Debt Counselling for Depression in Primary Care: an adaptive randomised controlled pilot trial (DeCoDer study)


Record Status
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Citation

Authors' objectives
Depression and debt are common in the UK. Debt Counselling for Depression in Primary Care: an adaptive randomised controlled pilot trial (DeCoDer) aimed to assess the clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the addition of a primary care debt counselling advice service to usual care for patients with depression and debt. However, the study was terminated early during the internal pilot trial phase because of recruitment delays. This report describes the rationale, methods and findings of the pilot study, and implications for future research. The overarching aim of the internal pilot was to identify and resolve problems, thereby assessing the feasibility of the main trial. The specific objectives were to confirm methods for practice recruitment and the ability to recruit patients via the proposed approaches; to determine the acceptability of the study interventions and outcome measures; to assess contamination; to confirm the randomisation method for main trial and the level of participant attrition; and to check the robustness of data collection systems.

Authors' conclusions
As a result of low recruitment, this trial was terminated at the internal pilot phase and was too small for inferential statistical analysis. We recommend ways to reduce this risk when conducting complex trials among vulnerable populations recruited in community settings. These cover trial design, the design and delivery of interventions, recruitment strategies and support for sites.

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