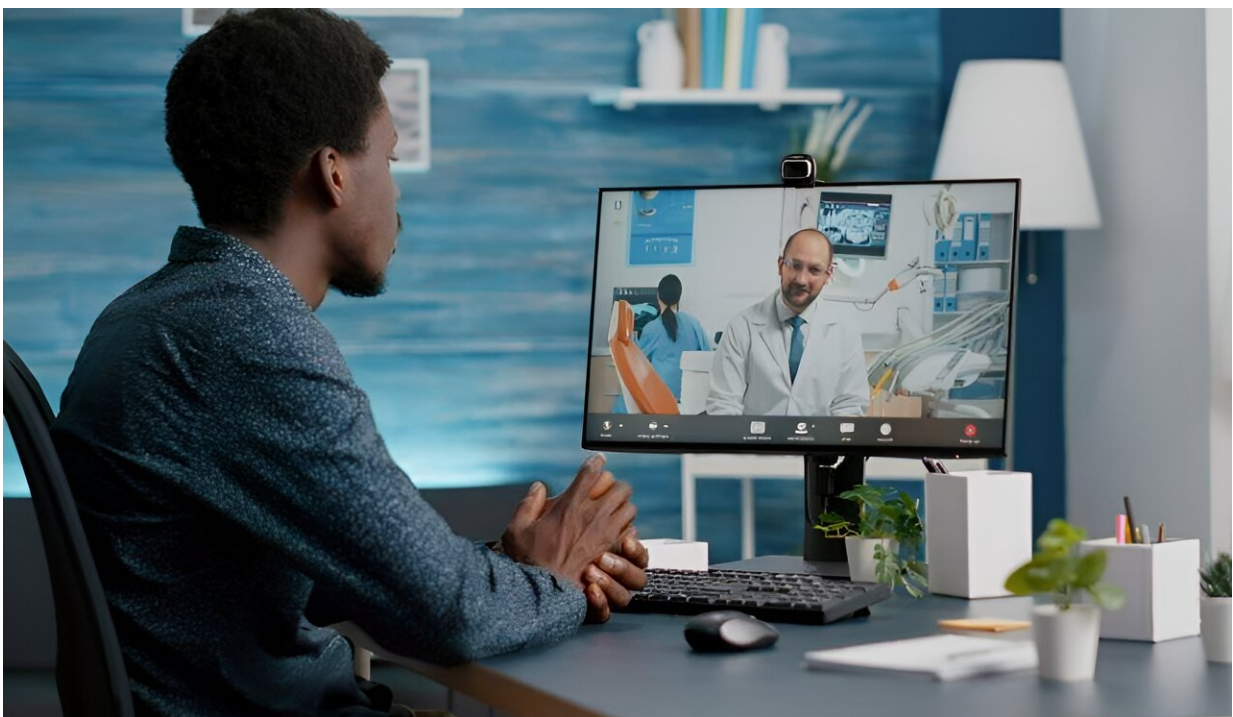


Study finds little or no difference in effectiveness of in-person versus remote cognitive behavioral therapy

March 19 2024, by Lori Solomon



There is little to no difference in the effectiveness of in-person versus

therapist-guided remote cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) across a range of mental health and somatic disorders, according to a [review](#) published in the March 18 issue of *CMAJ*, the journal of the Canadian Medical Association.

Sara Zandieh, from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, and colleagues conducted a systematic literature review to compare the effectiveness of therapist-guided remote CBT and in-person CBT.

Based on 54 included randomized controlled studies (5,463 patients), the researchers found that 17 studies focused on treatment of anxiety and related disorders, 14 on [depressive symptoms](#), seven on insomnia, six on [chronic pain](#) or fatigue syndromes, five on [body image](#) or eating disorders, three on tinnitus, one on alcohol use disorder, and one on mood and anxiety disorders.

There was moderate-certainty evidence showing little to no difference in the effectiveness of therapist-guided remote and in-person CBT on primary outcomes (standardized mean difference, -0.02 ; 95 percent confidence interval, -0.12 to 0.07).

"The World Health Organization has designated CBT as essential health care, but access remains an important barrier for many people in Canada," co-author Jason Busse, Ph.D., also of McMaster University, said in a statement. "Our findings suggest that therapist-guided, remotely delivered CBT can be used to facilitate greater access to evidence-based care."

More information: Sara Zandieh et al, Therapist-guided remote versus in-person cognitive behavioural therapy: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials, *Canadian Medical*

Association Journal (2024). [DOI: 10.1503/cmaj.230274](https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.230274)

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