

The Anxiety Clinic's Outpatient Programs

The Anxiety Clinic has developed a series of innovative Cognitive and Behavioural Therapy (CBT) programs for the treatment of Anxiety, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Hoarding and related disorders. These programs are:

- **Intensive** - consists of scheduled 3-hour sessions. The individualised program could include de-cluttering, social anxiety, phobia treatment, or exposure and response prevention.
- **Group therapy** where a number of participants are taught how to apply CBT strategies in their daily life.
- **Individual therapy** sessions for up to 1 hour.

These programs are designed to deliver behavioural and cognitive treatments. The proven effectiveness of such evidence-based strategies has been demonstrated in long-term research. It is also estimated that less than 10% of anxiety sufferers have access to this kind of treatment.

The outpatient program has been developed to provide a structured program that can offer effective psychological therapy without disconnecting the person from personal, family and work responsibilities.

The behavioural and cognitive strategies include education about anxiety, relaxation and mindfulness training, and other adaptive learning skills in a personalised protocol. The core of the treatment is the individual program for each patient that will include the following skills as appropriate - hyperventilation training, habit reversal, graded exposures, massed practice, social skills training and goal setting. The success of this process is based on the patient's motivation to change, personal psychological plan and the readiness for treatment. Each person will have input into their personal treatment program and will work on a planned and graded program in collaboration with the team.

The treatment philosophy of The Anxiety Clinic is that reintegrating the individual sense of self provides the best platform for overcoming destabilising anxiety symptoms. Finding the secure base helps in developing the attachments and personal values that support mature social interactions. CBT enhances this secure basis with strategies for thinking sensibly, regulating feelings, and actively engaging in life.

We will work in a collaborative way with the referrer, other therapists and the family, as needed, and work with the patient to ensure that privacy and consent issues are respected.

Who will provide the treatment?

The therapy team consists of psychologists Dr Christopher Mogan, Dr Elham Foroughi, Julie Mogan, and Credentialed Mental Health Nurse Kerryn Addison.

What conditions are suitable for treatment in the program setting?

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Hoarding Disorder
- Panic Disorder
- Social Anxiety Disorder
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (problem worry)
- Specific phobias like bridges, spiders, flying and heights.

Are there other conditions for which the programs can offer treatment?

There are many complex conditions that can also be associated with the above disorders especially Depression. Obsessive Compulsive Spectrum Disorders like Body Dysmorphic Disorder, Illness Anxiety Disorder, Skin-picking, Trichotillomania (hair-pulling) and other Tic or Movement Disorders that indicate attempts to reduce anxiety by using compensatory behaviours. The program develops a care plan for each participant, and provides support guidelines for continuing the treatment following this intensive phase. The programs seek to complement other medical and related treatments by providing access to specialised CBT strategies. Such strategic interventions aim to help sufferers better manage the emotional distress that arises from symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Who is not appropriate for the programs?

When a person has a dual diagnosis (for example, active substance abuse, eating disorder and/or actively suicidal), these programs are not suitable. It is preferable to have treatment for these conditions prior to engaging in these programs. If a person is in recovery from these conditions, it might be appropriate to participate in the programs, especially when the team can collaborate with other treating professionals in managing these complexities.

Those whose motivation for change is ambivalent are not appropriate as treatment readiness is essential. The programs require participants to fully engage in work with therapists in facing their fears. Experiencing discomfort requires courage and motivation. The team expects to work hard in helping participants achieve the graded tasks, and this collaborative approach requires significant effort from therapists and participants alike.

How do I register for the programs?

Telephone or email contact can be made for an initial discussion. A medical referral and a valid Mental Health Treatment Plan are required.