Here are the answers to some commonly asked questions about the treatment:

- **What is an immersive virtual reality environment?**
  
  We use immersive virtual reality technology known as the Blue Room. This is a 360 degree fully immersive room that allows us to create virtual images of various scenes into a 3m3 room made of blue screens. This means the specific environment that the person finds challenging can be reproduced in a safe setting. People can navigate within and through the scenes for example, in a supermarket or classroom with an iPad, without the need for a headset or goggles.

- **What does the treatment involve?**
  
  Each person goes into the Blue Room with a therapist. People navigate through a scene that is a recreation of a specific situation that makes them anxious. This starts with a low level of difficulty - for instance, for someone afraid of crowded buses, we start with them getting onto an empty bus. Over the course of the sessions more people would board the bus as the child or adult is able to meet the increased challenge. During the process the psychologist is there to help them practice anxiety management strategies they have learnt such as relaxation techniques and using coping self-statements.

- **How many treatment sessions are involved and how often?**
  
  Children and adults have two 20-30 minute sessions on one day, and then another two sessions a week or so later. The children are then followed up after the Blue Room sessions to check on their progress on managing the real life situation that made them anxious.

- **What anxiety/phobia/fear topics can be treated in the Blue Room?**
  
  We have treated many different types of situation specific anxiety – for instance, anxieties around shopping, speaking in class, public transport, heights, being a passenger in a car, busy roads, and birds. All people treated have anxiety relating to a specific situation – rather than being generally anxious much or most of the time.

- **How effective is the treatment**
  
  Just over half of the children and adults who have received treatment found it led to real life changes to their phobia – meaning people and their families could undertake some activities that were not possible beforehand.

- **Is this treatment available to children now through the NHS?**
  
  Yes – following the recent trial and the previous positive experiences of children and families receiving the Newcastle Blue Room treatment, it is now provided through the NHS for UK children where local Commissioning Groups provide funding. More information about the treatment and how to obtain a referral can be found at: https://www.ntw.nhs.uk/resource-library/complex-neuro-developmental-service-cnads/ or contact NTAWNT.cnads@nhs.net

- **What if I want to pay privately for the treatment?**
  
  The treatment is available privately, where funding is available
I work for a large organisation and we’d be interested in hearing more about this treatment – where can I find out more about doing that?

For more information please contact the research team.