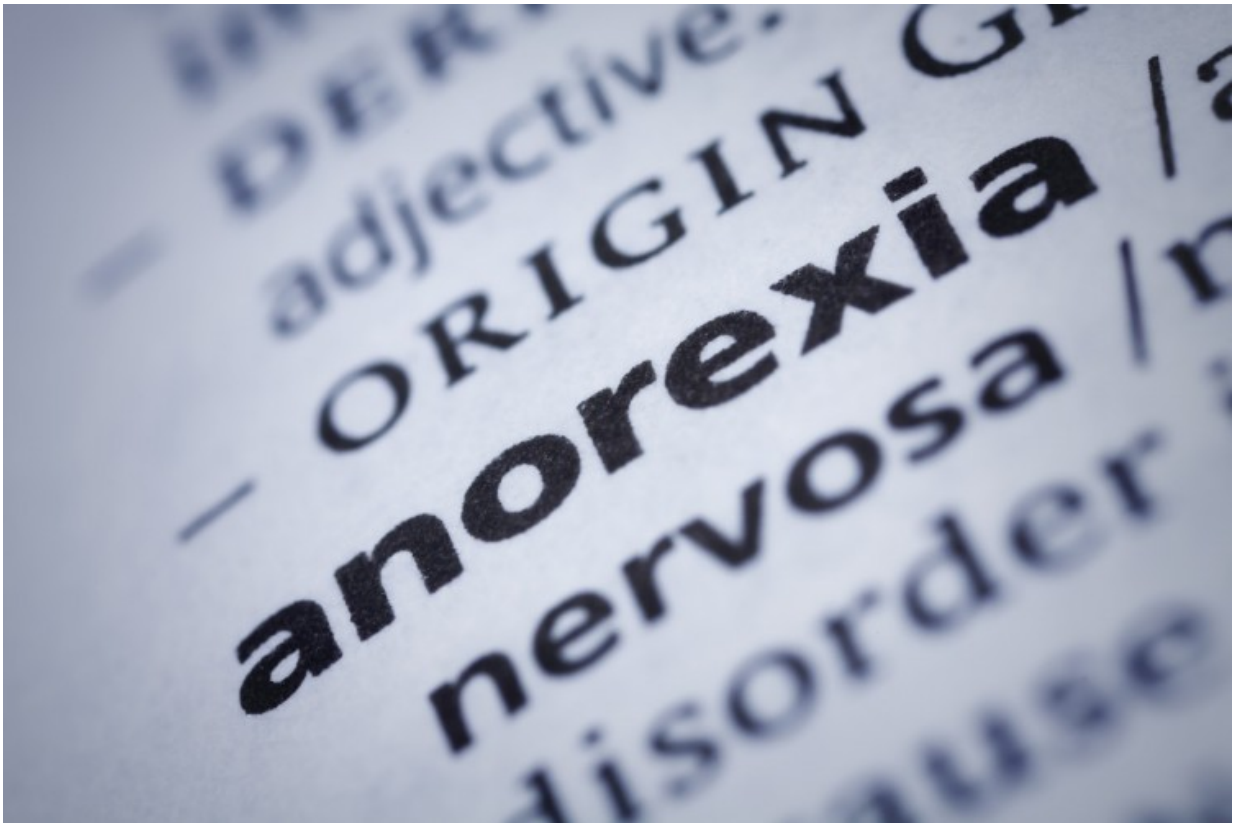


Inner voice of anorexia under investigation with help from people with lived experience

February 25 2016



During Eating Disorders Awareness Week (22-28 February), researchers from The University of Manchester are recruiting people with a diagnosis of anorexia for a new study into the concept of 'the anorexic

voice'.

Anorexia has the highest mortality rate of all [psychiatric disorders](#) and is linked to other associated conditions and [health problems](#) such as [depression](#), [osteoporosis](#) and quality of life.

Whilst research shows that half of people treated for this condition make a full recovery, this leaves 50% of people with on-going difficulties. Research is vital to increase our understanding of [anorexia](#) and how to help people who have this condition.

Part of the reason for low recovery may be a poorly understood phenomenon known as the anorexic voice – the internal dialogue which tells people not to eat, to exercise and to carry out other weight loss behaviours. It is this voice that the new Manchester study will explore.

Dr Kay Gant, the lead researcher in the University's School of Psychological Sciences, said: "Patients we've spoken to have referred to their voice as 'Ana' or 'anorexia twisted thoughts' and have described how their internal dialogue can lead to eating disorder symptoms and distress, so to them it is very important and powerful

"We believe that by understanding this we can develop more effective therapies and help more people make a full recovery."

To improve this understanding, the researchers have developed the Experience of an Anorexic Voice Questionnaire (EAVE-Q) with Leeds & York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

They are now looking for 150 people aged 16 or over, with a diagnosis of anorexia to complete it. This will be alongside two other standard questionnaires about mood and quality of life. In total this will take around 30-45 minutes, with the option of further interviews if the

participant wishes.

The responses will test the questionnaire to see if it works as a useful tool to help health professionals gain a better understanding of the voice and use this to inform treatment.

Dr Gant added: "NICE guidelines identify the lack of an evidence based treatment of choice for adults with anorexia, so this research could be invaluable in providing that evidence."

The study is supported by BEAT, the UK's [eating disorders](#) charity. Jonathan Kelly, a research officer at BEAT said: "Research is crucial to building greater knowledge and understanding of eating disorders. It has already taught us many important lessons about eating disorders treatment and support, however there is still much more to learn, including in this important area of study."

More information: Find out more and take the survey: www.psych-ssl.manchester.ac.uk...on.aspx?study_id=200

Provided by University of Manchester

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