

Systematic review and economic modelling of the clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of art therapy among people with non-psychotic mental health disorders

Lesley Uttley,^{1*} Alison Scope,¹ Matt Stevenson,¹
Andrew Rawdin,¹ Elizabeth Taylor Buck,¹
Anthea Sutton,¹ John Stevens,¹ Eva Kaltenthaler,¹
Kim Dent-Brown² and Chris Wood³

¹School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR), University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK

²Department of Psychology, University of Hull, Hull, UK

³Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust, Netherthorpe House, Sheffield, UK

*Corresponding author

Declared competing interests of authors: Elizabeth Taylor Buck and Chris Wood are registered art therapists with the Health Care Professions Council. Kim Dent-Brown is a registered arts therapist with the Health Care Professions Council.

Published March 2015

DOI: 10.3310/hta19180

Plain English summary

Art therapy among people with mental health disorders

Health Technology Assessment 2015; Vol. 19: No. 18

DOI: 10.3310/hta19180

NIHR Journals Library www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk

Plain English summary

We evaluated evidence for the clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of art therapy for non-psychotic mental health disorders. The majority of mental health problems are non-psychotic (e.g. depression, anxiety and phobias). For some people, art therapy may be a more acceptable alternative form of psychological therapy than more standard forms of treatment, such as talking therapies.

The evidence is current to May 2013. Fifteen clinical trials (777 patients) assessed the effectiveness of art therapy. Art therapy was associated with positive changes to mental health symptoms compared with a control group in 10 out of the 15 studies. The control groups varied between trials. Four trials found some improvement but no difference between art therapy and the control group. One trial reported that outcomes were more favourable in the control group.

Twelve studies (188 service users and 16 service providers) assessed the acceptability and the potential benefits or harms of art therapy. Reported benefits of art therapy from service users included increased understanding of self and expression of feelings. Some areas of potential harm were also identified. The quality of all included studies was low to moderate.

A review to identify publications assessing the cost-effectiveness of art therapy was undertaken. One relevant case study, of a single patient, was identified. A new analysis was, therefore, conducted using data from three trials identified in the clinical review which found that art therapy is plausibly cost-effective compared with wait-list control. There were limitations with the evidence used to conduct this analysis so further investigation is needed before any final conclusions can be made.

ISSN 1366-5278 (Print)

ISSN 2046-4924 (Online)

Impact factor: 5.116

Health Technology Assessment is indexed in MEDLINE, CINAHL, EMBASE, The Cochrane Library and the ISI Science Citation Index and is assessed for inclusion in the Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects.

This journal is a member of and subscribes to the principles of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) (www.publicationethics.org/).

Editorial contact: nihredit@southampton.ac.uk

The full HTA archive is freely available to view online at www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/hta. Print-on-demand copies can be purchased from the report pages of the NIHR Journals Library website: www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk

Criteria for inclusion in the *Health Technology Assessment* journal

Reports are published in *Health Technology Assessment* (HTA) if (1) they have resulted from work for the HTA programme, and (2) they are of a sufficiently high scientific quality as assessed by the reviewers and editors.

Reviews in *Health Technology Assessment* are termed 'systematic' when the account of the search appraisal and synthesis methods (to minimise biases and random errors) would, in theory, permit the replication of the review by others.

HTA programme

The HTA programme, part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), was set up in 1993. It produces high-quality research information on the effectiveness, costs and broader impact of health technologies for those who use, manage and provide care in the NHS. 'Health technologies' are broadly defined as all interventions used to promote health, prevent and treat disease, and improve rehabilitation and long-term care.

The journal is indexed in NHS Evidence via its abstracts included in MEDLINE and its Technology Assessment Reports inform National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance. HTA research is also an important source of evidence for National Screening Committee (NSC) policy decisions.

For more information about the HTA programme please visit the website: <http://www.nets.nihr.ac.uk/programmes/hta>

This report

The research reported in this issue of the journal was funded by the HTA programme as project number 12/27/16. The contractual start date was in April 2013. The draft report began editorial review in April 2014 and was accepted for publication in July 2014. The authors have been wholly responsible for all data collection, analysis and interpretation, and for writing up their work. The HTA editors and publisher have tried to ensure the accuracy of the authors' report and would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive comments on the draft document. However, they do not accept liability for damages or losses arising from material published in this report.

This report presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). The views and opinions expressed by authors in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the HTA programme or the Department of Health. If there are verbatim quotations included in this publication the views and opinions expressed by the interviewees are those of the interviewees and do not necessarily reflect those of the authors, those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the HTA programme or the Department of Health.

© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2015. This work was produced by Uttley *et al.* under the terms of a commissioning contract issued by the Secretary of State for Health. This issue may be freely reproduced for the purposes of private research and study and extracts (or indeed, the full report) may be included in professional journals provided that suitable acknowledgement is made and the reproduction is not associated with any form of advertising. Applications for commercial reproduction should be addressed to: NIHR Journals Library, National Institute for Health Research, Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre, Alpha House, University of Southampton Science Park, Southampton SO16 7NS, UK.

Published by the NIHR Journals Library (www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk), produced by Prepress Projects Ltd, Perth, Scotland (www.prepress-projects.co.uk).

Editor-in-Chief of *Health Technology Assessment* and NIHR Journals Library

Professor Tom Walley Director, NIHR Evaluation, Trials and Studies and Director of the HTA Programme, UK

NIHR Journals Library Editors

Professor Ken Stein Chair of HTA Editorial Board and Professor of Public Health, University of Exeter Medical School, UK

Professor Andree Le May Chair of NIHR Journals Library Editorial Group (EME, HS&DR, PGfAR, PHR journals)

Dr Martin Ashton-Key Consultant in Public Health Medicine/Consultant Advisor, NETSCC, UK

Professor Matthias Beck Chair in Public Sector Management and Subject Leader (Management Group), Queen's University Management School, Queen's University Belfast, UK

Professor Aileen Clarke Professor of Public Health and Health Services Research, Warwick Medical School, University of Warwick, UK

Dr Tessa Crilly Director, Crystal Blue Consulting Ltd, UK

Dr Peter Davidson Director of NETSCC, HTA, UK

Ms Tara Lamont Scientific Advisor, NETSCC, UK

Professor Elaine McColl Director, Newcastle Clinical Trials Unit, Institute of Health and Society, Newcastle University, UK

Professor William McGuire Professor of Child Health, Hull York Medical School, University of York, UK

Professor Geoffrey Meads Professor of Health Sciences Research, Faculty of Education, University of Winchester, UK

Professor John Powell Consultant Clinical Adviser, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), UK

Professor James Raftery Professor of Health Technology Assessment, Wessex Institute, Faculty of Medicine, University of Southampton, UK

Dr Rob Riemsma Reviews Manager, Kleijnen Systematic Reviews Ltd, UK

Professor Helen Roberts Professor of Child Health Research, UCL Institute of Child Health, UK

Professor Helen Snooks Professor of Health Services Research, Institute of Life Science, College of Medicine, Swansea University, UK

Please visit the website for a list of members of the NIHR Journals Library Board:
www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/about/editors

Editorial contact: nihredit@southampton.ac.uk