

BRAVE step for Australian-developed online anxiety therapy

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A ground-breaking approach to treating childhood and adolescent anxiety disorders, based on University of Queensland (UQ) research, will soon be available to families in the UK, US and Europe.

This follows a licence deal struck by UQ's main commercialisation company UniQuest with global online healthcare company CCBT Limited.

The aptly named BRAVE-ONLINE (Brave) [psychological intervention](#), which encourages children and adolescents to be brave in the face of anxiety or concerns that might lead to anxiety, originated from [Cognitive Behaviour Therapy](#) research undertaken within UQ's School of Psychology.

CCBT Limited has licensed the program to complement its existing suite of mental health online services, including FearFighter™, which is currently the only online anxiety treatment endorsed by the UK's National Institute of Clinical Excellence.

UniQuest Managing Director, David Henderson, said the licensing agreement demonstrated how a commercialisation pathway could make it possible for UQ research to have a profound impact on family life around the world.

"[Anxiety disorders](#) represent the most prevalent reasons why children and adolescents need [psychological help](#), so partnering the Brave

research team with a world-leading company such as CCBT, which has an established presence within the online healthcare sector, is a major milestone," Mr Henderson said.

Lead researcher, Professor Sue Spence, said as many as two thirds of children who experience anxiety may not be getting the help they need.

"There are various reasons why attending therapy sessions is not possible for these children; however, advances in computer technology have opened up new opportunities for families to access psychological services via the internet," Professor Spence said.

"The research shows that Brave is just as effective for treating anxiety with an online therapist as with face-to-face sessions."

Nicholas Niziolomski, CEO of CCBT Limited, said online cognitive behavioural therapies allowed treatment to be provided to a far greater volume of people, around the clock, and with greater cost effectiveness, but they need to be clinically effective to attract the support of national health services, health insurance providers, healthcare professionals, and community organisations.

"The fact that Brave has the strongest evidence-base of any online anxiety intervention for children in the world was a key factor in our decision to enter into the licensing partnership," Mr Niziolomski said.

"Programs like Brave give families more options for accessing treatment, governments a more cost-effective model for delivering wide-scale services, and healthcare providers more support for achieving positive outcomes for their patients and clients. That's why Brave fits so well with our range of our range of evidence-based treatments and eHealth services."

CCBT Limited has already engaged in trials of Brave with the UK's National Health Service, while a fourth Randomised Control Trial will be starting soon.

About BRAVE-ONLINE

BRAVE ONLINE is designed for children and adolescents experiencing Separation Anxiety Disorder, Social Phobia, Specific Phobia and Generalised Anxiety Disorder. BRAVE is an acronym for the cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) anxiety management strategies covered in the program: B is for Body signs (detecting physiological symptoms of [anxiety](#)); R is for Relax; A is for Activate helpful thoughts; V is for Victory over fears; and E is for Enjoy yourself. While the treatment is generic and consists of identical components for all children, therapists can tailor the program to meet the needs of the individual young person. The program consists of series of sessions for the child or adolescent and their parents over several months. BRAVE-ONLINE is completed by families in their own homes and includes working through a skills-building series of weekly tasks.

Provided by University of Queensland

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