

Participant and Care Partner Experiences with a Multimodal Communication Treatment with Discourse and Group Delivered via Telepractice (teleMCT+DG)



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Introduction

Multimodal Communication Treatment (MCT)

- Aims to teach people with aphasia (PWA) functional strategies to help resolve communication breakdowns (Purdy & VanDyke, 2011)
- Trains five communication modalities (speaking, gesturing, writing, drawing, and a communication book) at the single and two-word level (Purdy & Wallace, 2015; Wallace et al., 2014)

TeleMCT+DG

- Modified MCT to include discourse tasks and group therapy
- Modified to deliver via telepractice (Park et al., 2025; Rajesh et al., 2025)
- Shown positive evidence of treatment effects (Park et al., 2025)

Qualitative Feedback from the Participants and Care Partners

- Pursuing life participation of aphasia approach (LPAA)
- Important for evaluating therapeutic success and maintaining a person-centered approach (Hinckley et al., 2023)

Purpose of the Study:

The current study aimed to highlight participant feedback following teleMCT+DG, emphasizing their perceived effects on communication, whether they met their goals, and their perceptions of the treatment protocol and telepractice format.

Methods

Participants

People with aphasia (PWA) who have participated in teleMCT+DG and their care Partners (CP) were interviewed.

Table 1 Participant Demographics

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Participants with Aphasia	PWA1	PWA2	PWA3	PWA4	PWA5	PWA6*	PWA7		
Sex, Age	M, 75	M, 49	F, 51	M, 50	F, 41	M, 68	M, 42		
Etiology (Post onset)	CVA	CVA	CVA	CVA	CVA	CVA	CVA		
WAB-R AQ & WAB-R Classification	91.2 Anomic	60 Conduction	61.2 Conduction	32.3 Broca	85.6 Anomic	12.4 Global	61.2 Broca		
SAQOL-39 (Communication subset)	2.9/5	2/5	4.1/5	2.2/5	3/5	2.3/5	4.6/5		
Interview Participation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		
Care Partners	No CP	CP2	CP3	CP4	No CP	CP6	No CP		
Sex, Age	N/A	F, 49	M, 70	F, 48	N/A	F, 67	N/A		
Therapy Participation	N/A	75-100%	0-25%	50-75%	N/A	75-100%	N/A		
Interview Participation	N/A	Half with P2 present	Half with P3 present	Full with P4 present	N/A	Full (P6 not present)	N/A		

The care partner's participant number corresponds with PWA's participant number. *Participant unable to participate in the interview due to severe aphasia

Materials and Procedures

- Interview participation was flexible to accommodate PWA and CP needs and preferences.
- 41 interview questions within three categories:
- (1) satisfaction with the treatment
- (2) generalization to daily communication, and
- (3) advantages and disadvantages of telepractice format
- o Zoom©
- Video-recording to be manually transcribed for analysis

How much did you enjoy practicing five ways to communicate an object?

Analysis

- Descriptive qualitative analysis (Simmons-Mackie & Lynch, 2013)
- Independent coding for 2 interviews to determine initial key concepts (5 raters)
- Discussion between raters to develop the initial codebook with descriptive themes
- The codebook continued to be expanded and edited by following interviews
- Themes were emerged based on the final codebook

Results: Participants with Aphasia "Walking and then people 'Hello, how are you?' Um, yeah 1. TeleMCT+DG is I like [therapy] yeah like 'I'm talking better.'" helpful PWA1 4. Recommendations "[Therapy was] seamless. . . for teleMCT+DG fun, good, opportunity 2. TeleMCT+DG is to communicate, yes good. enjoyable PWA2 "No cause again mine really good, but [story pictures] no...like mine and "I'm like 'I can't think um car' like well what makes more mine" 3. Perspectives on now I could (gestures driving) but car driving or bike like this (gestures holding multimodal handlebars)." communication use (five modalities) "[The book] is not really how I talk or. . .its ok, 5. Telepractice PWA7 you know I have 'again oh hang on,' my upstairs 'hang on' take it up and I get my book. . . " "Can't drive. . . um mom dad 6. TeleMCT+DG is

Results: Care Partners

brother...yeah sucks."

"Or yeah some but more [group sessions],

speak hard, speech here more."

"He does not do a lot of handwriting because he is right-handed, and is numb, but he will do it with his phone and type it out, so I would say typing, yes.'

"P4 and I talked a lot that the gesturing—he gestures a lot more after doing [therapy], and I will say that was a direct, I think like, something we hadn't thought enough about doing as a way to communicate and I think it was increased."

3. TeleMCT+DG is helpful and enjoyable CP3

The gestures and all that, before um, I didn't. . . if I

was talking to people and I couldn't get a word

out, but I was gonna use a gesture or whatever--uh

they think I am not whatever (points to head and

motions 'stupid')."

4. Recommendations for treatment

things that are more tailored to,

you know what he would do every

day, you know as far as like normal

communication.'

"making more meaningful. . . just more functional words that he is going to use . . . it was a little too "I would say he needs to do more abstract, and he is so homework; I would say also to use always been super logical'

"I guess I'm just tired when I get home from work, and we don't and he's not doing therapy right now anywhere, so I guess I haven't taken enough time with him [to practice]."

5. Experience of living with a partner with aphasia

challenging

1. Perspectives on

multimodal

communication use

(five modalities)

2. Factors impacting

communication

"I would say just being frustrated, feeling rushed,

being over, you know being tired, those all really

affect his communication. . . I think that sometimes it

is just too hard, difficult, and he, sometimes I think

in those instances he would just rather not

communicate.

PWA4

Results: Ratings

Table 2. Participants' Ratings on the Helpfulness of Practicing Each Modality (1= not helpful at all, 5= very helpful)

Modality	PWA1	PWA2	PWA3	PWA4	PWA5	PWA6	PWA7	Mean
Speaking	5/5	5/5	5/5	5/5	4/5	3/5	4/5	4.43 /5
Gesturing	5/5	5/5	5/5	5/5	4/5	4/5	5/5	4.71 /5
Drawing	5/5	5/5	4/5	4/5	5/5	4/5	3/5	4.29 /5
Writing	5/5	5/5	5/5	5/5	5/5	4/5	3/5	4.57 /5
Communication Book	5/5	5/5	5/5	3/5	4/5	5/5	5/5	4.57 /5

Table 3. Participants' Enjoyment of TeleMCT+DG and Specific Tasks (1= did not enjoy at all, 5= very much enjoyed)

Treatment Elements	PWA1	PWA2	PWA3	PWA4	PWA5	PWA6	PWA7	Mean
Overall Therapy	5/5	5/5	5/5	3/5	5/5	5/5	5/5	4.71 /5
Communicating the Object Card	5/5	5/5	5/5	4/5	4/5	5/5	5/5	4.71 /5
Practicing all 5 Modalities	5/5	5/5	5/5	4/5	5/5	4/5	3/5	4.43 /5
Making stories out of pictures	4/5	5/5	4/5	2/5	5/5	3/5	3/5	3.71 /5
Group trivia	5/5	5/5	5/5	4/5	5/5	3/5	4/5	4.43 /5

Discussion

Summary

- Overall positive responses from PWA and CPs.
- TeleMCT+DG was productive, helpful and enjoyable
- Participants generate more nonverbal modalities in daily communication than before receiving the therapy
- Expressing that non-verbal modalities "helped get my words and thoughts out."
- Challenges of teleMCT+DG:
- Generating stories, reading impairments, confusion, or mobility impairments (e.g., handwriting due to numbness)
- PWA and CP Recommendations
- Take-home assignments, typing modality, and personalized story pictures

Clinical Implication & Future Directions

- Next step: include clinician responses regarding satisfaction and potential barriers in conducting the treatment
- Modifying teleMCT+DG based on the feedback (e.g., personalized materials)

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"On a scale from one to five ten!.

.Oh god I'd give [teleMCT+DG] a

five she really enjoyed this a lot.'