

Depression & Anxiety Programme for Breast Cancer

This programme from SilverCloud® by Amwell® is designed for those currently undergoing treatment for breast cancer (BC), or who have been treated in the past, and are experiencing low mood and worries. The programme aims to:

- Increase understanding about the psychological impact of breast cancer (BC)
- Provide evidence-based coping skills to deal with low mood and worries
- Promote a sense of personal agency

Therapeutic concepts

Psychoeducation

The Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) cycle is introduced in relation to depression and anxiety. Users learn about thinking styles and the relationship between behaviours, thoughts and emotions.

Behavioural techniques

The *Depression & Anxiety Programme for BC*, aims to help patients and survivors regain a sense of control and improve their quality of life, with the use of self-help techniques such as behavioural activation and activity scheduling.^{1,2}

Cognitive techniques

A variety of cognitive coping techniques are introduced, such as thought monitoring, identifying unhelpful thinking patterns, and distraction techniques.

Relaxation & mindfulness

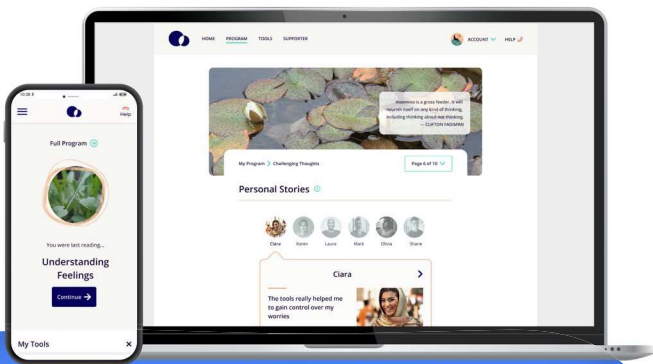
Simple and effective exercises, such as progressive muscle relaxation and mindfulness, can help users to gain rapid control over their anxiety and feel more positive.^{2,3,4}



How it works

The structure and content of the *Depression & Anxiety Programme for BC* follows the evidence-based principles of CBT, teaching users how to reframe thinking patterns and build coping skills.⁵

In keeping with the guiding principles of CBT, which endorse a structured outline and a goal-oriented focus, each module contains breast cancer-specific information, interactive activities, homework suggestions and personal stories.⁶



The programme is available 24/7, allowing users to access the content at a time and place that suits them. It can be accessed using a phone, tablet or computer and can be tailored to suit the needs of the individual.

Summary of programme modules:

- **Getting Started** The user is introduced to CBT and explores how it can help them understand anxiety. Two key tools of the programme – the Mood Monitor and the Thoughts, Feelings, Behaviour (TFB) Cycle – are introduced.
- **Understanding Feelings** Focusing on the feelings and physical components of low mood, the user can begin to build their own TFB cycles and track the impact of their lifestyle choices on their mood.
- **Boosting Behaviour** Introduces the cycle of inactivity and its role in maintaining low mood. Helps the user identify ways to motivate engagement in activities that provide a sense of achievement.
- **Spotting Thoughts** The user is introduced to thinking traps and is encouraged to identify their unhelpful thoughts, allowing them to further build their TFB cycle.
- **Challenging Thoughts** Helps the user learn techniques to tackle thinking traps and identify alternative ways of thinking.
- **Managing Worry** Focusing on the difference between practical and hypothetical worry, the user can learn new ways to understand and manage their worries.
- **Bringing It All Together** Prepares the user for coming to the end of the programme and focuses on helping them stay well in the future.

References:

1. Hopko, D. R., Armento, M. E., Robertson, S., Ryba, M. M., Carvalho, J. P., Colman, L. K., ... & Lejuez, C. W. (2011). Brief behavioral activation and problem-solving therapy for depressed breast cancer patients: randomized trial. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, 79(6), 834.
2. Moorey, S., & Greer, S. (2011). *Oxford guide to CBT for people with cancer*. OUP Oxford.
3. Padesky, C. A. (2020). *The Clinician's Guide to CBT Using Mind Over Mood*. Guilford Publications.
4. Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 84(4), 822.
5. Beck, J. S., & Beck, A. T. (2011). *Cognitive behavior therapy*. New York: Basics and beyond. Guilford Publication.
6. Maerov, P. J. (2006). Demystifying CBT: Effective, easy-to-use treatment for depression and anxiety. *Current Psychiatry*, 5(8), 26.

GPs in Lanarkshire can refer to SilverCloud directly via SCI Gateway. Please specify which program you are referring to.

There is further information about how to refer at the For Professionals page of the Lanarkshire Mind Matters website.

