

Panic & Anxiety Project

The Panic & Anxiety Project aimed to develop and test a computerised resource (portal) to assist people with stress and anxiety.

This project was undertaken in 2005 - 2006, and was a result of collaboration between people with panic and anxiety and a team of Monash University researchers from the Faculty of Information Technology and School of Primary Health Care. It became a predecessor of [Heart Health Online Project](#).



About the project

Project background aims

The project sought to extend the findings of an earlier project, which had established that implementing user profiles, information could be better tailored to the individual consumer. The project in conjunction with researchers from the School of Primary Health Care, assessed the applicability of that work for stress and anxiety management and involved examining the user requirements, profiles and information resources required by people suffering from those problems.

Project aims were to:

- identify the medical and societal information and decision-support needs of mental health consumers with anxiety and stress disorders.
- explore how different patient characteristics impact on information needs.
- explore the extent that current information resources on stress and anxiety disorders meet the users needs.
- identify gaps in suitable information.
- define the role of information technology in providing differentiated, quality information on stress and anxiety disorders, to match a range of information needs.
- advance the general understanding of how to develop a differentiated resource, applicable to other areas of information needs particularly in health.

Project plan

The project was conducted in two phases.

The first phase included conducting of focus groups and individual interviews with participants who were suffering from stress and anxiety. The aim of the focus groups/interviews was to obtain data on, how people obtained information, issues they had with the information they were able to obtain and the types of information consumers would value in this computerised resource.

The second phase included analysis of the obtained information by the researches and development of the resource, which would have the capacity to be tailored to the needs of individual patients suffering from stress and anxiety.

Research funding

FIT Small Grants Schema - \$20,000

Research methods

Research methods used were focus groups and interviews.

People

Chief Investigators:

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Former Partner Investigator:

Professor Jeff Richards (PhD, M. Psychol, BA (Hons), FAPS)

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Jeff had a background in clinical and health psychology. His areas of research specialty were primary health care, behavioural medicine, anxiety and mood disorders, cardiovascular health, and use of information technology in health and mental health. Jeff had a strong track record in Primary Care research along with numerous publications in leading international and national journals. He received international recognition for his development of an internet based treatment program (PANIC ONLINE) for panic disorder, which was the first of its kind in Australia. The development and pilot evaluation of that program were supported by the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund and engendered considerable national and international interest.

Project progress

Project timetable and outcomes

The project has been completed.

It confirmed that there was a difference in the type of the information people needed depending on particular characteristics. Those characteristics were aggregated into profiles and integrated into a revised meta-data schema.

A prototype portal interface was developed to trail the visual representation of the profiles.

The project findings contributed to the related follow on project [Heart Health Online](#) funded by [Beyond Blue](#), which aims to assist general practitioners to manage depression and related illnesses, in people with established coronary heart disease.

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Contact us

If you have any questions, comments or feedback about the Panic & Anxiety project, please contact [Dr Julie Fisher](#).

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