‘BrainGym’: Evaluating the feasibility and efficacy of a NEAR cognitive remediation program in residential substance use rehabilitation

BACKGROUND
- > 50% of adults in AOD rehabilitation have some cognitive impairment (Allen et al., 2012).
- Executive functioning deficits are most common (Fernández-Serrano, 2010).
- Cognitive impairment limits treatment response and increases vulnerability to relapse (Brorson et al., 2013).
- Cognitive remediation programs improve functional outcomes for mental health patients (e.g., Wykes et al., 2019) but are rarely available in AOD settings.

THE NEAR® MODEL OF COGNITIVE REMEDIATION
1. NEAR has well-established treatment manuals and resources (Medalia et al., 2017).
2. NEAR is designed for groups of up to 10 people with rolling admission.
3. NEAR is tailored to individual needs and preferences.
4. NEAR computer activities can be selected from a wide range of web-based programs.
5. NEAR promotes a success-oriented and engaging learning environment.
6. NEAR simulates real-life cognitive tasks.

INTERVENTION
‘BrainGym’
During the trial, residents attend three 60 minute BrainGym groups per week. Each session involves:

- 15 mins ‘bridging group’- linking computer activities with real life.
- 45 mins spent on computer activities, selected based on the individual’s cognitive profile.

FURTHER INFORMATION
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Publication date: 5 November 2019

REFERENCES