, rehabilitation and support services to Ukraine, Israel and throughout the world.

Our **vision** to create a community where mental health is a top priority and individuals accessing the resources they need to achieve optimal well-being is more than just words. Our research projects are leading to cutting-edge trauma therapy, best practices and education of the next generation of clinicians providing world-class trauma care. We are excited to launch the Ukraine Institute of Traumatherapy capital campaign to build a state-of-the-art medical and mental health complex just south of Kyiv.

