

New research to develop treatment for men with eating disorders

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Credit: University of Western Sydney

With eating disorders increasingly becoming more prevalent in men, researchers at Western Sydney University are embarking on a new study to understand more about men's experiences of the condition, and improve the types of male-centred treatments that are available.

Ms Priyanka Thapliyal from the School of Medicine is conducting the study as part of her PhD. She is working as part of a team that includes

Professor Phillipa Hay and Dr Deborah Mitchison also from the University's School of Medicine, Dr Janet Conti from the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, and Masters student, Alice Coen.

Ms Thapliyal says that males are certainly not immune to experiencing [eating disorders](#), with the National Association for Males with Eating Disorders reporting that one in four individuals with eating disorders are now men.

"Some of the most frequent concerns that males experience are problems with [binge eating](#) as well as the use of steroids to bulk muscles," says Ms Thapliyal.

"We know through the team's previous research, that single gender, or men only, treatment centres can be beneficial for men who have experienced an eating disorder.

"Many men reported the male-centred treatment was positive, because it felt like a client-therapist partnership, and they felt therapist had good knowledge and expertise in treating eating disorders.

"However there were also some negative experiences, with some men feeling there was limited availability of sessions, a perceived prejudice towards [men](#) with eating disorders, and some feeling like their therapy was more about 'money making' rather than helpful treatment.

"We want to expand this further and learn more from this next phase of the research, so we can best tailor treatment interventions which can lead to more positive, client-centred treatment."

Males 18 years and older who have experienced an eating disorder and who are interested in being interviewed for the study, are encouraged to contact Priyanka Thapliyal on 0437 928 690,

p.thapliyal@westernsydney.edu.au.

Provided by University of Western Sydney

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