

Upskilling diverse workforces to deliver inclusive online group therapy for adjustment after stroke: WAterS-2 Study

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1. Why is this important?

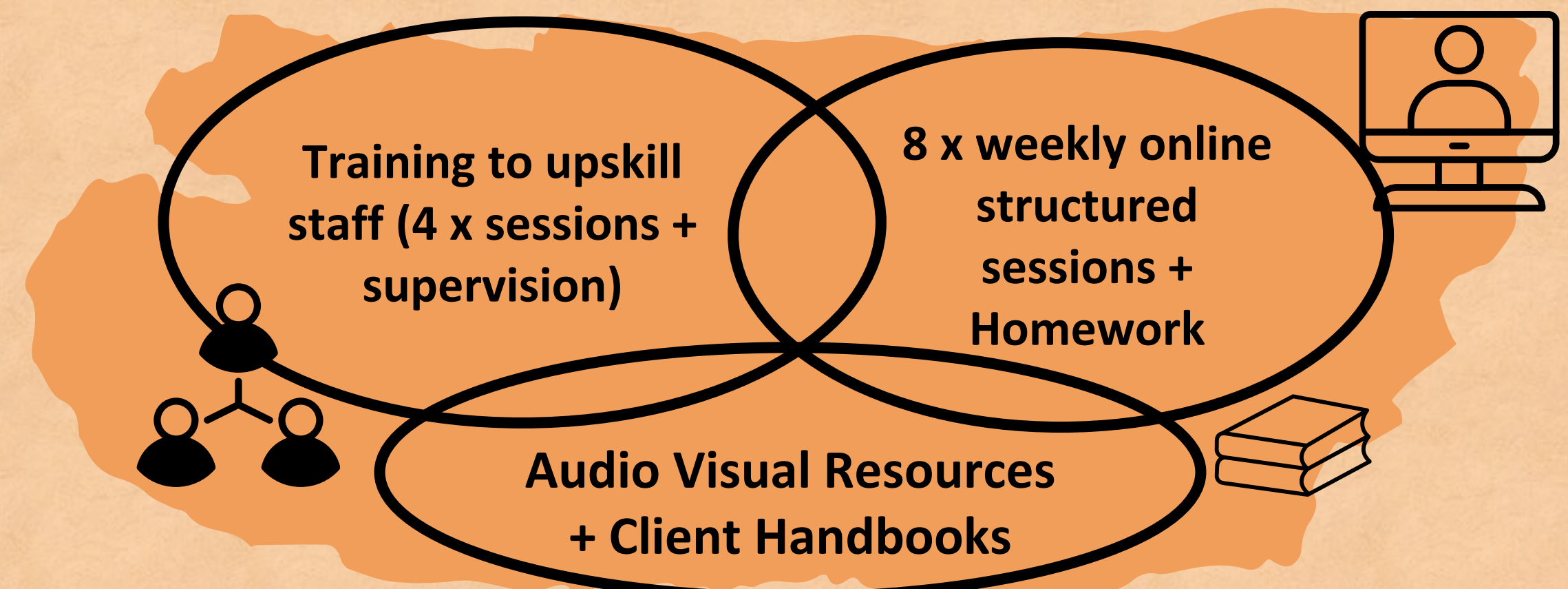
- Stroke survivors often **struggle emotionally**.



- People with **aphasia** and from **ethnic communities** face **additional barriers**.
- Training non-psychologists** may help **expand access** to support.

2. What did we do?

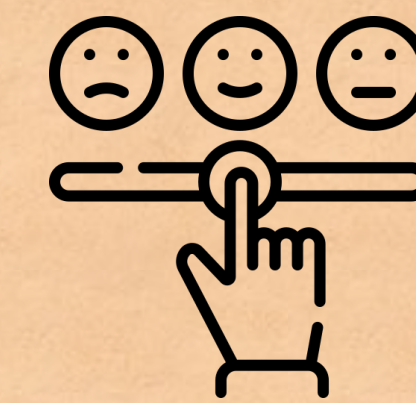
We tested an **8-week online group therapy** informed by **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)**, delivered by UK staff working in National Health Service (NHS) community stroke teams, including **peer support workers**



We collected:



Attendance



Surveys



Interviews

3. Who took part?

- 19 stroke survivors
- 50% had aphasia
- 32% ethnic background
- 13 staff trained
- 4 NHS sites

4. What did we find?

Workforce

- Staff delivered groups **safely** and confidently.

Non-psychologists – including **peer support workers with lived experience of stroke** – were successfully trained and supported to deliver therapy.

I don't think it's necessarily qualification... it's the ability to facilitate and encourage conversation

Stroke survivors

- 93% would recommend the groups
- 74% attended most sessions
- Peer support and ACT strategies valued.

The grounding and the sort of meditative stuff was pretty good

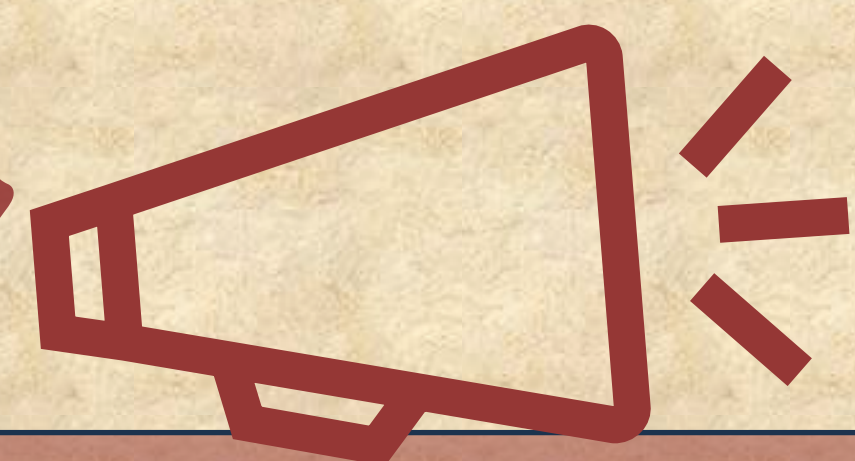
This has made me think that I can change things a bit

Inclusion

Inclusive delivery was possible but barriers remain.

We can't use translators for our groups either, so we're automatically missing people and that is so stigmatising and isolating

5. Key Messages



Inclusive, online psychological support for underserved stroke survivors can be delivered by diverse workforces — including peer support workers — helping expand access to care.

Free resources and a pragmatic research trial planned



Diverse workforce



Online delivery



Psychological support



Inclusive access



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