

Client-Centered Development of a Group Cognitive Intervention

Introduction: Approximately 50% of people with multiple sclerosis (MS) experience cognitive impairment with no clear evidence on the most effective cognitive intervention. A group approach to cognitive intervention has demonstrated promise (Shevil & Finlayson, 2009). Also, improvements in mood and MS symptomology have resulted from a group approach. Further development and research of group cognitive interventions is warranted.

Objectives: To use a client-centered approach to inform the development of content and structure of a group cognitive intervention by collaborating with potential consumers of the group (people with mild cognitive impairment due to MS).

Methods: In this qualitative study, participants had self-reported physician-diagnosed MS and self-reported mild cognitive impairment. Ten female participants participated in two focus groups which were audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using an inductive approach. Interpretive description guided the data analysis, which allows for the health professional to bring previous knowledge to the analysis of the data, while still being cognizant of the researcher's biases.

Results: Six themes will be presented: cognitive changes, cognition barriers, cognition facilitators, impact on daily life, cognitive strategies, and group structure. Participants discussed factors that made thinking easier or more difficult, how this impacted their daily life, and cognitive strategies they use to overcome these challenges. Participants also gave suggestions for the group intervention structure and timing.

Conclusion: This study provides content themes and real-life examples that can be incorporated into a group cognitive intervention to ensure that it is meaningful and relevant to consumers.