

British patients get therapy on computer

LONDON (AP) For nearly her entire life, Mary had a crippling fear of cramped spaces that meant she couldn't travel on airplanes, subways, or cars. Seeing a psychologist didn't help. So she tried something else. The 61-year-old bookkeeper, who only gave her first name to protect her privacy, sat down in front of a computer and spilled out her problems to a kind of psychiatric computer game called "Fearfighter."

Last year, "Fearfighter" was one of two programs endorsed by Britain's health advisory watchdog for people with panic attacks, mild depression, or phobias.

People uncomfortable with getting advice from a computer can still choose to see therapists, but the option of logging on for help is now available and will be paid for by the government-run National Health Service.

In Britain, patients registered with the NHS routinely wait up to six months to see a psychiatrist; nearly 90 percent of people with mild depression never actually see a therapist.

The computer programs now mean that for some patients, getting psychiatric counseling is as easy as getting a password from their general practitioner to access the program online.

"Six months for some patients might be too long," said Dr. Paul Grime, an occupational medicine expert at London's Royal Free Hospital.

Since the endorsement was made last February, many British psychiatric patients have skipped the weekly sessions at their doctor's office. Instead, they now log on at home, or go to libraries to use computers designated to run the programs, where there is a health professional ready to help if necessary.

The computers are not authorized to prescribe medicine. A qualified human is required for that.

The computerized treatment is possible because people with phobias, from fear of spiders to fear of heights, tend to get the same basic therapy.

"The idea is that the repetitive parts of the therapy are done by a computer, which can then make decisions based on these answers," said Dr. Isaac Marks, a professor emeritus at King's College Institute of Psychiatry in London, and co-developer of "Fearfighter."

Along with the new environment and gradually adjust and integrate into, along with day-to-day life learning more orderly conduct of this semester had just returned to the Minhang campus of the 05 homes in this Part of eight-year, 06 students getting better state. Recently, medical schools invited members of the Organization of guidance, assistance and cooperation in the work of party building this spring, the sun was shining in the season in full swing. Strengthening the party building work is the most important task of party building, is the ideological and political education of college students in the core areas, but also for the training of personnel is an important part of the task is a long-term and unremitting must get a thoroughly good grasp the intensity of the work to produce real results. Students on the work of party building and the importance of this special status, the hospital this semester early in the Organization Department held a special organizational meetings, a new member of the Organization of a special appointment, from Minhang campus headquarters back to the hospital in time with a special class member organizations, organizations invited to play a full member of the party in college students construction work in the role of the parties to cooperate and join forces, personnel mechanisms to promote the education of college students and political party education. These organs and by the Department of retired party cadres as the new members invited organizations, have long been engaged in party affairs, a rich social experience and a solid professional background disciplines, since the offers, the students threw himself into the work of party building, and by the end of their respective classes counselor positive opening Show exchanges, research and discussion, the grass-roots level among students to help the students join the party activists and members to improve their comprehensive quality and their party spirit, fully embodied the cause of the older generation of party members and party loyalty, love and commitment to training the next generation successors to take quietly pay may be upright. Under each class member organizations invited to the actual situation on the one hand guiding the party constitution study group dedicated to acquiring knowledge in the party spirit, help formulate and improve, the system s learning programs to enhance the quality of the party constitution study group activities offer advice and suggestions; On the other hand enhance the development of object inspection, and activists conversation , in coordination with Students joined the active elements of education. Special Rapporteur medical school organizations, the Department of Pathology retired teachers Jiang Qin has participated in 05 of the 2008 Constitution of professional learning group activities, and contact their teaching, learning and personal experience with the group extensive exchange students, and afterwards on the recent end of the two sessions hot topic Ranariddh discussions, a brilliant lesson Party Class , quality of life organizations initiative, teacher Jiang s cordial amiable, sincere guidance and valuable experience by the students received. Also worth mentioning is that the teacher asked Jiang vector innovation activities, strengthening the Party spirit of the more stressed the importance of theoretical study and irreplaceability, to

students joining the party activists profound enlightenment. Practice shows that the mechanism will be invited to introduce students to on the work of party building is to promote party-building work of the students scientific, standardized and institutionalized an effective powerful way, I believe students in the work of party building grassroots organizations invited members of the inspection staff, supervision, guidance, more vividly!

About the Author

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