

The VirtualClinic

**Results of 16 Australian clinical trials,
lessons learned, and future plans**

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St Vincent's Hospital

The Team ...

- **CRUfAD Director:** Professor Gavin Andrews
- **VirtualClinic Director:** Dr Nickolai Titov
- **Clinicians:** Dr Emma Robinson, Dr Matthew Davies, Dr Edward Wims, Karen McIntyre, Jay Spence, Dr Alison Mahoney, Sarah Perini
- **Support Team:** Genevieve Schwencke, Karen Solley, Luke Johnston, Isabella Choi
- **Programmers:** Dan Winter, Jason Hando
- **Our participants!**



Australian Context



Australia: A big country

Australia: Population = 21.5 million

12-month cases of common mental disorders (prevalence)*

■ Anxiety Disorders (14.4%)

■ Panic	416 000 (2.6%)
■ Social Phobia	752 000 (4.7%)
■ GAD	432 000 (2.7%)
■ PTSD	1 024 000 (6.4%)

■ Mood Disorders (6.2%)

■ Depression	656 000 (4.1%)
■ Dysthymia	208 000 (1.3%)

Only 35% of people with a mental disorder seek treatment

Internet Usage in Australia

South Pacific and Oceania - Internet Statistics and Population - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.internetworldstats.com/pacific.htm#au

Climate Admin VirtualClinic - free Inte... IWS South Pacific and O... IWS Australia Internet Usa...

AUSTRALIA

AU - 21,262,641 population ('09) - Country Area: 7,682,557 sq km

Capital City: Canberra - GNI p.c.US\$ 26,900 ('04), per World Bank

16,926,015 users as of Feb/09, 79.6% penetration, [redacted]

4,700,200 broadband subscribers as of Sept/07, [redacted]

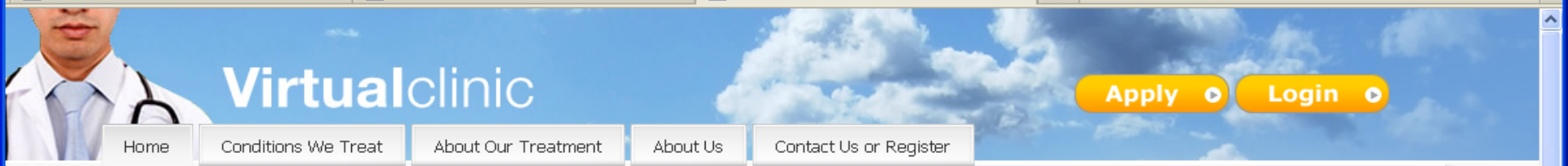
[Australia](#)
Information and map of Australia.

Site Links
(bottom menu)

[^ top of page](#)

Find: [input] Next Previous Highlight all Match case

Done



We provide free Internet-based education and treatment programs for people with anxiety and depression. Please note: we were formerly called *ClimateClinic*.



Social Phobia - 621 Australians treated for social phobia to date. 110 Australians registered in our current trial.
"I used to avoid social situations because of social anxiety. Now that I've completed the Shyness Program I can now go out for coffee with friends, something I would have never done before treatment."
[Read more...](#)



Generalized Anxiety Disorder - 48 Australians treated for GAD to date. 150 Australians registered in our current trial.
Our new Worry program aims to help people with extreme worry.
[Read more...](#)



Depression - 59 Australians treated for depression to date. 135 Australians enrolled in our current trial.
"My mood was so low I thought I was a failure and was losing hope that things could change. In the Sadness Program I'm now learning that by changing my habits I can improve my mood, and that's something I can control." [Read more...](#)



Panic and Agoraphobia - 52 Australians treated for panic to date.
"I was suffering panic attacks and thought I was going crazy. The Panic

Three Simple Steps to Join:

1. Read and learn
2. Apply or register
3. Accept and participate



Aims of the VirtualClinic

- Explore Internet-based strategies for enhancing existing Australian mental health services.
- Develop guided and self-guided Internet-based cognitive behavioural treatment (CBT) programs for common mental disorders:
 - Social Phobia
 - Panic Disorder
 - Depression
 - Generalized Anxiety Disorder
 - Others
 - Transdiagnostic programs

Model of Treatment

- Empowering people
- Replace “sage on the stage” with “guide on the side”
- Aim to:
 - Reduce severity (short-term)
 - Reduce vulnerabilities (longer-term)
 - Increase resilience (longer-term)
- Do this by:
 - Providing education/knowledge
 - Teaching skills - systematically
 - Providing guidance about overcoming hurdles and maintaining gains

Treatment Components

- Include:

- Psycho-education
- Behavioural activation
- Graded exposure
- Cognitive therapy
- Problem solving
- Communication skills
- Relapse prevention

**What Does the
VirtualClinic
Look Like?**



Lesson 1 Content

[View fullscreen](#)



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Lesson 1

Lesson 1

Lesson 1 Summary

After completing the lesson, please download the summary.

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Lesson 1 Forum



[Go to Forum](#)

Resources

There are **22 resources** for this course.

[View Resources](#)

Lesson 1 Stories from the Front Line

Hi I'm Bruce, I'm late starting after my ...

[Read more](#)

Messaging



5 new message(s).



91 old message(s).



1 sent message(s).



[Compose New Message](#)

[Go to Messages](#)



6 Lessons – Psycho-Education

6 Summaries/ Homework

6 Forums

Additional Resources - Systematically released

Stories from previous participants

Automatic Reminders/Prompt Emails

Guidance: Self vs. Technician vs. Clinician

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Lesson 1
Lesson 2

Messaging

VirtualClinic Results

3 Stages of Research

Stage 1: Evaluating proof of concept:

- Question: Does it work?
- Design: Clinician vs. Waitlist Control

Stage 2: Testing parameters:

- Question: Is Technician-guided as effective as Clinician-guided?
- Design: Clinician vs. Technician-guided

Stage 3: Evaluating effectiveness:

- Questions: Is ICBT equivalent to face to face? Are non-research clinicians effective?

Completed + Current Projects

Stage 1 = Proof of Concept – Clinician vs. Waitlist Control

Stage 2 = Parameters – Clinician vs. Technician support

Stage 3 = Effectiveness – ICBT vs. Face to Face, real world clinics

	Social Phobia	Depression	Panic Disorder	GAD	Trans- diagnostic
Stage 1	2 trials (n = 180)	2 trials (n = 58)	2 trials (n = 70)	1 trial (n = 48)	1 trial (n = 82)
Stage 2	4 trials (n = 450)	1 trial (n = 135)		1 trial (n = 151)	
Stage 3	2 trials (n = 67)				

16 Studies: Total n = 1200+

Results

Stage 1 = Proof of Concept – Clinician vs. Waitlist Control

Stage 2 = Parameters – Clinician vs. Technician support

Stage 3 = Effectiveness – ICBT vs. Face to Face, real world clinics

	Social Phobia	Depression	Panic Disorder	GAD	Trans- diagnostic
Stage 1 (120 min/p)	Treatment (ES = 1.0) > Control	Treatment (ES = 1.0) > Control	Treatment (ES = 1.0) > Control	Treatment (ES = 1.0) > Control	Treatment (ES = 1.0) > Control
Stage 2 (40 min/p)	Clin = Tech (ES = 1.3+) > Control	Clin = Tech (ES = 1.4+) > Control		???	
Stage 3 (40 min/p)	ICBT = F2F ES = 1.0+)				

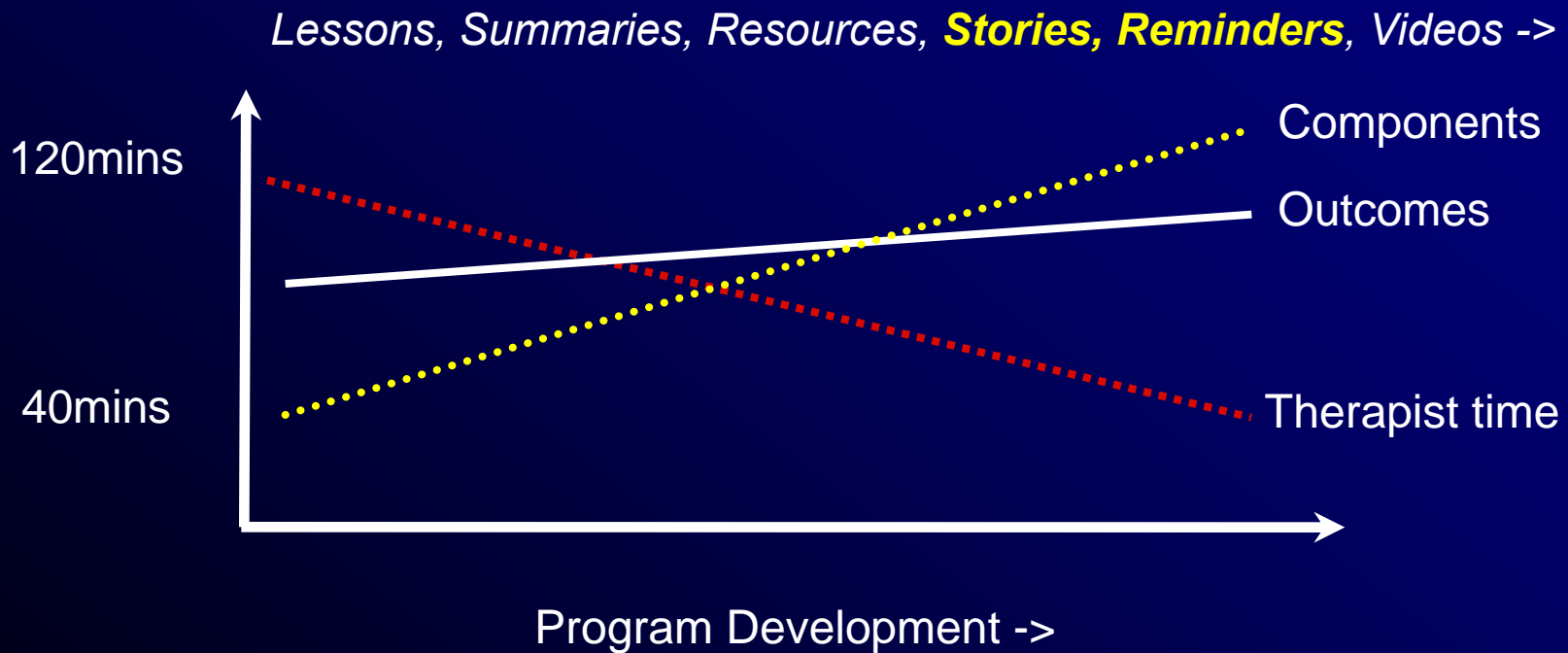
Effect Sizes: Disorder specific measures

Lessons Learned

Stage 1 = Proof of Concept – Clinician vs. Waitlist Control

Stage 2 = Parameters – Clinician vs. Technician support

Stage 3 = Effectiveness – ICBT vs. Face to Face, real world clinics



**Who Are Our
Patients?**

Who Uses VirtualClinic?

	National Survey 2007	Anxiety Disorders Clinic*	Virtual Clinic
Age	42	35	40
K-10	26	30	29
Gender (% male)	34%	42%	40%
Education (Tertiary)	53%	73%	58%
Married/de facto	33%	40%	52%
Employed	57%	52%	72%

* Face to face clinic at St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney

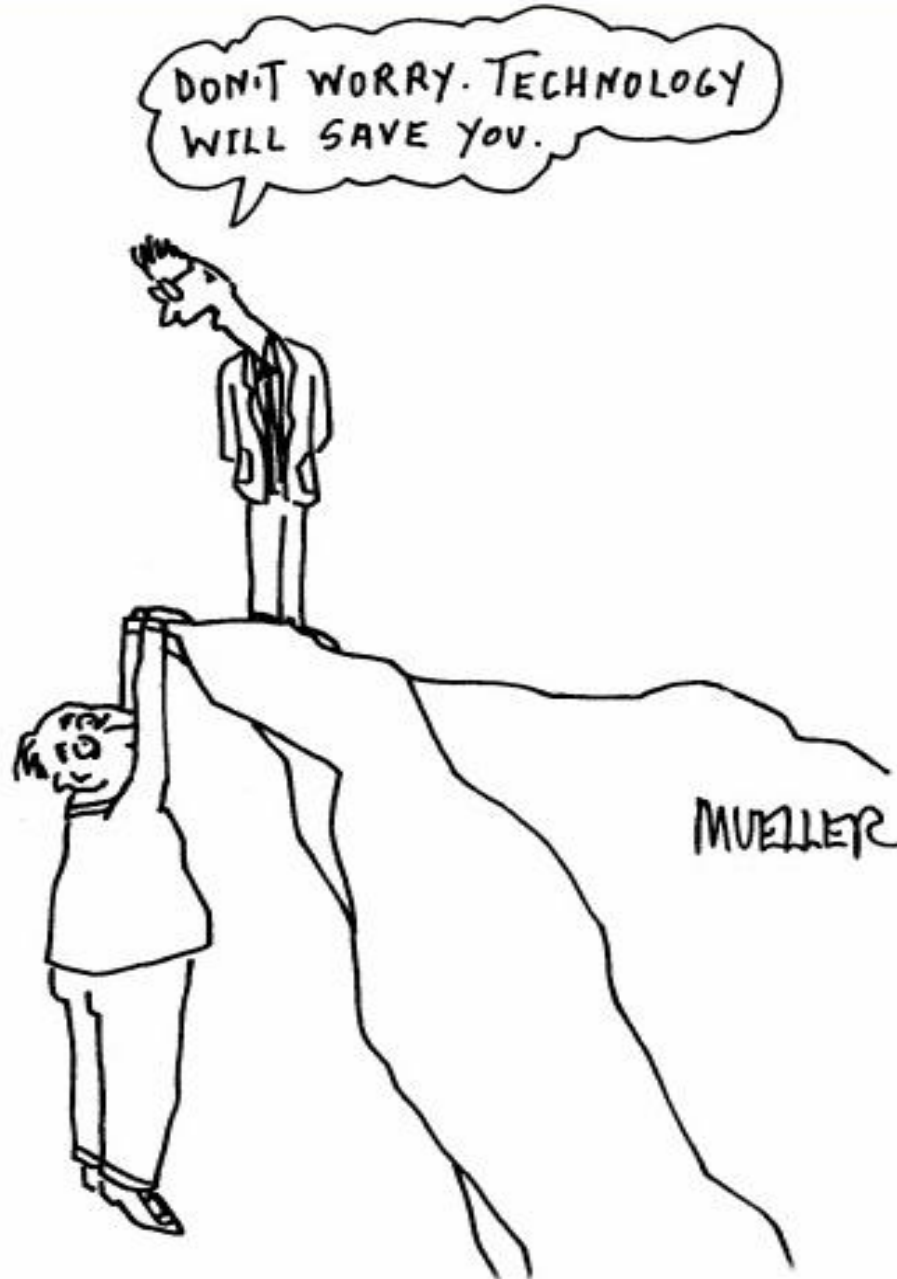
Severity of VirtualClinic patients same as Anxiety Disorders Clinic

What Have We Learned?

- Large demand
- The “modality” is initially a distraction
- Patients are not “unusual”
- Results are similar to face to face, acceptable, cost-effective, and sustained at 3 or 6 months
- Technicians can produce similar clinical outcomes as clinicians, at reduced cost, with similar acceptability
- VirtualClinics have the potential to be useful

Where To

- Evaluating:
 - Stage 2 and 3
 - Transdiagnostic programs
 - Self-guided programs
 - Booster programs
- Implementation:
 - CRUfADClinic for general practitioners
 - External clinicians using VirtualClinic
 - Stepped care modeling



Summary

- Considerable unmet need in Australian adults with anxiety or depression
- Pattern of results indicates:
[Clinician-guided = Technician-guided] > Waitlist
- Beginning implementation trials in wider community
- Exploring how to add value to results with additional components (pre and post-acute-treatment)
- VirtualClinic is popular and appears to have the potential to be a useful addition to existing services

- www.virtualclinic.org.au

- *Thank you ...*