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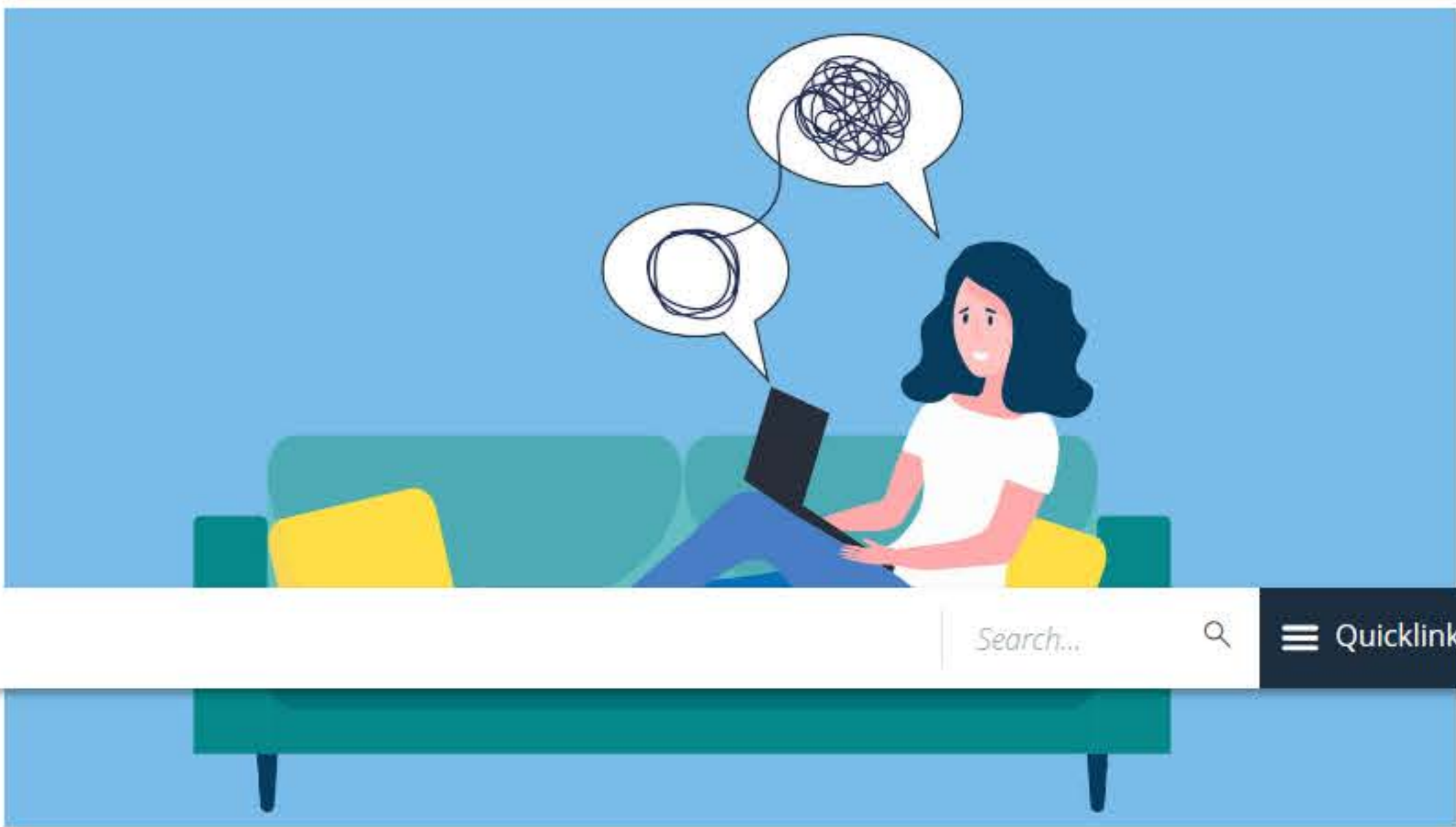
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Psychological Services Center offering COVID-19 Stress Clinic, general teletherapy

June 17, 2020

New telepsychology services, including one focused on stress responses to COVID-19, are now available through the Psychological Services Center at the University of Maine.

The center is the in-house outpatient clinic for an American Psychological Association accredited doctoral training program in clinical psychology. Staffed by clinician-psychologist teams with specific expertise, the center serves clients throughout the state of Maine.

When UMaine shifted to remote learning in mid-March in response to the coronavirus pandemic, the center developed a telehealth program to continue serving existing clients. They are now accepting new clients for programs including general teletherapy and the COVID-19 Stress Clinic (CSC).

The CSC is a four- to five-session therapy program designed to help people gain skills to manage stress reactions or emotional difficulties that have arisen because of or been exacerbated by the pandemic, according to Dr. April O'Grady, the center's director.

"For many people, learning a few strategies to manage pandemic-related stress can go a long way in improving their overall well-being during quarantine and beyond," says Dr. O'Grady. "Many people that don't need or want a typical course of psychotherapy would be well matched for a shorter course targeted to their needs."

Each CSC session focuses on a specific strategy to address the particular needs of the client. The program is now accepting clients ages 16 and older, who start with a confidential intake via phone or videoconferencing and are then assigned to a therapist. Each session is \$15.

Dr. O'Grady works with three graduate students — Melissa Jankowski, Jessica Shankman and Taylor McMillan — to determine which clinical psychology strategies will be the most helpful for clients. Based on this information, they create a treatment guide focused on specific skills that clinicians at the center can use to ensure uniform treatment for all clients.

The team plans to collect data on ways clients cope with stress of the pandemic before and after treatment, and hopes to publish research in the future.

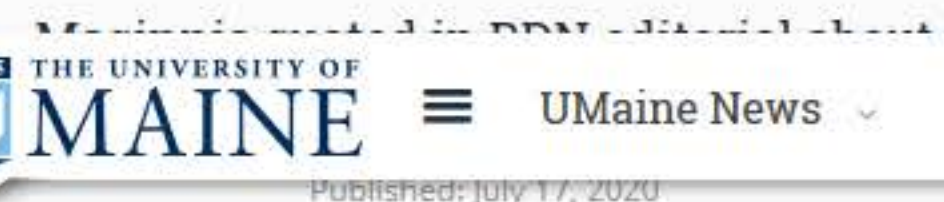
The center also offers its typical therapy services through videoconferencing, encompassing research-based psychological treatments, such as cognitive behavior therapy, for a range of needs and ages. Clients can transition to one of these services after completing the CSC, or may enroll separately depending on their needs.

Areas of specialty include anxiety, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorders, ADHD-related difficulties, parenting challenges, adjustment difficulties, school difficulties and behavioral difficulties, as well as services for older adults. Fees for typical therapy are on a sliding scale, with a session often less than or equal to an insurance copay.

For more information or to become a client, call the center at 207.581.2034 and leave a message.

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