

# A pilot investigation into the use of a peer mentor to support an online group tic therapy intervention.

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## Background

- Peer mentors help to create a community in which patients take ownership over their health and well being, develop knowledge and confidence and learn to self- manage (NHS England, 2022).
- This pilot study investigates the impact of incorporating peer mentor support into a 4 session virtual tic therapy group.

## Methods

### Phase 1:

- Consultation with peer mentor to co-produce content and decide peer mentor involvement in group.

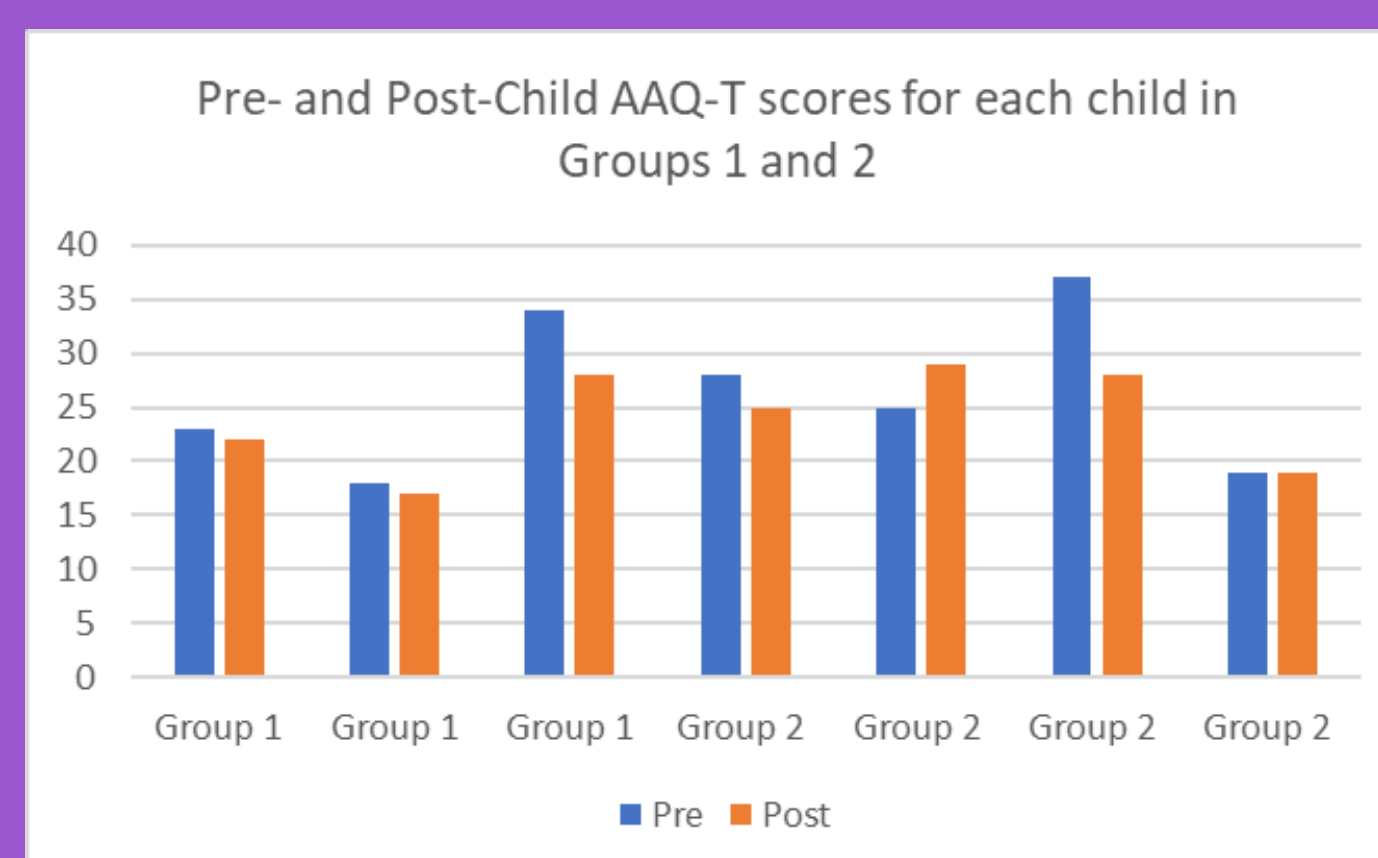
### Phase 2:

- Children attending the TANDeM service were invited to attend the group, which incorporated Habit Reversal Therapy, Exposure Response Prevention, relaxation, externalised attention and acceptance strategies.
- Two groups ran in parallel, each group had six participants (overall mean age = 11; male:female 2:1).
- One group was co-facilitated by a peer mentor (group 2) whose contribution included the sharing of lived experience and advice.
- The following outcome measures were used pre- and post group:
  - Acceptance and Action Questionnaire - Tic-Specific Version (AAQ-T)
  - Yale Global Tic Severity Scale-Revised (YGTSS-R)
  - Qualitative interview.

## Results

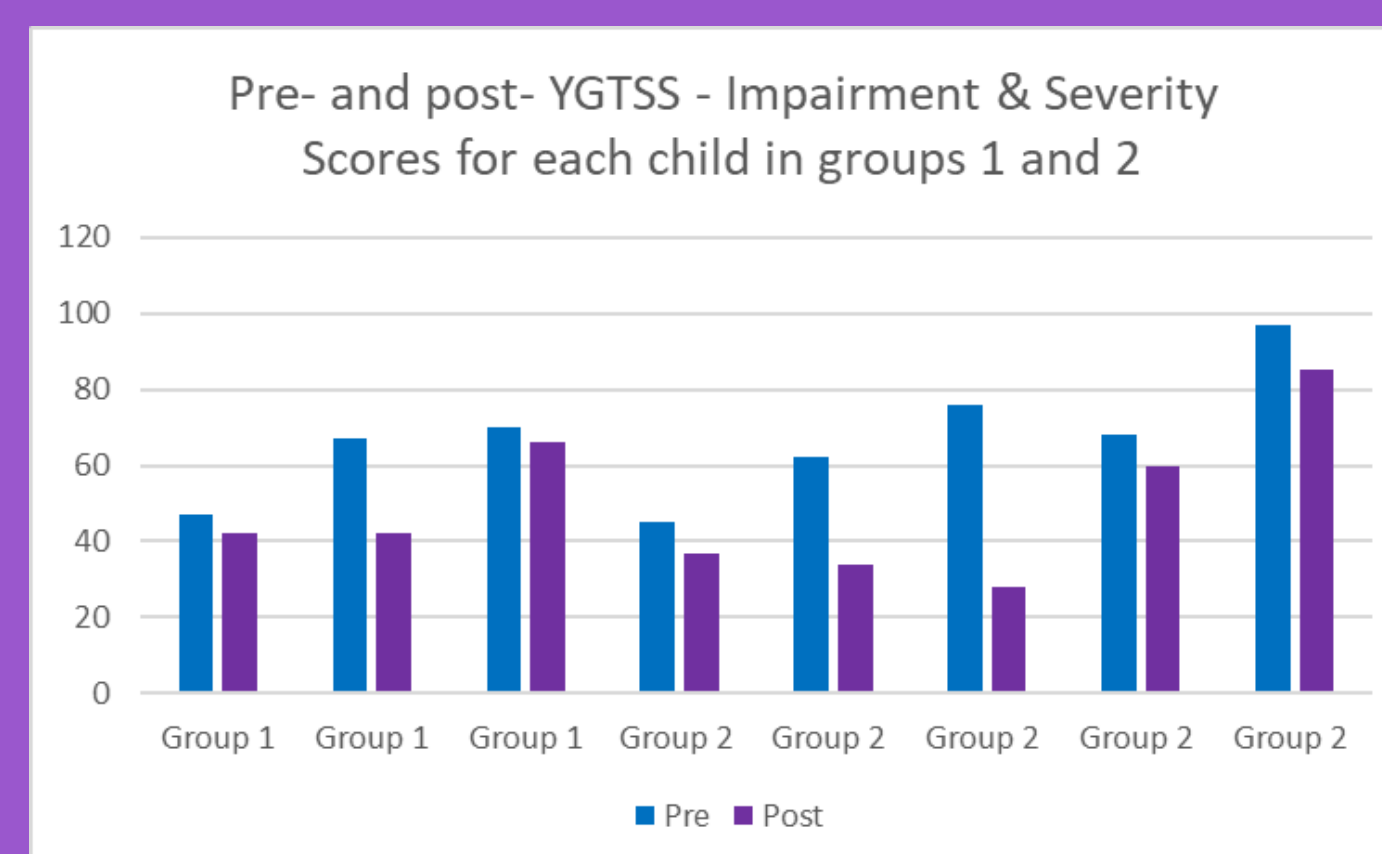
### AAQ-T results:

In group 1, all three children reported improved tic acceptance following the group. In group 2, two children reported improved tic acceptance, one remained the same and one declined.



### YGTSS results:

All children, across both groups, reported an improvement in tic severity and impairment.



### Qualitative feedback themes:

- The benefits of having someone with lived experience (N=4).
- Appreciation of advice given by peer mentor (N=3).
- Giving hope for the future. (N=2).
- Peer mentor seen as a role model (N=2).

## Conclusion

- Both groups improved with regard to tic severity and impairment and findings were mixed with regard to tic acceptance levels, with more consistent improvements in the non-peer mentor group.
- Qualitative feedback on the peer mentor involvement was consistently positive across all participants interviewed with a clear recommendation for on-going peer mentor involvement in future groups.
- In this small sample, it is not possible to draw conclusions regarding whether the peer mentor had any significant impact on tic acceptance and severity, as compared to the non-peer mentor group.
- As qualitative feedback was very positive, we will progress to phase three of the study and further groups comparing outcomes in groups that are co-facilitated by a peer mentor and those that are not.