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**PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM THE EVALUATION OF AN  
INTERNET-BASED DEPRESSION TREATMENT  
PROGRAMME (RID TRIAL) IN NEW ZEALAND**

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**Background** Depression is a major risk factor for self-harm and suicide, and a leading cause of disability. Many people who experience depression do not come to the attention of health services. Cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) is effective in managing depression, however, few CBT therapists, limited access and high cost are significant barriers to accessing CBT.

**Aims/Objectives/Purpose** To evaluate proven internet-based interactive and personalised CBT and depression literacy (DL) programmes from Australia in terms of their effectiveness in reducing depression, anxiety, alcohol use, and self-harm, and enhancing quality of life in the general population.

**Methods** A national, exclusively web-based trial (<http://www.otago.ac.nz/rid>) was conducted with over 700 participants who were randomly assigned to a CBT, DL (interventions) or control group. After completing a baseline mental health survey, they worked through a 4-week programme (intervention or control) followed by an immediate survey on their mental health. Then they

completed online mental health surveys at 6 monthly intervals until 24 months had elapsed.

**Results/Outcomes** Many participants reported that they did not have a preference for which of the three trial groups they would be randomly assigned to and gave altruistic reasons for taking part in the trial. Results will be presented on the immediate impact of the online interventions on mental health and well-being.

**Significance/Contribution to the Field** The initial findings are relevant to the Government's new national strategy to implement online psychological therapies in the general population and thereby provide a wide range of suitable mental health treatments for consumers.