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Letter to the Editor

Internet-Delivered Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Major Depression and Anxiety Disorders

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Dear Editor,

Advanced depression is characterized by a depressed mood and reduced interest and enjoyment in most activities. Anxiety disorders are also characterized by feelings of distress and fear that can impair one's daily functioning [1].

Depression is highly prevalent and has adverse consequences for individuals in the personal, social and economic dimensions in short and long term*[1]*. Statistics show a prevalence of 9.4% for anxiety disorders in a primary care sample of preschool children, which is highly persistent among these youths over a 12-month period *[1]*.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is essentially an evidence-based psychotherapy used to treat depression and anxiety disorders in individuals *[2]*.

Studies have shown that CBT has been very effective in treating anxiety disorders among young people *[3, 4]*. However, only a few of them treat mental health professionals with the above mentioned disorders *[5-7]*. Young people generally adopt technology more readily and use devices such as computers, cell phones, and tablets. According to the estimates by a research institute, 95% of youth use the internet, 93% have a home computer, and 78% use cell phones *[8]*. It is desirable for young people to use CBT technology to reduce costs and time to contact a therapist *[9]*.

This treatment was first introduced as part of routine care in the mid-1990s and then evaluated and used by the general public *[10]*. Thereafter, the number of controlled trials in the treatment of patients with psychological problems presented by the internet grew much faster than usual. Most studies on internet-based therapies provide another form of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) refers to what is called Internet-based CBT (ICBT) *[11]*.

Internet-based CBT was created with the aim of increasing access to specialized therapies and has since proven to be effective and affordable for a range of disorders *[12]*. Although the ICBT has been studied for nearly 20 years, *[13]* extensive research on this technology-based mental health intervention has expanded over the past few years *[14, 15]*. One of the advantages of ICBT compared with conventional psychological treatments is the shorter time. In adults, ICBT requires approximately 85% less time per week than the traditional treatment *[16]*.

ICBT is a very useful solution for improving economic and mental health efficiency worldwide. However, this integration of CBT with information technology has not yet reached its true position. ICBT intervention can be effectively implemented internationally without geographical constraints. In doing so, the researchers hope to determine the feasibility and ethical aspects of this new treatment *[17]*.

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Studies show that compared to waiting lists, ICBT is effective and may lead to an improvement in symptoms of mild to moderate depression and social phobia *[2]*. However, the effectiveness of ICBT compared to individual or group CBT is still uncertain. The use of ICBT is economically advantageous. Most patients with mild to moderate depression or anxiety disorders felt that despite some limitations, ICBT provided patients with more time, speed, and location of treatment. It also improves access for people who cannot afford other treatments because of the cost, time or nature of their health *[2]*.

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Authors' contributions

The author conceived and conducted the study alone.

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Conflict of Interest

The author does not have any conflict of interest.

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