Money and Mental Health
What the research says
Professor Dame Til Wykes
& Dr Hannah Belcher
Sharp rise in mental illness among those whose income fell away during Covid

Steepest decline in wellbeing came among those newly reliant on universal credit and self-employment grants, UK survey finds

- Coronavirus - latest updates
- See all our coronavirus coverage

- Bigger increase in those in weaker financial positions at the onset

- The economic fallout of the pandemic will last beyond lockdown measures

The Guardian (28/04/2021) report on NatCen Social Research
Second Wave

Covid: Depression rises in young and women during second peak

5 May 2021

Women and younger adults were more likely to feel depressed during the second UK coronavirus peak than men and other age groups, Office for National Statistics (ONS) data suggests.

BBC News (05/05/2021), report on Office of National Statistics

Second Wave

• 100% increase in rates of depression during the pandemic

• 1 in 3 adults unable to afford unexpected expenses experienced depression early 2021
People with financial difficulties are more likely to have mental health difficulties and less likely to recover
Jenkins et al, 2008; Acton, 2016

People with mental health difficulties are more likely to have money worries and struggle to gain/process advice
Bond & Holkar, 2020; MIND, 2011
Financial problems and IAPT

Access difficulties include:

- Lack of mental health awareness
- Not knowing if a client is being supported
- Struggling to make first contact

Only 6% are signposted for help

Acton, 2016, *The Missing Link*
Predicted recovery rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Rate for those without financial difficulties</th>
<th>Rates for those with financial problems</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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Acton, 2016, *The Missing Link*
Designing a Combined Intervention
Interviews
Exploring benefits and design of the intervention with service users and staff

Case Studies
Testing the combined intervention and its acceptability with patients

Feasibility
Comparison of those receiving combined intervention and those signposted
## Intervention Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants:</th>
<th>Topic Questions:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ 14 IAPT practitioners</td>
<td>• How you feel about adding debt advice to IAPT talking therapies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ 6 Citizen’s Advice money advisors</td>
<td>• When is the best time to introduce the debt advice during therapy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ 16 former IAPT service users</td>
<td>• What format should the debt advice be given in?</td>
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</tbody>
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**Interviews**
Staff Views

Benefits of the combined intervention

Therapists would know their clients are receiving support:
“...knowing that there is somebody supporting them in that area that you could sort of check in with them, gives you that assurance that they are their needs are being met in this area”

It would free up therapy time:
“I guess in having that specialist support you can have that more focussed time thinking about the intervention”

It could improve client engagement overall:
“because you as a therapist can set it up for them it takes the stress and the administrative time away from them. Um so I think they would be quite likely to [engage]”
Timing the Debt Advice

IAPT Therapist
Start before the therapy:

“...what might be really nice and try to what I can imagine would be incredibly helpful actually for them, is if they were able to engage in that whilst they were waiting for therapy.”

CA Money Advisor
Start after the therapy:

“I would think that the talking therapy would start first and then so the client is informed that you know we’re going to get a debt advice session alongside to support you, because most clients are overwhelmed if you give them too much information at the same time...”
Service User Views

What debt advice should help with

How to maximise income and navigate the benefits system:
“whether your getting everything you need or entitled to because that’s also a struggle.”

Help prioritising credit repayments and budgeting:
“I think getting a handle on your budget, bills your monthly bills”

Acting in an advocacy role and supporting to take action:
“I was just really struggling to manage it myself, and so they acted as my third party”

Understanding the emotional consequences like overspending:
“For me personally I guess probably um looking at why I’m spending and obviously for me there is a emotional or psychological reason”
Adding Debt Advice to IAPT

How should the debt advice work?

- Ask at triage
- Run in parallel
- 30 minute sessions
- One-to-one
- Tailored contact
- Online or face to face
- Flexible time limits
- Shared info with IAPT

staff
service users
both
“The to do list”
<table>
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<th>Case Studies to assess feasibility</th>
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<tr>
<td>▪ 20 IAPT clients</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Receiving ‘high-intensity’ IAPT treatment and debt advice intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Exit interviews with patients and staff involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Measures of mental health and money worries taken pre and post</td>
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</table>
Measuring outcomes

**Referral**
- High-intensity IAPT
- Screen those ‘with financial difficulties affecting their mental health’
- Mental health measured
- Refer to a money advisor

**Intervention**
- Patients receive both services in parallel
- Communication between therapist and advisor encouraged

**Outcomes**
- Patients interviewed at the end of therapy
- Measure:
  - Confidence in managing finances
  - Mental health
- Patients continue with money advisor for as long as needed
Next Steps...

• **Feasibility** – Proportion of people eligible who take up the support
• **Acceptability** – Sessions attended and service satisfactions
• **Evaluation** – Mental health and financial worry changes