CF-Specific Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: Development of an intervention manual in partnership with adult patients with CF and CF healthcare providers

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**Objective**

The objective of this project is to develop an innovative, CF-specific cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) intervention for adults that can be integrated into existing CF care systems.

- 8 brief modules covering core CBT-based coping skills
- Can be flexibly-delivered in the outpatient clinic, by phone, or during inpatient admission
- Administered by existing members of the CF care team—nurses, social workers, psychologists
- Developed with input and feedback from adults with CF and CF health care providers
- Prevention-based, geared toward individuals with CF who screen in the mild or subclinical range on measures of depression and/or anxiety

**Impact**

This project will address a need for new approaches to prevent and treat depression and anxiety in CF:

- Interventions need to be brief, personalized, flexible, skills-based, and accessible to patients with CF via integration into the CF clinic setting.
- Modification and tailoring of existing traditional CBT protocols are required to specifically address:
  1) the emotional challenges of managing CF
  2) stressors related to disease management
  3) the transition to adult CF teams
  4) barriers to access to care

We hypothesize that the intervention will support individuals coping with CF by:

1) lowering perceived stress and existing symptoms of depression and anxiety
2) reducing the incidence of progression from mild to moderate and severe levels of these symptoms

**Audience**

Our primary audience is adults with CF who are interested in:

1) gaining individualized support to build skills to face current and future challenges in living with CF
2) preventing and treating symptoms of anxiety and depression

**Deliverables**

- We anticipate the following steps to engage patients and providers in the development of the intervention:
  
  1. Consultation with the CF Patient and Family Advisory Board at Massachusetts General Hospital
  2. Individual feedback (virtual focus groups) from 5-10 adults with CF
  3. Focus group with CF providers—physicians, nurses, social worker—regarding the integration of the intervention into the CF clinic setting

**Challenges**

The categorization of this project for intra-hospital review was challenging. It was not initially considered a research study, nor did it qualify as quality improvement. It was determined that IRB review would be needed to execute the focus group phase of the project.

**Ideal Next Steps**

- Next steps include piloting this intervention with individuals with CF, and developing and piloting a training program for intervention facilitators.
- Longer-term goals include formal testing of the feasibility, acceptability, and efficacy of the intervention in a multi-center randomized controlled trial.
- We have applied for clinical research funding from the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation to fund these next two phases of the project, and have received preliminary approval for the extended development phase.

**Treatment Manual and Patient Workbook: Summary of CF-Specific CBT Modules**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Overview and Introduction to CBT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Relaxation Skills Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Psychoeducation about Depression and Behavioral Activation Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sessions 4 and 5</td>
<td>Adaptive Thinking Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 6</td>
<td>Taking Charge of My Health: Problem-Solving to Address Barriers to Personal Self-Care Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 7</td>
<td>Psychoeducation about Anxiety/Facing Fears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 8</td>
<td>Maintaining Positive Changes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>