Introduction: Anxiety prevalence ranges between 14 and 70% in persons with cognitive impairment (CI) (Breitve et al., 2016; Kuring et al., 2018), compared to <7% in general population of older adults over 65 years (Grenier et al., 2019). Anxiety accelerates cognitive decline (Palmer et al., 2007), contributes to the frequency of changed behaviours, increased institutionalisation (Schnaider Beeri et al., 2002; Vugt et al., 2005) and decreased quality of life (Poon, 2019). Psychotherapy has been shown effective but available interventions are scarce (Beeri et al., 2002; Vugt et al., 2005) and decreased quality of life (Poon, 2019).

Psychotherapy has been shown effective but available interventions are scarce (Tay et al., 2019).

Research aims: (1) to develop a psychotherapeutic program to alleviate anxiety in people with CI, (2) to test its feasibility and efficacy.

Methods: A 6-week psychotherapy program consisting of psychoeducation and relaxation exercises to alleviate anxiety was developed and tailored to be delivered via telehealth videoconferencing to people with CI and their support persons. We will use videos to facilitate the therapy content and to compensate for cognitive deficits. The intervention will be tested in an RCT (Figure 1). Following the baseline assessment, eligible participants and their support persons will be randomised to Tele-CBT intervention or treatment as usual.

Enrolment: We will use mixed model analysis for between-group differences in anxiety, depression and quality of life outcomes, and thematic analysis to evaluate the tolerability and ease of use of the intervention.

Expected outcomes: Based on our previous studies, we expect a 5-point between-group difference in primary outcome measure (Rating Anxiety in Dementia Scale). Moreover, we anticipate improvement in depression and quality of life measures as well as support persons’ emotional wellbeing and quality of life.

References:

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