

# OCD PARENT/CARER WORKSHOP

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

There is evidence highlighting the importance of the role of families and targeting family accommodation in OCD treatment. McGrath & Abbott (2019) found that specifically targeting family accommodation in OCD optimises treatment response. Demaria et al. (2021) found that parental involvement in the treatment of children/young people with OCD is important for several reasons, including:

- can be high levels of distress and conflict in relatives of those with OCD
- family accommodation of OCD symptoms predicts poor treatment response
- parents want to be engaged in their child's intervention

There is evidence of self-blame, isolation and feelings of loneliness in parents of children with OCD (eg. Chessell et al., 2023). Negative beliefs about child anxiety, e.g. it's harmful, were associated with higher levels of parental accommodation (Johnco et al., 2022).

### Objectives of workshop

- A space for parents to explore OCD and breaking the OCD cycle with parents in a similar situation
- To understand the role of family accommodation and how to reduce this
- To feel more confident about fighting back against OCD

It was our hope that the workshop would be both informative for parents, and a space to discuss and reflect on their experiences of parenting a child with OCD.

We wanted to provide a space to put a practical plan in place to start to reduce accommodation, whilst exploring some of their beliefs around OCD and protective parenting.

## METHOD

### What did we offer?

Parents/carers were offered two 1.5-hour workshops, two weeks apart, over Microsoft Teams. In addition, optional 1:1 consultation, lasting 30 minutes, were offered to support parents/carers to implement the strategies that had been discussed. The workshops and consultation were led by two Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapists and supported by Undergraduate Placement students. After the workshop, those who attended were provided with an OCD parent resource pack and the PowerPoint slides.

### Content

The aim of the first workshop was to give parents an overview of OCD, including common co-occurrences and maintenance. Parents were introduced to the concept of family accommodation and supported to consider how they might be accommodating their child's OCD. Workshop two was more practical in nature, with parents given an opportunity to plan how they would reduce an accommodation behaviour using a graded approach. Breakout rooms were used to allow for discussion between attendees. Towards the end of the second workshop, common barriers to reducing accommodation were discussed, along with ideas for managing these.

### Who was invited and who attended?

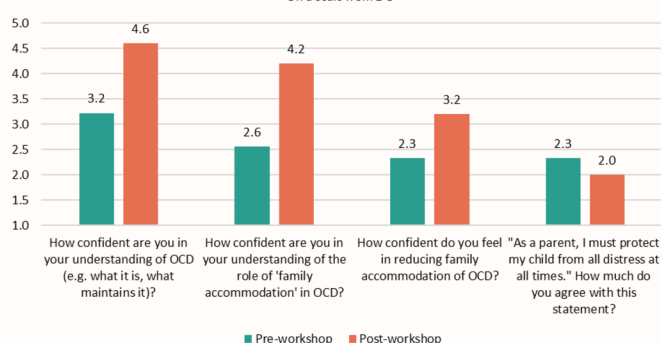
18 parents of children and young people on the Depression and Anxiety Pathway, with OCD as their main presentation or a clear part of their presentation, were invited to the workshops. The majority were waiting for CBT, with one young person waiting for Art Therapy. 11 parents confirmed attendance, five did not respond, and two were unable to make the date/time offered. A follow up call was made if parents did not respond to the invite within a certain amount of time. 10 out of the 11 parents who confirmed attendance attended the first workshop session. 9 out of the 10 who attended the first workshop attended the second workshop.

## OUTCOMES

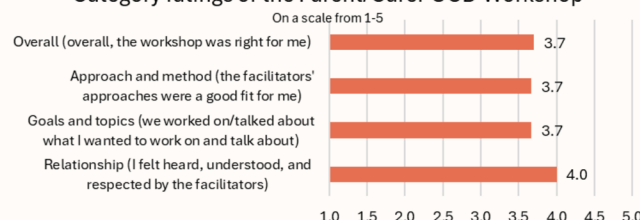
### Outcome measures used

- Family Accommodation Scale (FAS) given after the first session
- Mentimeter questionnaire (anonymous) completed at the start of the workshop and at the end, measuring confidence and understanding of OCD and Family Accommodation
- Mentimeter Feedback questionnaire (anonymous) to gain insight into experience of workshop

OCD Understanding Pre- and Post- Workshop  
On a scale from 1-5



Category ratings of the Parent/Carer OCD Workshop



### Feedback

- Parental confidence increased in understanding of OCD, understanding of the role of family accommodation, and reducing family accommodation following the workshop (see graph)
- 5 out of 6 parents who completed the Feedback questionnaire found the workshop either very or slightly helpful (1 parent found it neither helpful nor unhelpful), and 5 out of 6 parents would recommend the workshop to a parent/carer in a similar position (1 parent was unsure)
- Parents gave feedback that the breakout rooms and hearing the perspectives of other parents was helpful, as well as advice to externalise the OCD and information about the overlap of OCD and ASC
- Ideas about improvements included: describing case studies, longer time in breakout rooms, success stories, and more practical advice rather than theory

## CONCLUSIONS

### Strengths:

- Increased confidence in understanding OCD and family accommodation and reducing the accommodation
- Slight reduction in belief that they have to protect their child from all distress
- Overall, the parents did find the workshop helpful
- Parents valued the space to connect with each other

### Weaknesses:

- Many parents felt that they couldn't make changes to accommodation without the 1:1 support and that this was too big of an ask
- Perhaps we overestimated how easy it would be for parents to identify accommodation when OCD has been around for a long time

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE SESSIONS

### What changes could be made if this is offered in the future?

- Include success stories and potentially an expert by experience
- Have more time in breakout rooms for parents to be able to connect
- Have more time and reflections as a group on identifying and mapping accommodations
- We could ask them to watch a pre-recorded webinar around general psychoeducation of OCD before they attend the workshop so that we can focus more time on the accommodation