

Digital cognitive behavioural therapy for children and young people with symptoms of anxiety and low mood

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is a treatment offered for children and young people to help with negative feelings, including symptoms of anxiety and low mood. It is a type of talking therapy that can help a person learn new skills to manage problems by understanding how thoughts can affect how they feel and behave. There is an increased need for child and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS) that has become even greater due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Children and young people can experience long waiting times for treatment

Digital CBT can be delivered on mobile phones, tablets, and computers. It is based on the principles of face-to-face CBT and include various components including psychoeducation and cognitive restructuring that are accessed remotely and can be used alongside group and individual therapy. It can potentially improve access to mental health services by offering greater flexibility, more choice and self-management through remote online interventions. Key considerations on the value of digital CBT technologies are usability, ability to engage with users and effectiveness when compared to standard care.

NICE will identify and review digital CBT technologies providing an early signal to the system on whether they can be recommended for use in the NHS, conditional on further collection of real-world evidence to inform NICE guidance.