OPTIMISING PATHWAYS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE AFTER TRANSIENT ISCHAEMIC ATTACK AND MINOR STROKE

A Newsletter from the OPTIMISE Study Team — Winter 2024

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What is OPTIMISE project?

OPTIMISE stands for **O**ptimising **P**athways of Psychological Care after **T**ransient **I**schaemic Attack and **MI**nor **S**trok**E** and is led by Dr Eirini Kontou, Assistant Professor and Clinical Psychologist. It is an acronym for a research project. The project focuses on improving emotional and cognitive (thinking) support for people who have experienced a TIA (transient ischaemic attack) or minor stroke, empowering them on their path to recovery.

You can learn more about the project and what we do on our website.

The study was also adopted by National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) ARC East Midlands and you can find out more about it here.

Meet the team: Eirini and Sandra

Eirini Kontou is a Clinical Psychologist at Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and an Assistant Professor at the University of Nottingham. She is the Lead Investigator for the OPTIMISE project.

Sandra Wydera has a background in health psychology and criminology. She works as an Assistant Psychologist and a Research Support Officer. On OPTIMISE project, she is the first point of contact if you have questions about taking part in the research or joining our Patient and Public Involvement group.

Umbrella review protocol now published!


STUDY PROTOCOL

REVISED **Psychological interventions for mood and cognition after stroke and transient ischaemic attack: A protocol for an umbrella review [version 2; peer review: 2 approved]**

Eirini Kontou, Farhad Shokraneh, Roshan das Nair, Terry Quinn, Leonardi-Bee, Naomi Thorpe, Naomi Clifford, Marie Williams, Sandra Wydera, Avril Drummond

First part of the OPTIMISE project involves conducting a systematic review of previous literature on the psychological interventions for neuropsychological (specifically mood and cognition) difficulties after stroke/TIA.

We have now published a protocol for the review and it is available here. **It has been viewed over 500 times now!**

We also presented the initial findings from the review in a poster format at the 21st NR-SIG-WFNR Conference.

Research Participation Opportunity

Exploring Factors which relate to PTSD and Mood Problems post-TIA

Chloe Webb, Trainee Clinical Psychologist under supervision of Eirini, is looking for adults who experienced a TIA to take part in a short survey about their experiences. See details below and if you have any questions about the study, please feel free to email Chloe on: chloe.webb1@nottingham.ac.uk

About Chloe's project

Transient Ischaemic Attacks (TIA), often called 'mini strokes', can leave people feeling worried and anxious. However, currently within the UK there is minimal research into the psychological effects of a TIA, and healthcare services do not always recognise their emotional impact. Our study hopes to explore what factors might lead to someone experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mood concerns after a TIA, and potentially highlight patients' unmet needs.

If you are an **adult** who has experienced a **TIA** within the **past 3-months**, and are not currently receiving any psychological therapy, please scan the **QR code** or click the link below to complete a quick survey about your experiences. The survey includes information about the study, alongside completing questions relating to demographics, mood, how you coped with your TIA, and how you thought about it afterwards. The survey only needs to be completed once.

Link to survey: https://loom.ly/u3EorF8

What is Patient and Public Involvement?

Patient and Public Involvement in research is all about researchers involving people with lived experiences or living knowledge of their research topic, within their research processes.

In health and social care research, people with experiences will frequently be part of research by being invited to participate in research as recruits. Participants or recruits in research are the people whose experiences and knowledge will be listened to, understood, studied and catalogued as part of the research data.

However, Patient and Public Involvement is beyond this. Patient and Public Involvement in research is about research teams working with people who understand what is being researched and through their own experience and knowledge they can advise, help and do work with the researchers to help make the research relevant, successful and impactful to both the research and public goals.

This Patient and Public Involvement activity, by members of the public is very important and it can involve many different things throughout the course of a research study. Here in the OPTIMISE team we are really lucky to work with a group of people who understand and have similar experiences to the people who are participating in the research. Our Patient and Public Involvement group meet once every 3 months face to face and get involved in conversations about the research with tips, suggestions and enthusiasm!

If Patient and Public Involvement in research sounds like something you'd like to find out more about or get involved with then you can contact imhinvolve@nottshc.nhs.uk for more information. We'd love to hear from you.

Thank you for reading!