

PSYCHOLOGY

College of Life and Environmental Sciences

Study Information Sheet

Does a novel training programme improve working memory?

WHO IS ORGANISING THIS RESEARCH?

This research is being conducted by Dr Anna Adlam and Dr Henrietta Roberts at the Mood Disorders Centre and Centre for Clinical Neuropsychology Research at the University of Exeter, and is supported by the Wellcome Trust. The Mood Disorders Centre, and Centre for Clinical Neuropsychology Research, promote research, practice, and training of benefit to people with mood disorders and neurological conditions.

WHO HAS REVIEWED THIS STUDY?

This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the University of Exeter Ethics Committee.

WHAT THE STUDY IS ABOUT

In this study we are interested in examining whether repeated practice at a computerised working memory task over a 20 day period improves cognitive control capabilities (as measured by other unpractised tasks). We are additionally interested in some personality factors that may influence this.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN TAKING PART?

The study involves attending two assessment sessions with a member of the research team, and completing 20-30 minutes of daily practice of the computerised cognitive training task at home over a 20 day period in between these two sessions. Each assessment session will take approximately 90 minutes and can be completed at the Mood Disorders Centre, University of Exeter. If you complete all 20 days of practice then you will be reimbursed £20 for your time and contributions to our research. This will be given to you when you complete the second assessment session.

In each assessment session we will ask you to complete some short tasks designed to measure different aspects of cognitive control. We will also ask you to fill out some brief questionnaires that ask about various aspects of your mood. On each occasion, after you have answered these tasks and questionnaires, we will ask you to complete a short exercise that involves identifying and spending a few minutes thinking about a recent problem or difficulty that you have experienced. We will also ask you to complete a breathing exercise that involves paying attention to your natural breathing patterns over a short period of time. Finally, you will be asked you give us some details about yourself and any medical history that you may have that could be relevant to the study (for example, if you are taking any medications that might influence your concentration; if you have experienced any mental health difficulties or treatments that might influence how you respond to the cognitive training).

The home training involves being randomised to one of three novel training programmes. All of the training programmes are new and have yet to be evaluated. You will not be told which training programme you have received until the end of the study. At this point, if we find that one training programme is more helpful than another, and if you did not complete the more

helpful version, then we will give you the opportunity to do this should you wish to. You will not be reimbursed for completing a second training programme and your scores for this will not be included in the study.

The home training will involve spending 20-30 minutes each day for 20 days practicing a task on your personal computer. This task will be explained to you in detail when you come to the first assessment session, and will be accessible by logging into a secure website which is hosting the training. You will be assisted with registering with the website during the first session, and also have the opportunity to ask any questions about the website, what the training task involves, and how to complete it. Once you have logged in to complete your daily practice, you will be asked to spend approximately 25 minutes completing the training task. Detailed instructions will be given each time you login before beginning the task and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions about this during the first session prior to beginning the training.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE INFORMATION YOU GIVE?

All the information that you provide will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential, and you are free not to answer any particular question if you do not wish to do so. Your answers to the questionnaires and all data gathered by the computer will be identifiable only through an ID number (and not your name). No one else will see this data apart from the research team and we will not communicate any of this information to anybody else. Your name and contact details will be stored separately from any personal information that you provide on the questionnaires.

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time during the study without explanation, and to request that any data you have contributed thus far be withdrawn from the study.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

When complete, the researchers will communicate the results of the study to the wider community of researchers. This is typically achieved through writing up the results in an academic journal, presenting the results at conferences and other outlets. This will NOT involve identification of individuals who took part. You will be given the option to receive a report summarising the study findings if you would like this.

WHAT IF THERE IS A PROBLEM?

If you have any questions or experience any difficulties then please contact a member of the research team. If you would like to make a complaint, please contact Dr Anna Adlam (contact details are below).

WHAT TO DO IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART

If your parent/guardian does not complete and return the 'opt out' form that they will have been sent, you will be free to choose whether you wish to participate in the study and may yourself complete a consent form on the day of assessment.

THANK YOU FOR READING THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Further information and contact details

For further information about the project please contact **Dr Anna Adlam** (A.R.Adlam@exeter.ac.uk) or **Dr Henrietta Roberts** (H.Roberts@exeter.ac.uk) at the University of Exeter, College of Life and Environmental Sciences, Psychology, Exeter, EX4 4QG. We will be happy to answer any questions that you might have.