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INTERNET-BASED TREATMENT FOR MENTAL DISORDERS

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Internet-based cognitive behaviour therapy (ICBT) is a new and promising treatment for psychiatric and other medical disorders. The aim of this presentation is to determine the applications, clinical efficacy and cost-effectiveness of ICBT.
Results from several studies using RCT protocols provide consistent evidence to support clinical efficacy with large effect size of ICBT for depression, panic disorder and social phobia. In addition, preliminary evidence for large effect size is seen for several other disorders such as e.g. severe health anxiety, irritable bowel disorder, eating disorders, cannabis use and pathological gambling. Moderate or small effects are indicated for some other conditions.
Cost-effectiveness analyses suggest that ICBT is cost-effective compared to no treatment or to conventional CBT, respectively. In addition, each therapist can treat at least four to five times more individuals with ICBT as compared to conventional CBT. This is critical since the number of qualified CBT therapists is small compared to the treatment needs.
It is concluded that ICBT currently is a well-established and highly cost effective treatment for depression, panic disorder and social phobia. Moreover, in general ICBT is as effective as conventional CBT for respective disorders, i.e. if conventional CBT works then ICBT works.

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