

DARE progress report Year 2

Project Title Effectiveness of Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Preventing Depressive Relapse in Subjects at Very High Risk

Grant Type : Project Grant

NHMRC Application ID: 436897

Administering Institution: Monash University

Chief Investigator A: Prof. Graham Meadows

Year Funding Commenced: 2007

Date of report: 16 February 2009

Overview: This is primarily a multisite pragmatic RCT while secondarily the project will examine therapeutic mechanisms for how a mindfulness based therapy may prevent relapse of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD). Patients are people who have had at least three prior episodes of MDD and who are currently in remission. The intervention is the 8-week group treatment course of Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) as practiced by locally recruited and trained clinicians within Australian settings. Control condition is treatment as usual (TAU) with the

addition of regular self monitoring for depressive symptoms.

Outcomes include time to MDD relapse, time in depressive episodes, and healthcare costs.

Candidate intermediary variables monitored include medication compliance and time spent in meditation.

Progress: The project is running on time to the project plan. In the second year we have

completed recruitment based on revised power calculations and conducted 5 more therapy groups. Specific aspects of progress as follows:

- Recruited 204 eligible participants with 102 participants randomised to each treatment condition. Seven participants have withdrawn following allocation to treatment.
- Recruitment closed January 2009. 482 inquiries led to 380 phone screenings with 250 candidates proceeding to a face-to-face intake assessment interview.
- In the fourth quarter of 2008 we revised our power calculations to take into account the available data regarding the proportion of the sample taking medication, a likely lower rate of attrition, and the fact that our follow up period is 26 months, not 24 months. This reduced our required sample size to 196 eligible participants from 276 (number assessed for eligibility reduced to 245 from 344). A review of the power calculations at the end of recruitment confirmed that the study is adequately powered.
- Three-year approval to conduct the trial was received from the Barwon Health Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) and The Alfred HREC.
- We recruited and trained a further 15 casual research interviewers in two day training courses conducted in April and July.
- From September – November 2008 we completed a practitioner training cycle for 18 new MBCT therapists, including the final training of 5 therapists from Adelaide.
- Five therapy groups delivered MBCT to 37 participants (plus 9 participants who received less than four sessions of therapy).
- Data collected to 15 months for the first group of 13 participants.

