**What do we know about relapse prevention following guided-self-help for anxiety and depression? A scoping review protocol.**

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**Protocol and Registration:**

The scoping review will be written following the PRISMA extension for scoping reviews checklist and registered on FigShare.

**Review Question:**

How is relapse prevention being addressed following guided self-help for anxiety and depression?

**Aim:**

This scoping review aims to explore the literature on how relapse prevention is being addressed for anxiety and depression following guided self-help, identify specific characteristics of materials/resources/interventions being used, their outcomes (if available) and understand gaps in the evidence to aid the planning of future research.

**Methods:**

**Electronic Database Search:**

The final search was conducted on the 9th of May 2023. Identification of relevant studies was achieved by searching four different electronic databases including PsycINFO, CINAHL Plus, PubMed and Web of Science. The search strategy was discussed and curated with the research team and comprised key subject terms associated with the research question which were combined using Boolean operators. The following search strategy was used: (“self -help” OR “self-management” OR “low intensity”) AND (“relapse prevention” OR “remission” OR “recurrence”) AND (“Anxiety” OR “depression”). The reference list of any included studies will also be hand searched to identify additional relevant studies not found through the search strategy.

**Other sources of evidence:**

A search for other resources using three different strategies was conducted in September 2023 to identify additional relapse prevention resources not formerly published or identified via the electronic database search. The first strategy involved inputting the search string used in the electronic databases into the google search engine and reviewing the first ten pages of results. The second search strategy involved the use of the National Grey Literature Collection Database where the search string was inputted and all the results were reviewed.

The final search strategy involved contacting experts with knowledge on relapse prevention in the context of GSH.

The title and abstract of all retrieved searches will be independently reviewed by a researcher against the inclusion/exclusion criteria. Any articles or resources that are deemed relevant will be subject to a full text review by independent reviewers against the inclusion/exclusion criteria.

**Types of study to be included:**

All studies and resources written in English.

**Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria:**

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| **Inclusion Criteria** | **Exclusion Criteria** |
| Studies conducted in adults aged 18+.  Resources designed for adults aged 18+. | Participants where the main health disorders described is not anxiety and/or depression but this exists as a comorbidity. |
| Studies conducted in adults with symptoms of depression and/or anxiety.  Resources designed for adults with symptoms of depression and/or anxiety. | Studies/resources not including information about relapse prevention. |
| Studies/resources including information about how relapse prevention was targeted for anxiety and/or depression **following** guided self-help. | Studies/resources including information about relapse prevention NOT focused on FOLLOWING guided-self-help (e.g., studies reporting on relapse prevention during treatment) |
|  | Studies where the primary outcomes are not related to anxiety and/or depression  Resources where the main focus us is not related to anxiety and/or depression |
|  | Studies where the intervention is designed to replace existing psychotherapy treatment for anxiety and/or depression. |

**Comparator/control:**

Studies do not need to include a comparator or control.

**Main outcome(s)/ study objectives**

The following outcomes and objectives will be addressed in the scoping review:

* How relapse prevention has been addressed for anxiety/depression following guided self-help?
* What are the key characteristics of the interventions/ /resources used to prevent relapse and maintain recovery following guided self-help?
* How effective are the interventions at addressing relapse prevention following guided self-help for anxiety and depression?

**Data extraction (selection and coding):**

The characteristics and key findings will be extracted for each study and an excel spreadsheet will be curated to manage the data. The following information will be gathered from the included studies:

* Author, year, country
* Study design
* Participant information including number of participants, age-range and whether they have reported symptoms of depression and/or anxiety.
* Intervention characteristics including mode of delivery, duration, content and who is involved in delivery.
* Relevant outcomes and effects of intervention.

Data extraction from grey literature will be performed using the same extraction form and the form will be populated on areas deemed relevant.

**Strategy for data synthesis:**

The aim of the scoping review is to provide an overview of the types of relapse prevention interventions/resources used to address relapse prevention and maintenance of treatment gains following guided self-help for anxiety and/or depression. Gaps in the literature will be identified on this area to inform future research. Results of this scoping review will be analysed using a narrative synthesis following the guidance by Popay et al. (2006).

A narrative (descriptive) synthesis is planned because we anticipate variation in the types of studies/resources included allowing the investigation of any similarities and/or differences between studies/resources to provide a summary of the knowledge available (Lisy & Porritt, 2016). Consistent with an integrative approach to synthesising data, the planned synthesis will present a descriptive summary of the findings across included studies/resources. A preliminary synthesis providing a description of the results of included studies/resources and the patterns across them will be included. Secondly, the relationships between and across studies/resources will be explored to identify (i) differences and similarities and (ii) characteristics of successful interventions/resources to understand what is effective/useful and what is not and why.

**Quality Appraisal:**

Quality appraisal is not a requirement for scoping reviews (Pollock et al., 2021) as scoping reviews typically do not seek to assess quality of evidence (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005; Pham et al., 2014). However, for the purpose of this review a quality appraisal of included empirical studies will be carried out to provide an overview of the quality of the evidence in the area. For this reason, the papers will not be excluded or allocated different weight based on the results from the quality assessment.

The quality of the individual studies will be assessed using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) (Hong et al., 2018). This tool allows for the appraisal of empirical studies across different study designs including qualitative, quantitative randomised controlled trials, quantitative non-randomised, quantitative descriptive and mixed methods (Hong et al., 2018). The risk of bias of each paper will be evaluated against the appropriate methodological quality category pending on the study design. Two reviewers will rate each criterion for the included studies and any disagreements over risk of bias between reviewers will be resolved by consensus where necessary. The results of the critical appraisal will be presented in a table for included studies.

**References:**

Arksey, H., & O’Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *8*(1), 19-32. https://doi.org/10.1080/1364557032000119616

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Pham, M. T., Rajić, A., Greig, J. D., Sargeant, J. M., Papadopoulos, A., & McEwen, S. A. (2014). A scoping review of scoping reviews: advancing the approach and enhancing the consistency. Research synthesis methods, 5(4), 371-385.

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