

Purpose

- To reinforce management strategies which help patients cope with anxiety
- To give clinicians knowledge of patients' subjective measurement of their anxiety which will inform clinical sessions
- To improve engagement with a treatment plan by reminding patients, who may have short term memory difficulties, of the messages which help them to manage their anxiety.

Setting:

Mental health community teams, or general practice with a clinician who is specialised in managing anxiety.

Selection of patients

- Community patients who have been diagnosed with anxiety disorder who are currently in treatment with a specified plan of care pertaining to an anxiety management programme / interventions with a clinician.
- The patient will have been provided with strategies / interventions to assist them to manage their anxiety but may be new to this approach.
- Patients who may have memory or attention difficulties who may benefit from regular text message prompts in order to assist or encourage compliance and to enable reinforcement of linking high anxiety levels with implementing anxiety management strategies.

Expected outcomes:

1 Changes in healthcare usage:

- increase compliance with CBT treatment plans / interventions.

2 Improved clinical outcomes:

- Improved risk reduction for modifiable risk factors

3 Patient empowerment:

- Increased patient understanding and reinforcement of the need to rate their mood (anxiety) and measure their subjective units of distress within their treatment.
- Linking mood measurement and monitoring may assist patients to use suggested CBT interventions and increase self –management increasing autonomy.
- Possible improved mood management and self- management and increased mental wellbeing.

4 Benefits for patients:

- Patients may find Flo messages helpful to prompt and reinforce new / forgotten knowledge acquired between clinical sessions.
- Clinicians find Flo text messaging provides patient with reminders and prompts and improved compliance with mood management plans. Provision of health promotional information via text messaging does not require excessive clinical time and may save time within clinical sessions.

5 Cost effectiveness:

- Reduction in costs of secondary care use (eg appointments at clinical sessions)

Success criteria

- 50% of patients who committed at start do at least 10 days of responding to texts over a 3-week period.
- Made improvements to their wellbeing
- 50% of patients manage to rate their anxiety during the 4 week period

Protocol summary (3 weeks):

- The patient receives the text messages daily for a period of three weeks.

Patient:

- has a formulation and treatment plan completed with a clinician.
- has a copy of the 0-8 rating scale
- signs contract, agreeing to respond to messages from Flo.
- receives interactive messages, and tries to adopt the advice contained in them.

Clinician:

- ensures the patient has an established treatment plan for anxiety disorder. This has been completed by the clinician in collaboration with the patient and the patient receives a copy of this.
- provides a copy of the 0-8 anxiety rating scale.
- obtains written consent from the client to receive and respond to the interactive text messaging protocol.
- enrolls patient on Flo by using the patient's current mobile phone number and NHS number.
- evaluates the effectiveness of the Flo messaging system by monitoring patient feedback.

Reminder message

Once on day 1 and again on day 13:

Just to remind you your responses go to an automated messaging service and may not be seen by a clinician for several days. Flo.

Anxiety question

Daily at 10:00:

Please say how anxious you are today, on a score of 0-8 where 0 = no anxiety, and 8=high anxiety. Please reply ANX, followed by your score, eg ANX 4 Thanks, Flo

2 hours later if no reply:

You haven't said how anxious you are today, on a score of 0-8 where 0 = no anxiety, and 8=high anxiety. Reply ANX, then your score, eg ANX 4 Thanks, Flo.

0 - 4:

Great! You are managing your anxiety really well. Thanks Flo.

Well done your readings are low! Please keep practising the strategies you have learned. Thanks Flo.

This is good! You are successful in managing your anxiety well. Keep going with what is working! Thanks Flo.

Today your readings are in the low range. You are obviously working hard in managing your anxiety levels. Well done!

Your readings are low and you are doing really well by successfully keeping your body's fear response under control. Keep going! Thanks Flo.

You are making such good progress by identifying anxiety triggers and managing it well. Well done! Thanks Flo

You are back in control of your anxiety instead of allowing it to control you. This is fantastic; well done! Thanks Flo.

Excellent! Your anxiety ratings are low you doing so well but remember to keep referring to your treatment plan often. Thanks Flo

It is good you are managing your anxiety well. Keep practising the techniques in your treatment plan to help maintain your progress. Thanks Flo.

Well done! You are working well on your treatment plan. Keep practising. Thanks Flo.

5 – 6:

Your anxiety is a little high today please refer to your plan of care and use your anxiety management strategies now. Thanks Flo

It can feel overwhelming when your ratings are high but keep motivated to practice your techniques as this will help lower your anxiety. Thanks Flo.

Plan some quiet time into your day to practice your anxiety management interventions and reflect on what situations you have been finding difficult Flo.

Take five deep, relaxing breathes. Breathing in deeply through your nose and exhaling out of your mouth. Visualise the tension leaving your body. Thanks Flo.

Look at the anxiety management strategies in your care plan soon and try to use them to help reduce today's readings. Thanks Flo.

Sometimes unhelpful and negative thoughts can trigger anxiety. Jotting down when they occur can sometimes help identify situations that trigger them. Flo.

Your readings tell me that you could benefit from your controlled breathing strategies. Read your prompt sheet and have a go. It should help. Thanks Flo.

Concentrating on the here and now instead of worrying about the future or ruminating on the past can help you reduce your anxiety readings. Try it now! Flo.

Remember anxiety is the brain's normal response to stressors. Stepping back and having a think about how you manage it can often help. Thanks Flo.

Noting down the triggers for your higher anxiety times may help. You could review them with your clinician at your next session. Thanks Flo.

7 - 8:

Your anxiety is very high today. Please contact your clinician within working hours and at the earliest opportunity for support. Thanks Flo.

Patient Experience Questions

Day 1 (xEvalQ-01 / 02)

Do you feel confident that you understand your anxiety? Please text CC 1 if you do, or CC2 if you don't understand your anxiety.

Do you think that text messages will help you? Text CC1 if you think they will, or CC2 if you don't. Thanks, Flo

Thank you. I hope you'll find the programme useful. Take care, Flo

After 3 weeks: (xEvalQ-03 /04 / 05)

Please text CC1 if you agree with the statement "I would recommend this service to my friends and family", or CC2 if you disagree.

Thank you. Now, do you feel confident you understand your anxiety better? Please text CC1 if you do, or CC2 if you do not. Thanks, Flo.

Please text CC1 if you agree with the statement "I find the messages from Flo are helpful", or CC2 if you disagree.

Thank you for answering these questions. Knowing how useful you find the texting service helps us to improve it for future patients.