

AVATAR2 NEWSLETTER

ALLY FEEDBACK

*We wanted to share with you a little of the fantastic feedback we have received from our Avatar Allies to whom we say a big **thank you!***

Here, two clinicians from mental health teams in NHS GG&C share their experiences of referring to the trial, and to work with clients participating in avatar therapy.

“ I was pleasantly surprised at how easy it was to refer patients to the study.

The research assistants made it **straightforward and convenient** to contact by email or get a time to discuss, as they were so **flexible** around my busy calendar. It was **only a small amount of information** the team AVATAR2 required about the patient such as patient name, contact details and their permission to be contacted, and **they did the rest.**

My experience of being keyworker to a patient undertaking the therapy was positive. There was **really good communication** between myself and the AVATAR2 therapist which I think played a big part in supporting the patient through their therapy journey. Everything was well documented in clinical notes which meant I had an understanding of what was happening at each session.

I have had positive feedback from a patient that underwent the therapy. **The therapy is interesting and innovative and I would recommend referring any patients who you think may or may not engage in the therapy.** I had initially thought a patient I referred would not engage with it because they had not engaged with any other therapy and continued to hear voices and be distressed by them regularly – I was proved wrong. I continue to discuss the therapy with patients who hear voices and if they give permission I share their details with the AVATAR2 research team.” *Avatar Ally 1*

“ I have had a good experience with the Avatar trial.

The referral process is **simple and straightforward** and doesn't require lengthy paperwork or prolonged discussion.

Patients could be initially wary, but on engaging with the trial they were often pleasantly surprised and appeared to value others taking an interest in their symptoms. I valued being able to offer a new form of psychological treatment to long term patients with chronic psychotic symptoms whose needs can be easily overshadowed in a busy CMHT where there is increasing focus on new assessments and crisis management. **I would definitely recommend participation in this trial.”** *Avatar Ally 2*

Many thanks to all our Avatar Allies – the participants, families and loved ones, clinicians and other professionals without whom this trial wouldn't be possible.

HOW DO I DESCRIBE THE STUDY?

"AVATAR therapy would involve you creating an image or “avatar” of your distressing voice on a computer (see image on top right for an example) with the support of a therapist. The therapist will support you to speak confidently to the avatar; this can help you feel more in control when experiencing the voice/s in daily life.

Would you like to know more? A member of the AVATAR2 team can contact you.”