**Evaluating Behavioural Skills Training via Telecommunication to Support Mediators in Facilitating Acceptance and Commitment Training**

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**Objective:** Multiple randomized control trials have demonstrated the effectiveness of acceptance and commitment training (ACT) for improving the quality of life across numerous populations, including family caregivers of children with NDD. Specifically, research conducted by the Centre for Addition and Mental Health has demonstrated that parent caregivers and clinicians can co-facilitate ACT workshops for other parents with IDD effectively, with the participants identifying the unique benefits of learning from parent co-facilitators. The challenge is to build capacity to scale up and implement these ACT workshops across Canada. Little research to date has been conducted on effective methods to train facilitators to provide ACT workshops for family caregivers, especially training lay family caregivers to co-facilitate these groups alongside a clinician. Training using telecommunication is less expensive and more efficient than in-person training, allowing trainers to build capacity and increase access to training by overcoming geographical barriers. The aim of this research was to examine the effect of providing additional behavioural skills training (BST) via telecommunication to family caregiver and clinician co-facilitators across Canada that have already received foundational in-person ACT training.

**Method:** The researchers provided behavioural skills training via telecommunication to refine the participants’ facilitation of specific ACT skills and increase their confidence so that they can be prepared to deliver high quality manualized ACT workshops independently in the future. The current study included three caregivers and one clinician, where quantitative data on competency, confidence, and quality of ACT facilitation was collected at baseline, post-training, and will be conducted at a one-month follow-up using a multiple-probe design across participants. In addition, a social validity measure will be administered following completion of the training, specifically assessing the BST telecommunication training format.

**Results:** Participant competency scores (% correctly implemented steps on the ACT skills) were low and stable in baseline (*M =* 2.4%); current post-training data are stable and high (*M* = 96.6%), demonstrating a significant level change from baseline to post-training. Interestingly, baseline facilitation confidence ratings were high, despite competency scores being low. Post-training and follow-up confidence scores will be collected after follow-up. The current results of this study suggest behavioural skills training delivered through a telecommunication format is efficient and cost-effective in promoting and improving the quality of ACT facilitation skills.

**Discussion:** Ultimately, increasing the number of competent ACT facilitators will improve access to ACT workshops to support family caregivers, which is essential given the high levels of stress this population has been demonstrated to experience. Insights from the study will have implications for scaling up ACT or other similar psychosocial interventions.

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