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Online relapse prevention tool offers 'cheap accessible option' for people with bipolar disorder

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An online relapse prevention tool for Bipolar Disorder offers a "cheap accessible option" for people seeking support following treatment, say researchers.

Bipolar Disorder (BD) is a lifelong mental health condition characterized by depression and mania. It affects one percent of adults worldwide and costs an estimated £5.2 billion annually in England alone.

It is treated with medication, yet many people continue to experience relapses.

Enhanced Relapse Prevention (ERPonline) is a psychological approach developed by the Spectrum Centre for Mental Health Research.

It teaches people with Bipolar Disorder (BD) to recognize and respond to early warning signs of relapse.

Lead researcher Professor Fiona Lobban from the Spectrum Centre for Mental Health Research at Lancaster University said: "The key elements are identifying your individual triggers and early warning signs for both mania and depression, and developing coping strategies to manage mood changes in everyday life."

The research into ERPonline is published in the Journal of Medical Internet Research.

It involved 96 people split into two groups at random - half could access the ERPonline intervention, while the other half received their usual treatment.

The researchers found that access to ERPonline was associated with an improvement in beliefs about mood plus increased monitoring of early warning signs of depression and mania compared with patients who did not

use the intervention.

Professor Lobban said: "Online interventions may prove an important cheap, feasible and acceptable step forward in creating a choice of evidence-based interventions for people with BD at different stages of recovery."

Source:

<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/news/articles/2017/researchers-develop-online-support-for-people-with-bipolar-disorder/>
