**Introduction**

Asperger’s syndrome (AS) and High Functioning Autism (HFA) belong to the autism spectrum disorders (ASD). They are characterised by impairments in development of communication and social skills and presence of stereotypical behaviours, interests and activities. There is a growing amount of evidence suggesting that AS and HFA individuals have higher rates of anxiety. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) is a form of treatment that has established beneficial effects in individuals with anxiety disorders.

The aim is to determine whether or not psychological treatments for anxiety can be adapted and used to successfully treat the anxiety experienced by people with AS.

**Participants**

48 individuals with AS/HFA have been recruited from sites across Kent, South East London, and Norfolk.

The inclusion criteria:
- Clinical Diagnosis of Asperger Syndrome and/or High Functioning Autism
- Clinical Diagnosis of Social Anxiety
- Adults 16 ≥ years
- IQ ≥ 70

**Design and Measures**

A single-blind randomised cross-over trial incorporating pre-, post- and follow-up assessments of anxiety. The intervention of group CBT will be delivered by trained CBT therapists; the anxiety assessments are completed by research assistants. All group sessions will be co-facilitated.

The Assessment Measures were:

**Anxiety:** HAM-A, Fear Questionnaire, Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale, Social Interaction Anxiety Scale SIAS, Social Phobia Inventory SPIN.

**Depression:** HAM-D.

**Well-being:** Social and Emotional Functioning Interview, SF36, EQ-5D, Adapt SEF Insight Into the Diagnosis Questions.

**Resources:** Resource Use Questionnaire.

**Objectives**

Successful intervention is likely to lead to significant improvements in individual’s psychosocial functioning, leading to improvement in their quality of life, and their ability to participate within their wider community. We hope to develop a cost effective treatment in order to ensure that we are able to treat the maximum number of people with finite resources.

**Progress**

Kent - Group 1 completed. Group 2 starting Jan 2013.

South East London - Group 1 completed. Group 2 starting Feb 2013.

Norfolk - 2 groups part way through; 2 more to follow in 2013

**Data- baseline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Cut offs</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAM-A</td>
<td>&gt;18 moderate</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>3-41</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HAM-D</td>
<td>&gt;18 mild</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>1-26</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FQ</td>
<td>Agoraphobia &gt;19</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>1-20</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social phobia &gt;18</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>7-29</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSAS</td>
<td>&gt;65 marked phobia</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>11-106</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>34-9.54</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoidance</td>
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<td>33.4-4.53</td>
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<td>SIAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPIN</td>
<td>Social phobia &gt;34</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>3-63</td>
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</table>

**Issues- encountered to date**

RA- Maintaining condition blindness
CBT- sessions
- Attendance
- Group contribution