

Participant Information Sheet

Emotion Regulation after Brain Injury (ER-ABI):

Group Therapy Program

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You are being invited to participate in a study which is being conducted by researchers from The University of Western Australia (UWA) because you have registered your interest via the Robin Winkler Clinic.

This information sheet explains what will be involved should you decide to participate. Please read the information carefully and ask any questions you might have.

Why we are doing the study

The purpose of this study is to pilot a group therapy program for individuals who have difficulty regulating their emotions following a brain injury. We hope to establish the effectiveness of this program in improving participants' ability to regulate their emotions. Our aim is to make the program widely available for use in settings such as inpatient or outpatient rehabilitation centres and hospitals.

What the ER-ABI group therapy sessions involve

The purpose of these sessions is to enable participants to identify and understand the difficulties they are experiencing regulating their emotions, and to develop strategies to help them better manage their emotions. There are 9 sessions altogether, 8 consecutive weekly sessions that run for 2 hours with two short breaks, and one follow-up session which will take place approximately one month after the eighth group therapy session. You will be asked to complete questionnaires that ask about how you regulate your emotions, your ability to complete daily living tasks, psychological symptoms and emotional functioning.

Each session will cover a different emotion process, strategy or concept and will build upon the previous sessions. The sessions will involve interactive group discussions about the target concept and some individual and group activities to demonstrate the concepts. Over the course

of the program, participants will develop skills and strategies that can be applied in everyday life to help better manage their emotions. The overall aim is for participants to apply the skills and practice using new strategies in their daily lives to ensure the therapeutic benefits of the program are sustained beyond the length of the program. All of the group sessions will be recorded for training and supervisory purposes. All recordings will be accessible by only the group facilitators and the clinical supervisor. Recordings will be retained for 30 days only and will then be deleted.

What participation in the program will involve

Before being invited to take part in the program, you will be asked to undertake a clinical interview and a neuropsychological assessment. This screening assessment will take approximately 2-3 hours and will take place at the Robin Winkler Clinic at UWA. The neuropsychological assessment will assess your thinking skills such as memory, mental flexibility and verbal skills to ensure that a group format is suitable for you. This, along with the clinical interview will enable us to assess your eligibility for the program, provide you with more detailed information, and to ensure your involvement in the program will be of benefit to you. If you are invited and you agree to take part, you will be required to attend all of the group therapy sessions (unless you are unwell). In order to integrate the therapeutic benefits of the program into your everyday lives, you will be asked to complete tasks and activities between sessions. These homework tasks are an essential and important part of the program and completion of these tasks is strongly encouraged.

You will also be asked to nominate a study partner and a supportive person (see below) to complete questionnaires and/or attend parallel information sessions that are designed for family/friends of individuals taking part in the ER-ABI program. The supportive person and study partner may or may not be the same person.

It is important for our assessment of your eligibility for the ER-ABI group program that we obtain information regarding the nature, location and severity of your injury, and how it has impacted your thinking skills. Therefore, with your consent we will request medical records pertaining to your injury (i.e., hospital discharge summary and imaging reports) and the results of any prior neuropsychological evaluation you have completed since your injury.

Nomination of a supportive person to attend parallel information sessions

We also aim to provide support and information for one supportive person of each participant in the group program. If you are invited to participate in the group therapy program, you will be asked to nominate a supportive person to attend two group information sessions. This person will also be asked to complete a questionnaire which asks about your recovery and your ability to carry out activities of daily living. The parallel sessions will take place at the same time as sessions 1 and 4 of the group therapy program.

Nomination of a study partner to complete questionnaires

We are interested in understanding the perspective of a close relative or friend with regards to your recovery and daily functioning. If you are invited to participate in the group therapy program, you may be asked to nominate a study partner to complete questionnaires that ask about your recovery, emotional functioning and your ability to undertake activities of daily living such as managing tasks around the home.

Possible risks and burdens

There are no significant risks that are likely to arise from your involvement in the group. It is possible that discussions within the group may involve content of a distressing nature. If you experience any distress, please inform one of the facilitators and we will discuss this with you and will help you with accessing appropriate agencies that can help. All of the facilitators are either trained clinical psychologists or neuropsychologists, or are students undertaking clinical training in either psychology or neuropsychology under the supervision of an experienced clinical psychologist.

Possible benefits

The main benefit of your involvement in these sessions is that we hope they will enable you to better manage your emotions in a way that improves your wellbeing. We hope that this study will improve access and availability of care for individuals with a brain injury and lead to higher levels of psychological wellbeing and quality of life for those who take part.

Costs of the sessions

There will be no cost associated with attendance. A small reimbursement (\$10) will be provided to cover the cost of transportation and parking for each session.

How your privacy and confidentiality will be protected

Importantly, any information about your participation in the group therapy program and data collected as a part of this study will be kept confidential – that is, no one will be allowed to see it without your permission unless required by law. No information that can identify who you are will be kept with your study data. We will assign a code number (e.g. 001) to your file instead of your name so that you cannot be identified from the data collected. Only investigators will have access to a list that can connect you to this number so that we can match your data from the first to last sessions. This and all other data collected for this study will be kept in a locked office at UWA. Any video recordings made for training and supervisory purposes during the course of your participation in the ER-ABI program will be kept for 30 days from the date they were recorded, and will subsequently be deleted.

Voluntary participation and withdrawal

Your participation in this group therapy program is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate and, if you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

Contact for further information

If you have any questions about participating in these sessions, please contact Natalie Pepping at the Robin Winkler Clinic on 6488 2644 or at: natalie.pepping@research.uwa.edu.au.

This project has been granted ethical approval by the University of Western Australia (UWA) Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). If you have any complaint regarding the manner in which a research project is conducted, this may be given to the Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee, Registrar's Office, The University of Western Australia, 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, WA 6009 (telephone 6488-3703).