

Title: The effectiveness of a CBT informed approach within older adult services: addressing issues of collaboration and flexibility to enhance engagement and improve outcomes.

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- ▶ **Aims:** To provide psychological assessment, formulation and intervention for an 80 year old female experiencing significant carer stress related to the deteriorating health of her husband who was diagnosed with vascular dementia.
- ▶ **Method:** Cognitive behaviour therapy was identified as the preferred approach, within a framework of collaborative empiricism. Jointly developed goals of identifying and modifying dysfunctional thoughts, assumptions and core beliefs and recognising and addressing patterns of unhelpful behaviours were identified.
- ▶ The client was introduced to psychoeducation regarding unhelpful thoughts, and tools such as activity and mood diaries were utilised alongside behavioural experiments.
- ▶ A fair degree of flexibility was required and utilised during the sessions due to the health demands of the client and her husband, and using practical resources, and repetition of key ideas, supported her engagement.
- ▶ **Results:** The therapy took an unexpected turn after 6 sessions when the client's husband unfortunately passed away. Following discussion including through supervision, the focus of the therapy was broadened to deal with emerging issues of bereavement alongside original goals.
- ▶ The client continued to use practical techniques e.g. recognising thinking errors to help contain emotional distress and improve interpersonal effectiveness.
- ▶ The client coped well through this difficult period and attributed her new-found understanding of her thoughts and behaviour as important in this. She gradually became more confident to take responsibility and exert more control over her thoughts and emotions.
- ▶ She completed 11 sessions over which time she successfully started planning her future life, re-engaged with hobbies and widened her social network.
- ▶ The sessions were conducted between May 2019 to November 2019 with continued collaboration and flexibility offered to the client who was unable to attend some weeks in between due to the death of her husband, her physical health problems and the on call commitments of Dr Chorghade. This approach was successful and reflected a client centred therapeutic approach.
- ▶ **Conclusion and discussion:** The success of a model adherent yet flexible psychotherapeutic approach despite the emergence of unexpected adversity was demonstrated in this case.
- ▶ Therapeutic priorities were revised whilst retaining focus on original goals allowing for the success of the intervention to be measured.
- ▶ Significant learning was achieved for both the client and the developing therapist through a collaborative and supportive therapeutic relationship.