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Top Tips for Clinical Psychologists

Supporting clients' cognitive health through ageing

COVID-19 has presented many challenges when it comes to supporting clients' cognitive health.

Chartered Clinical Psychologist, Dr Reena Vohora, shares six top tips on how you can provide and improve your clients' cognitive health through ageing post-COVID.



- 1. Improve accessibility through blended assessments.** The pandemic has led to a major review of procedures, and increased waiting times. Turning to digital platforms such as [Q-global](#) and [Q-interactive](#) can aid with test administration, scoring, and access to results post-assessment. If you are considering remote delivery, first consult guidance from the [British Psychological Society](#) and [Division of Neuropsychology](#) regarding the appropriate considerations for professional practice. Also consider the help clients might need to support them with technical elements, in case they have any difficulties.

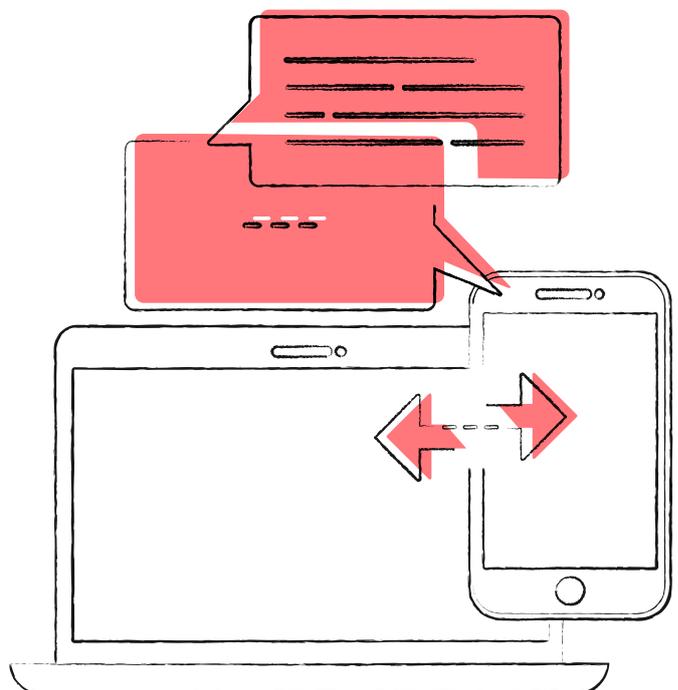


2. Promote creative solutions for cognitive and social stimulation. With many daily activities affected due to the ongoing impacts of pandemic, it is time for us to be creative. Consider how clients might access online tasks and games to support a range of cognitive functions such as attention, memory and language. Look to create a system that supports a sense of structure, including reminders and prompts, and encourage stronger social connections with others.



3. Confront the long-term problems of loneliness Having meaningful connections with others is key to our overall wellbeing and cognition. While we cannot afford to lose the benefits of face-to-face approaches in the long term, digital approaches can help maintain connections. It is imperative that individuals with cognitive and/or sensory impairments aren't excluded from these services.

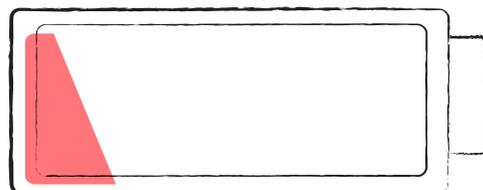
4. Are your clients tech savvy? Although we need to be sure that we don't make general assumptions, we also need to acknowledge that some older people may struggle with using technology. It is therefore vital that we not only look at our clients' levels of confidence with technology but also their access to data. Don't forget: family members/carers may be able to help with set-up and engagement during your sessions. Virtual training can also be provided for family members/carers, on behalf of clients who cannot access any tech-based approaches.





5. Share further post-diagnostic support. Many services, such as memory clinics, have improved their access to assessment at early stages, yet post-diagnostic support is essential too. We need to consider how to use tech more effectively, for example by creating online resource packs, or producing recordings of strategies for cognitive rehabilitation. Reassessing your clients is also important - assessments like the [Wechsler range of assessments](#), provided by Pearson Clinical can be great for this.

6. Don't overlook the fatigue factor. Fatigue is an important consideration when it comes to working with any individuals who have cognitive impairment, and also those experiencing long COVID. The possible impact of fatigue on cognition, mood and recovery should be a significant factor to bear in mind when deciding on appropriate forms of assessment, on goals and timing for input, and on the format of therapeutic you offer.



Dr Reena Vohora

Clinical Psychologist



Dr Reena Vohora began working in the NHS in 2005, and specialises in work with adults on managing emotional wellbeing, difficulties relating to food and body image, and with older adults who have cognitive and/or neurological impairment. Reena is also a tutor on a doctoral clinical psychology course and co-chair of the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust Race Equality Network.

For more information, visit www.doctorreena.com

'Cognition Top Tips for Clinical Psychologists' has been created by Dr Reena Vohora for Pearson Clinical, 2021.

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