What do people with aphasia want from online Intensive Comprehensive Aphasia Therapy Programmes (ICAPs)?

Dr Margaret Sandars

What are ICAPS?

- Aphasia is a **communication disability** caused by **damage to the brain** e.g. stroke
- **Speech and language therapy can help** people with aphasia'
- ICAPs are **Intensive Comprehensive Aphasia Therapy Programmes**
- ICAPs have **5 key components:**
  1. **Intensive (3 hours x 5 days x 2 weeks)**
  2. **Individual and group therapy**
  3. **Different therapy activities**
  4. **Education**
  5. **Small groups**
- ICAPs are usually in person but **can be online**

What did we do?

- **We asked people what they would want from an online ICAP**
- **7 people with aphasia** (all due to stroke) and **3 partners** took part
- They attended **3 online focus groups**

What did people think?

Intensive
Think about fatigue and other commitments
2 weeks might not be enough to make progress

"I think 5 days a week, absolutely"

"3 hours in one day is probably a little bit too much"

Individual and group therapy
Hard to match different abilities
Some group members may take over
Prefer exercises 1:1 but also like to work with others

"I kind of withdraw a little bit and then... I know I'm probably not learning"

"If it wasn't all exercises... that might help"

Different therapy activities
Speech and language only
Focus on speaking but also would like some variety
Enjoy music and therapy apps

"Experiencing other people having the same problems is excellent"

Education
Already know about aphasia but a recap may help
Provide evidence for ICAPs
Other sources of support

"I didn't realise... that there were different types of aphasia"

Small groups
4-8 people do therapy together
Others can provide support
Problems with people not turning up

"Whole stroke thing can be quite a lonely place"

Online
Prefer face to face
Problems using computers
Cuts travel time and costs
Helps the NHS see more people

"When I came around... all of my computer skills were destroyed"

What DO people with aphasia want?

BEFORE the ICAP	DURING the ICAP	AFTER the ICAP
• Offer therapy **as soon as people are ready**	• **Co-ordinate sessions** with physio, OT etc.	• Offer **catch ups** (every 1-4 weeks)
• Only include people who can **access a computer**	• Time sessions to **help with fatigue**	• Give activities for people to **carry on at home**
• Make sure people can **commit** to the full programme	• Include a **therapy assistant and partners**	• Let people know about **other sources of support**
• Provide **technical support** to get people set up	• **2 x 45 minutes per day of individual therapy x 5 days x 4 weeks**	• Can people **do the programme again?**
• Consider **other needs** e.g. visual problems	• Include **individual exercises** and **planned group time**	
• Tell people about the **benefits of ICAPs**	• Include **music-based therapy**	
	• **Not much homework**	

"When the intensive is finished, what is the follow on?"

What next?

This project will help us to **develop an online ICAP** in the North West of England

For more information, please contact: m.sandars@lancaster.ac.uk