ABSTRACT

SRIP 35th ANNUAL CONFERENCE. 14TH AND 15TH SEPTEMBER 2015

The East Midlands Conference Centre & Orchard Hotel, The University of Nottingham

Title:

A systematic review of computer- and internet-based psychotherapy interventions for perinatal mental health.

Authors:

Susan Ayers, Miriam Thiel, Ellinor K. Olander

Corresponding author contact details:

Susan Ayers, Centre for Maternal and Child Health Research, School of Health Sciences, City University London, Northampton Square, London, EC1V 0HB

Abstract (word count *max=300 words*)

Background:

Reviews have shown that computer- and web-based interventions can be effective for a variety of mental health disorder across different populations. However, the effectiveness of such interventions for women in the perinatal period has not yet been reviewed.

Aim and Objectives:

This review therefore aimed to systematically review and synthesise findings on the efficacy of computer- or web-based interventions for women's perinatal mental health.

Method:

Multiple electronic databases were searched for published and unpublished literature using keywords supplemented by hand searches.

Results:

Eleven studies were eligible. The majority were randomized controlled trials and the methodological quality was rated as good. Interventions were targeted at depression, stress, and complicated grief for either the antenatal or postpartum period or the time after pregnancy loss. Most program reported statistically significant effects from pre-intervention to post-intervention, and compared to a control group.

Interpretation: Preliminary evidence for this modality to be effective in delivering treatment during this period was identified. However, the findings are limited due to methodological limitations and the heterogeneity of included studies.

Conclusions: This systematic review provides the first research synthesis on computer- and web-based interventions for perinatal mental health issues and revealed significant gaps in the current evidence-base urging the need for more high quality trials.