

A group memory rehabilitation programme for people with traumatic brain injuries: the ReMemBrIn RCT

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Plain English summary

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Plain English summary

People with brain injuries often report memory problems. These difficulties can continue long after the injury, causing complications in daily life. Many people do not receive specific help for these memory problems after leaving hospital.

Our study explored whether receiving 'memory rehabilitation' (a group treatment to help people deal with memory difficulties) was better than the treatment that people usually receive to help reduce the frequency of forgetting in daily life.

We recruited 328 people who had memory problems following brain injury. About half were allocated at random to receive memory rehabilitation and half did not have any extra memory treatments, but everyone continued to receive their usual care. Those who had memory rehabilitation were offered 10 group sessions at which strategies were taught to help them cope with memory problems. We asked all participants to complete memory tests and questionnaires at the start of the study and again 6 and 12 months afterwards to find out whether the memory rehabilitation had any effect. Some participants were also interviewed about the study.

At the 6- and 12-month assessments, there were no differences between those who received memory rehabilitation and those who did not in terms of how often participants reported memory problems in their daily lives or how well they performed on memory tests. We also did not find any differences in participants' mood or quality of life. However, individual goals set by the participants at the start of the study were a little better met by those who received memory rehabilitation than by those who did not. The memory rehabilitation did not represent value for money. In interviews, participants reported positive experiences of taking part in the study and of attending the group sessions.

This group memory rehabilitation programme is unlikely to help people with memory problems following a brain injury more than the usual treatment that people receive. Some people may benefit more from memory rehabilitation than others, but this needs further investigation.

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