Online support for victims of personal injury during claims settlement

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Background
Current claims settlement:
Negative impact on victims’ psychological and physical recovery

Discrepancy claims settlement:
Monetary damage ↔ Immaterial needs
“Money alone cannot heal”
Recognition, rather than highest compensation

Background
Secondary victimization:
Renewed victimization
- Lack of information
- Lack of involvement
- Lack of ‘voice’
- Not being believed
- Not taken seriously
- Bad communication
- Claims settlement takes (too) long

Procedural justice:
Procedural aspects more important than outcome
Voice, information, explanation, respect & politeness
Perceived justice
Positive emotions, reduced psychological stress, higher subjective well-being

Current study
Empowerment
Process through which people gain more control over their decisions and actions affecting their health

e-Health intervention
- Proven to be effective
- Large audience
- Low cost
- At home
- At any time

Intervention
Claims settlement information
Explaining process of claims settlement

E-Coach
- Problem Solving Therapy
- Based on Self-examination Therapy (Bowman)
- 5 weekly lessons
  - Determine problems
  - Tackle solvable problems in 6 steps
  - Think less negatively about unimportant or unsolvable problems
  - Accepting situations that cannot be changed
  - Make a future plan
- Guided self help
  - Support by email
**Method**

**Randomized Controlled Trial**

- **2 x 2 design**
  - e-Health intervention ↔ usual care
  - Claims settlement just started ↔ 1 year of claims settlement

**Participants:**

- Victims of personal injury
  - 340 traffic accidents

- Recruitment via lawyer’s office
  - Providing claims settlement file

- Inclusion criteria:
  - > 18 years old
  - Internet, email
  - Dutch language

**Data collection:**

- Baseline, 3 months, 6 months, 12 months

**Outcome measures:**

- Primary outcome: Empowerment
- Perceived justice
- Well-being
- Stress

- Secondary outcomes: Demographic variables
- Locus of control
- Perceived work ability
- Website usage

**Independent variables:**

- Demographic variables
- Locus of control
- Perceived work ability
- Website usage

**Conclusion**

- First e-Health intervention study in field of liability law

- Results are interesting for other law fields

- Good implementation perspectives

- Results give insight in
  - concept of secondary victimization
  - effect of procedural justice

**Thank you!**

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