Researchers at the Centre for Appearance Research (CAR) at UWE, Bristol are being supported by the VTCT Foundation to work with the charities involved in the Appearance Collective (AC) to provide evidence-based psychosocial support for people affected by visible differences. We are incredibly excited by this collaboration and look forward to what we can all achieve by working together.

Launching soon– the CAR participant pool!

As part of the VTCT Foundation programme of work, we will soon be launching a CAR participant pool. This will be for those living with a visible difference, parents of children living with a visible difference and health professionals, as well as the general public. Those registered will receive updates and opportunities to take part in research at the Centre for Appearance Research. We will be calling upon Appearance Collective charities to help us promote the participant pool, whether that be through a mailing list or social media. Look out for an email soon about how you can help. Thank you.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy app

CAR researchers Fabio Zucchelli and Dr Heidi Williamson have been busy laying the groundwork for an exciting mobile app, aimed at helping adults with a visible difference who struggle with appearance concerns. With phones in so many people’s pockets 24/7, apps are a great way to engage people in health-related interventions.

We’ve assembled an exciting project team to make sure the app is designed with all the expertise it needs. We’re working with Dataphiles, a software developer with whom CAR have previously shared great success in developing YP Face IT, an online intervention for young people with visible differences. Dr Olivia Donnelly, a psychologist working in a specialist NHS service for people with appearance concerns, is providing expertise in the therapeutic model we’re using called Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). More recently, we’re pleased to report that Emma Rush from Vitiligo Support UK will work with us to provide the all-important user perspective.

So far we’ve designed the blueprints of the app, helped greatly by feedback from Appearance Collective members at the Workshop on Public Involvement at the end of January. Here are some changes we’ve made as a result of their input:

- Cutting down and simplifying text that had confused readers.
- Looking at alternative ways of presenting ‘values’ and ways users can choose their values.
- Adding a progress bar, and breaking the app into smaller chunks.
- Including motivational screens at the end of each sub-section.

Next, we aim to run a workshop with potential users to get their valuable feedback on the app. So watch this space!
Publication round-up

#CleftProud: A content analysis and online survey of two cleft lip and palate Facebook groups

This study analysed survey data and real-time posts collected from two existing Facebook groups hosted by the Cleft Lip and Palate Association. The study identified common topics of concern among adults born with cleft and parents of children born with cleft, as well as benefits and disadvantages of group participation. The findings suggest that social networking sites can be a helpful source of health-related information and peer support when appropriately managed.


Falling through the gap: Dental treatment experiences of patients affected by cleft lip and/or palate

This study used qualitative methods to assess adult patients’ experiences of community dental care. Participants perceived local dental practitioners to lack knowledge of cleft lip and palate and its treatment. In addition, participants were largely unaware of the services they were entitled to. The findings suggest that improved training and resources for non-specialist health professionals is needed, alongside closer communication between specialist teams, local practitioners, and the tertiary sector.


Everybody’s Different : The Appearance Game

One of the priorities set by the Appearance Collective was developing new Interventions for schools. ‘Everybody’s Different: The Appearance Game’ has been created by CAR in collaboration with Focus Games. The game helps children aged 9+ explore visible differences, body image, bullying and diversity. It went on sale in November 2017 and we have already had some great feedback, including a blog post review on the website of Our Altered Life (@ouralteredlife). Written by the author of the book (‘Our Altered Life’) in which Charlene (‘Charlie’) Beswick portrays her journey following the birth of her son with Goldenhar Syndrome, the review describes Charlie’s time spent playing Everybody’s Different with Year 5 pupils in a local school. Read the review here: [https://www.ouralteredlife.com/review-giveaway-everybodys-different-appearance-game/](https://www.ouralteredlife.com/review-giveaway-everybodys-different-appearance-game/). You can purchase copies of the game at [www.appearancegame.com](http://www.appearancegame.com)

Other news……..

CAR’s Visible Difference and Intimacy workshop will be held on 21 May 2018 in London. For more information and to register, please email claire.hamlet@uwe.ac.uk. CAR also produced a Podcast on the very topic, please visit [www.uwe.ac.uk/car/podcast](http://www.uwe.ac.uk/car/podcast) to listen to the episode.

Appearance Matters 8, 12-14 June 2018 Join us for CAR’s biennial conference in Bath to hear about research and good practice around body image and appearance. Our keynote speakers include Dr James Partridge, OBE from Changing Faces who will be speaking about promoting inclusion and best practice healthcare for people with disfigurements. To find out more about the conference, please visit [www1.uwe.ac.uk/hls/research/appearanceresearch/newsandeventsfrom](http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/hls/research/appearanceresearch/newsandeventsfrom)

Follow us on Twitter [@CAR_UWE](https://twitter.com/CAR_UWE). On Facebook: [www.facebook.com/AppearanceResearch/](http://www.facebook.com/AppearanceResearch/). You can also listen to our podcast which explores the world of appearance, the latest research in the field and features leading appearance experts: [www.uwe.ac.uk/car/podcast](http://www.uwe.ac.uk/car/podcast)