



# AMETHYST Study Information Form

## Do your clients experience persisting auditory hallucinations?

You may wish to refer them to our psychological treatment trial

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The AMETHYST study aims to increase our understanding of the best ways to help individuals who experience hearing voices (auditory verbal hallucinations), by comparing Avatar Therapy with Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

### Inclusion Criteria:

- Aged over 18 years
- A diagnosis of a schizophrenia spectrum disorder or a mood disorder with psychotic symptoms
- Currently experiencing hearing voices with significant negative content (i.e. critical, abusive or threatening) and/or that cause distress
- Currently on treatment with antipsychotic medication OR has tried at least two different antipsychotics in the past and these have been discontinued due to insufficient treatment response and/or poor tolerability
- Access to the internet and a computer/other device on which videoconferencing software can be used

### Exclusion Criteria:

- Auditory verbal hallucinations are attributable to a primary substance use disorder or organic disorder
- IQ < 70
- Currently receiving or has received individual psychological therapy for hearing voices in the past 3 months
- Auditory verbal hallucinations are spoken in a language other than English

### What will clients be asked to do?

Following an initial research assessment, clients will be randomised to receive seven one-to-one sessions of either Avatar Therapy or CBT. Clients will complete a further assessment at the end of therapy and at three- and six-month follow-ups.

Clients will receive a \$50 gift card following each research assessment (four in total) as acknowledgement for their time and contribution.

### What do the therapies involve?

#### *Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)*

CBT is a therapy based mainly on discussion about the voices experienced. This therapy aims to identify ways in which the experience of hearing voices is distressing or bothersome, before finding the best possible ways of coping with and responding to the experience.

#### *Avatar Therapy*

Avatar Therapy is very similar to CBT, but the process of therapy is aided by the use of a computer-generated avatar to represent one of the voices that is experienced. The use of the avatar creates a more vivid experience during therapy, which allows the client to role play different methods of coping and responding with the support and guidance of the therapist.

### Where do the assessments and therapy take place?

All research assessments and therapy sessions will be conducted online via Zoom.

### How do I refer a client?

If you have a client who may be eligible, who is interested in participating, and who is happy to be contacted by the AMETHYST researchers then please visit our website and complete the [referral form](#). A member of the research team will then contact you or your client. Alternatively, your client may like to contact us directly and can use the [registration form](#) on the website. Please see our website and contact details below.

### For more information, contact:

The AMETHYST team:

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